



*Making Schools Work Better for all Children*

Newsire - May 1, 2001

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**Vol. 3, No. 18**

This is National Charters Schools Week, and along with countless activities throughout the nation being conducted by local charter schools, The Center for Education Reform has planned daily activities in the nation's capitol aimed at underscoring the contributions of charter schools towards education reform and the education of America's children.

Among the events and announcements planned for the week -

- \* A daily release and posting of "Charter School Success Stories" on our website. Check [www.edreform.com](http://www.edreform.com) daily to see how charters are succeeding.
- \* April 30 - "CER Ranks the States" as we release our most recent ranking of charter school laws state-by-state.
- \* May 1 - "A Congressional Tour of DC Charter Schools" will visit the Cesar Chavez Public Charter High School for Public Policy and the Community Academy Public Charter School.
- \* May 2 - A Pre-release of key data from the "2001 Survey of Charter Schools," providing a snapshot of current charter school information, including data on enrollments, state assessments, curriculum and populations served.
- \* May 3 - Capitol Hill showing of the PBS film, "Charter Schools That Work" for House and Senate staff members.

Additionally, CER continues to make available new "My Child Learns at a Charter School" bumper stickers and other items celebrating National Charter Schools Week. Keep checking our website [www.edreform.com](http://www.edreform.com) all this week for additional updates on NCSW.

**INDIANA:** The greatest way to celebrate National Charter Schools Week, of course, is with the addition of a new charter school law, and Hoosiers will be doing just that on Wednesday, May 2, when Governor Frank O'Bannon signs the new charter legislation into law. And what a law it is: In the State Rankings to be released today, Indiana ranks 7th among the 38 states, with high scores in nearly every category.

**SAN FRANCISCO:** One of the key elements in the San Francisco School Board's attack on the

Edison Academy Charter School has been an alleged failure on the part of the school to provide information in a timely manner. But a new report by Mike Antonucci of the Education Intelligence Agency cites more than 35 reports the school system is demanding, and asks if San Francisco's other 114 schools could provide the information on command. The answer: Evidentially not, given an independent audit showing the district could account for only half of \$20 million in bond money, purchased properties without being able to demonstrate need, awarded contracts through verbal agreements, failed to install windows at Hillcrest Elementary School, and spent \$250,000 to bulldoze a vacant lot it did not own.

Meanwhile, parents at the school fed up with the obstructionist efforts of the school board have organized into "Parents to Save Edison Charter," and expect to have more than 90 percent of parents and teachers on a petition demanding Edison's renewal. You can view their website, in English and Spanish, at [www.edisonaction.org](http://www.edisonaction.org).

CHOICE: A new study of Milwaukee Public Schools concludes that the Milwaukee school choice has helped drive public school improvements at those schools with high numbers of voucher students, improving scores at the city's lowest performing schools. Conducted by Harvard professor Caroline Hoxby compared the productivity at schools where low-income students qualified for vouchers with urban schools outside Milwaukee that do not have a voucher program. Productivity was defined as the ratio of standardized test scores to per-pupil spending. Hoxby found that productivity in math, science, social studies and grammar improved fastest at schools with the highest number of voucher students, and slowest for those schools without vouchers. Reading fell at all schools, but the decline was slowest at the voucher schools. The report is available [online](#).

CHOICE VICTORY: As many expected, the Florida Supreme Court declined to review the decision that upheld the state constitutionality of using public funds for student tuition in private schools - a clear defeat for school choice opponents who had hoped to have the decision reviewed. The vote was 4-1, with two justices not participating. The result sends the case, which challenged the Florida A+ plan providing state-funded vouchers to students in poorly performing schools, back to the Leon County Circuit Court for further consideration of remaining issues.



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