



Making Schools Work Better for all Children

Newsire - April 7, 1999

April 7, 1999

The big news of this week is that **Milwaukee** School Board member and pro-school choice advocate John Gardner handily won reelection on April 6. In fact, the entire slate of reform-minded candidates won, proving to Milwaukee and America that the people have won in the political world of school choice. It is important to note that the opponents brought in big guns from around the nation – national unions and People for the American Way among them – to fight and spent half a million dollars, only to be turned away by the real players in Milwaukee, the families.

In other news, [The Edison Project](#), the nation's largest private sector provider of educational services, reported significant achievement gains for the second consecutive year. Those gains are particularly important, says CER, because they are being made among poor, disadvantaged youngsters who make up the bulk of Edison students.

How come, you should ask, that on the **Nation's Report Card**, even a majority America's best students have trouble demonstrating reading proficiency in both 4th and 8th grade?

The answer might lie in the fact that not only are America's public schools not flexible enough to allow for strong curricula to succeed, but that proven practices are normally shunned. Recent research by established education groups – even in the Blob – find that both [Core Knowledge](#) and **Direct Instruction** – two widely popular, core curriculum programs – are yielding greater gains in the schools which use them than other traditional public schools. But these programs are only in a little over 1,000 schools combined. If they are so successful, why don't more adopt them?

Well, a national study yields some insights into why more schools don't do the right things often enough. Each year, it takes 48.6 million hours or 25,000 employees working full time to complete all the paperwork required by the U.S. Department of Education. So less time and less money go to those who need it most – the children and their teachers.

That's why greater choices for children – and some competitive fervor – is being fiercely debated in states like **Florida** and **Texas** as one way to help children cut through the bureaucracy. Listen in again next week for updates on where those battles stand, and be sure to let us know what is going on in your community!



