

Center for Education Reform



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

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

FAX ALERT

April 30, 1999

TO: Choice Supporters
FROM: Jeanne Allen
RE: Florida's A+ Education Package

TAKE HEART! Choice efforts across the country got a big boost on Friday from the Sunshine State. Florida's State Senate has now passed Governor Jeb Bush's *A+ Education Package, 25 – 15*. Now it's on to Governor Bush's desk for signing.

The program provides public schools the tools they need to succeed and demands accountability. In the future we can all look to Florida as a model for responsible education reform.

Can we dare to hope that this is the crack in the dam that will lead to a flood of similar legislation across the country that will place education firmly in the hands of parents and teachers? Congratulations to Pat Heffernan and Floridians for School Choice, let your hard work be an example to reformers nationwide!

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FAX ALERT

For Immediate Release

Contact: Mary Kayne Heinze
(202) 822-9000

FLORIDA BRINGS ACCOUNTABILITY HOME

**Statement by Jeanne Allen,
President of the Center for Education Reform
On passage of Florida's A+ Education Package**

April 29, 1999 Thanks to the efforts of Florida lawmakers and thousands of ordinary citizens, children in the Sunshine State will be waking up to the promise of better schools. Enactment of Florida's *A+ Education Package* has made education reform history. It is the first statewide choice program and one that stresses public school improvement and accountability.

The program's emphasis is on making public schools succeed. Those who do well will receive additional state money. Those that consistently fail will risk losing students. Children in those schools will have the opportunity to choose another school – be it public or private – where they can succeed.

Parents will now have a fail-safe guarantee to a quality education. If their school fails, they'll be afforded an alternative. That's a powerful message; it is a message that is likely to yield significant gains in all Florida schools.

Rather than seeking ways to block implementation of this important program, opponents should embrace this change in the status quo and put their efforts into ensuring that no school fails its children.

Some have called the plan radical and say it will hurt public schools. There is nothing radical about guaranteeing that children get the best education available and that parents be permitted a choice in the matter. Florida's new choice and accountability plan will help turn around failing schools and give much-needed assistance to many disadvantaged children.

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