

Center for Education Reform



Making Schools Work Better for all Children

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Ohio's landmark school choice program for Cleveland's most poor was overturned last week by the State Supreme court, NOT because it's unconstitutional, (it is constitutional), but because the bill was passed in the wrong manner. Thus a technicality threatens the livelihood of several thousand children most in need of good schools. Keep posted here.

Besides choice, the other issue for the last year of this century is clearly teachers. How to train them, how to hire them, and what to expect of them. The Bay state-- **Massachusetts** -- has shown that with a little ingenuity, you can get high quality people.

They put out a notice offering \$20,000 signing bonuses and the promise that the candidates chosen wouldn't have to go to teacher's college, and guess what? 63 new teachers were chosen that represent more minorities than usual in Massachusetts school, have more advanced degrees and strong professional backgrounds and some with much needed math and science credentials.

You see, high quality people do want to teach, but the process that's been in place for so long discourages them because it doesn't expect expertise in any particular subject area. Kudos to Massachusetts for doing this.

New York school children perhaps need more attention than most. English scores for the state's fourth graders -- even among the suburbs -- were in the sewer. 67% of the city's fourth graders failed the exam.

But in some recently revamped school districts, the children posted gains. The difference: at schools where there is more autonomy for teachers and choice for parents, students performed seven percentage points better than their counterparts.

Achievement for children is everything. That's why this week, we direct you to a school in North Carolina that's making great gains for children. **Healthy Start Academy** posted the biggest gains of any school in the Tar-heel State, with 99% of it's children having met or exceeded the standard. That's because Healthy Start is a charter school, devoted to serving at-risk youth. You can reach them by calling Tom Williams at 919-956-5599.

Thank you for checking into the Center's Hotline. If you have additional questions you can reach us at 800-521-2118. Have a great week!



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