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FAX ALERT

AROUND THE REFORM WORLD IN 30 DAYS

June 30, 1999 As a fitting lead to Independence day, reformers over this past month have proved that freedom does indeed ring in states and communities nationwide:

- **Ohio's** legislature re-enacted Cleveland's school choice program and extended it into 6th and 7th grades through 2000 and 2001 respectively. The 1995 program (which helps some of the city's poorest children) was ruled invalid by the state Supreme Court on a technicality, and the legislature had to reauthorize it for the program to continue.
- **Virginia's** *Standards of Learning*, thought to be among the highest in the nation, are serving as a model now for teachers, too. The State Board of Education has adopted the highest standards nationwide for English and math teachers. Believe it or not, some people are actually critical of the move.
- **Milwaukee** is once again making news. This time, the public school system has struck an unprecedented bargain with the Catholic school system. The superintendents of both systems have agreed to share resources, including staff developing, training, technology, and after school programs, to name a few areas.
- With the ink just dry on **Florida's** new accountability package, the state released scores last week showing 78 schools having failed basic measures of accountability. Two of those schools have Fs for two years or more, paving the way for children in those schools to get vouchers. So far, the NAACP and ACLU are standing with some union and other establishment groups in a lawsuit to stop the program.
- Meanwhile, **New York's** first eight charters were approved and our congratulations go to the Albany Urban League, the Learning Project and Boys Harbor, among others, for being pioneers in helping children succeed.

The *Monthly Letter to Friends* reviewing June's progress should be at your door step today, and is already available on line. Have a safe and happy Fourth of July.

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