



*Making Schools Work Better for all Children*

Newsire - December 3, 1999

December 3, 1999

## **Education Reform Hotline**

**December 3, 1999**

School choice is slowly creeping into federal education funding. Language added at the 11th hour offers financial inducements to school districts if they establish open enrollment policies. Nine states already offer statewide open enrollment within the public school system, nine more offer statewide choice wherein districts are not required to participate, and 14 offer open enrollment within their school district. (For a run-down, see [Answers to Frequently Asked Questions About School Choice](#).) School choice advocates, however, would like to see Congress go further and provide parents the right to choose any school that best suits their child and have the money tied to accountability for academic progress.

The Supreme Court is discussing a Louisiana based case where federal block grants are being used to fund technology programs in religious schools. The case may impact the national debate on school vouchers by giving the Court another opportunity to better define the boundaries of church and state.

The Public Agenda Survey entitled *On Thin Ice* provides some interesting insights into what Americans don't understand about reforms and how they are practical about solving our public school troubles: 1) Although most Americans know very little about vouchers and charter schools, when they are explained, the majority of Americans are open to vouchers and like the idea of charter schools. 2) Americans want accountability, more responsive schools, better public schools and are pragmatic about solutions. 3) The public needs more exposure to fresh ideas that stress choice and accountability. These ideas must be better broadcast, clear and grounded. So let us help you. Just follow the links for more in-depth explanations about charter schools and school vouchers.

Washington DC school Superintendent Arlene Ackerman "talks the talk" of charter school support, but she doesn't "walk the walk." In three recent incidents the superintendent has shown that charters are not at the top of her priority list!

- First, Hyde Public Charter School moved into temporary quarters in the Hyde building, with the understanding that they would be moving to the third floor. Well, not so fast. DC Public Schools commandeered the floor for a future program for expelled students.
- Next, Paul Jr. High School, a conversion charter approved by the DC Public Charter School Board, was notified by DC Public Schools that they would be evicted from the building upon conversion to charter status.
- And finally, the Hearst Elementary School, another board approved charter conversion, has been informed that a PTA meeting planned for the purpose of discussing the charter school option cannot be held on DCPS property!

These actions violate the DC School Reform act, and are simply not in the interest of the city's school children.

Thanks for checking out the Center for Education Reform's hotline. If you'd like additional information on education reform, please call the Center directly at 800-521-2118 or surf the issues and analysis here on the web. Have a great week!



The Center for Education Reform  
910 Seventeenth Street, NW, Suite 1120 • Washington, DC 20006  
800-521-2118 • 301-986-8088 • Fax: 301-986-1826

[www.edreform.com](http://www.edreform.com) • [cer@edreform.com](mailto:cer@edreform.com)

copyright © 2013