



CER's Grades for Nation's Charter School Laws Change; Equity, Authorizers Are Two Major Factors

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While more than half the nation's 41 charter school laws have created a strong environment for charter schools to open and grow, still 20 other laws have only mediocre or failing grades, according to a new report released by The Center for Education Reform (CER) today. *Raising the Bar: Charter School Law 2006 Ranking and Scorecard* reveals that laws where authorizers are limited and that do not guarantee basic equity for students fail to yield as high numbers of quality charter schools as many lawmakers intended when they passed laws.

"There is a correlation between top-scoring laws and the quality of the charter environment in that state," noted Jeanne Allen, CER president and a co-author of the report.

As evidence, Washington, DC and Delaware are the first and third strongest laws respectively. Both states saw their charter school students make greater gains than conventional public school students between 2003 and 2005 national assessments. State AYP data also supports this conclusion.

Based on dozens of criteria, seven states made the honor roll with As, and fourteen were high achievers with Bs, including several that are new to the pool. The scores of several state laws dropped, including Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Texas, for failing to provide the components that ensure equity, freedom and growth. California jumped several places, a reflection in part of strong components as well as the fact that others have failed to keep pace. The report also addresses why states with failing laws tend to offer charter schools in name only, as well as why nine states still have no law in place.

The media may obtain copies of *Raising the Bar on Charter School Laws* by contacting CER. It is available to the public for \$39.95. Also released today by The Center for Education Reform: [Annual Survey of America's Charter Schools](#) and [Charter School Closures: The Opportunity for Accountability](#).

In the News: [Lawmakers Receive 'D' Grade for Charter School Law](#), by Laura Brown, *Hawaii Reporter*, March 10, 2006 [Charter School Report Says States Tweaking Laws](#), by Erik W. Robelen, *Education Week*, March 8, 2006 [Tennessee Earns a C for Charter School Laws](#), *Nashville City Paper*, Tennessee, March 7, 2006 [National Study Gives New Mexico A B For Charter School Laws](#), *Sante Fe New Mexican*, New Mexico, March 5, 2006

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The Center for Education Reform (CER) creates opportunities for and challenges obstacles to better education for America's communities. Founded in 1993, CER combines education policy with grassroots advocacy to foster positive and bold education reforms. For more information, contact CER at (202) 822-9000 or [send us email](#).

