

# THE Center for Education Reform



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## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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LATEST CHARTER SCHOOL LAWS SCORECARD RELEASED

*Analysis paves the way for new regulative action*

(Washington, D.C. 1/14/03) The Center for Education Reform (CER) today released its semi-annual ranking and profile of the Nation's 40 charter school laws, which will be useful to new policy makers seeking to enact or modify laws. In addition to changes in 11 states, this year also marks the debut of two new laws from Tennessee and Iowa; although neither show great promise, Tennessee ranks only a "C - minus" and Iowa places right above Mississippi with an "F."

The number of states with strong laws (As & Bs) remains the same at 20, with no new states joining their ranks. Strong laws are those that foster the development of numerous, genuinely independent charter schools that serve a wide array of children. Weak laws provide little chance for the growth of charters outside existing educational structures.

This year regulatory fever was the prevailing condition in states. Legislative bodies, school boards, state boards, and state departments of education fueled efforts and succeeded in some cases, to add burdensome regulations that can undermine a charter school's success.

On a brighter note, over half the winners from last month's election consider charter schools effective alternatives to traditional public schools. A new crop of reform-minded legislators and Governors are likely to introduce changes to weak laws.

(more)

This analysis provides a guidepost to what kind of charter activity is likely to occur under certain legislative conditions. While by no means definitive, it provides a useful yardstick against which to measure and fashion forthcoming legislation and amendments. A state trying to create a healthy supply of charter schools will know to steer clear of the roadblocks put in place by states on the weaker side of the continuum.

This document is intended to both serve as a guide to those evaluating their own existing charter laws against other states' for the first time, or revisiting them with an eye toward making potential amendments. It is also a primer to help charter proponents in the remaining 11 states work to get it right the first time.

For scoring details and ranking chart, go to:

[http://www.edreform.com/charter\\_schools/laws/rankingintro.htm](http://www.edreform.com/charter_schools/laws/rankingintro.htm). ***Charter School Laws Across the States*** is available for \$39.95 (plus S&H) by calling the Center at (202) 822-9000.

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*The Center for Education Reform is a national, independent, non-profit advocacy organization providing support and guidance to individuals, community and civic groups, policymakers and others who are working to bring fundamental reforms to their schools. For further information, please call (202) 822-9000 or visit our website at <http://edreform.com>.*