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GROWTH IN CHARTER SCHOOLS REFLECTS INCREASING DEMANDS FOR CHOICES

(Washington, D.C. 9/17/02) Today the Center for Education Reform announced the results of its annual tally of charter school numbers across the United States.

Marking an increase of approximately 14 percent this year (393 schools), there are now about 2,700 charter schools operating in 36 states and the District of Columbia. Charter schools will be opening for the first time in Indiana and Wyoming. Three additional states with charter laws — Iowa, New Hampshire and Tennessee — do not have any schools. An additional 69 charters are already approved to operate in the next school year.

Since 1992, when the first charter school opened, 160 charter schools have closed for failing to comply with the dictates of their charter, representing six percent of all charters schools ever opened.

Despite few charter laws passed in the last four years, the number of charter schools continues to grow. The top five charter states are: Arizona: 468; California 452; Florida: 232; Texas 228 and Michigan: 186. The schools have begun to make an impact in many urban centers with high concentrations of charters. Examples include: Phoenix: 122; Houston: 66; Philadelphia: 44; Detroit: 54. In some cities, the numbers of charter students have begun to rival the numbers of students enrolled in district schools. In Washington, D.C. more than 14 percent of students are enrolled in charter schools and Kansas City has similar numbers.

A state-by-state breakdown of charter schools opened in the 2002-2003 school year: is available at:
<http://www.edreform.com/pubs/chglance.htm>

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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>.