

THE Center for Education Reform



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PRESS ALERT

For Immediate Release

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CER LEADS GROUP IN SUPPORTING CLEVELAND SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM *Files Amicus Brief supporting parents' choices*

(Washington, DC 4/25/2000) Jeanne Allen, president of the Center for Education Reform today announced the Center has filed an *amicus* brief with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in support of the Cleveland school choice program. This marks the third time CER has sponsored an *amicus curiae* brief defending the Cleveland program.

"The outcome of this case has everything to do with whether Cleveland's children have a bright future," said Allen. "CER is proud to help underprivileged families who are often left with no choice for an education besides failing schools," she added.

Joining CER in submitting the brief are 14 mainstream educational and business groups with diverse memberships and concerns. "We are truly honored to have organizations such as Minnesota Business Partnership, the Center for New Black Leadership and the American Legislative Exchange Council join us in this important issue. It shows the breadth and depth of educational reformers," remarked Allen.

Cleveland's scholarship program began in 1996 and provides \$2,500 to more than 3,500 low-income families allowing them to send their children to private and parochial schools of their choice. Among those who have challenged the Cleveland school choice program are the Ohio Education Association, state affiliate of the National Education Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the People for the American Way.

The 32-page brief argues several critical issues: that the program "benefits children, not schools" through choice; that the law clearly supports parents' right to make "meaningful educational choices" among public private and religious schools; and that the inclusion of religious schools in the program is a Constitutional necessity.

"These arguments are compelling and should not be ignored by the Court," said Allen. The Court needs to carefully consider rights of thousands of Ohio children to quality educational options."

Joining CER as Amici:

American Education Reform Foundation
American Legislative Exchange Council,
The Center for New Black Leadership
Children First CEO America
Education Leaders Council
Empower the People
I have a Dream-DC,

Institute for the Transformation of Learning,
Floridians for School Choice,
Maine School Choice Coalition
Milton and Rose Friedman Foundation
Minnesota Business Partnership
Texas Coalition for Parental Choice in Education
Texas Justice Foundation.

Copies of the brief are available at The Center for Education Reform by calling (202)822-9000 or by visiting our website at www.edreform.com.

On Monday, April 24, 2000 a groundbreaking report was released showing compelling evidence that real school choice is the only vehicle for meaningful public school reform. The report titled, "Competing to Win: How Florida's A+ Plan has Triggered Public School Reform" identifies reforms that have come to Florida schools because of the threat from competition and choice. CER was among several organizations that co-published the report including the Urban League of Greater Miami, The Collins Center for Public Policy, Floridians for School Choice and the James Madison Institute. For copies of the report, journalists may call the Institute for Justice at 202-955-1300.

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The Center for Education Reform is a national, independent, non-profit advocacy organization founded in 1993 to provide support and guidance to individuals, community and civic groups, policymakers and others who are working to bring fundamental reforms to their schools