



1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 204 • Washington, DC 20036

Tel 202-822-9000
Fax 202-822-5077

FAX ALERT

For Immediate Release

Contact: Mary Kayne Heinze
(202) 822-9000

WHAT CHOICE DO YOU HAVE?

CER PROVIDES THE ANSWER IN ITS LATEST PAPER ON EDUCATIONAL CHOICE PROGRAMS

July 28, 1999 Poll after poll reveals Americans' growing dissatisfaction with the current condition of public education. The Center for Education Reform's (CER) 1997 *National Survey of American's Attitudes Toward Education and School Reform* found that as a result of this dissatisfaction, a majority of people support school choice. More than 20 other polls have since confirmed the Center's findings about this growing support for school choice.

CER explores these choices with the release of its latest paper: *Choice Today*. "CER is pleased to provide this comprehensive accounting of choice programs available to children around the country. Our paper exposes those who have resisted these valuable programs to the quality educational opportunities that choice provides to children and their families," said CER President Jeanne Allen.

Choice Today begins the discussion on choice opportunities in Maine and Vermont, the nation's longest running choice programs. It then provides an overview of the city-wide programs, currently in place in Cleveland and Milwaukee working to benefit poor children. All of these programs have faced legal challenges in the past year and despite those efforts remain in place assisting children.

Florida made history in becoming the first in the nation to provide educational choice statewide. The program provides all children in low-performing schools the option to leave and attend a school of their choice. But even before the ink was dry on this landmark law, certain parties, including the ACLU and the NAACP, challenged the measure in court.

Choice Today also provides solid evidence resulting from academic studies on the benefits from choice. Over the past several months, state-wide choice programs were proposed for Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and Pennsylvania for low income and low performing students but eventually these initiatives failed.

"With these programs succeeding elsewhere in the country providing a guarantee of success or the ability to take their children elsewhere, parents will begin to pressure their own lawmakers to extend choice in their own state," said Allen.

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Choice Today is available at minimal cost from the Center for Education Reform or can be downloaded from our website at www.edreform.com. For additional information on school choice or education reform please call CER at (202) 822-9000.