



*Making Schools Work Better for all Children*

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**Florida** brings accountability home! 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 this legislation, sponsored by Governor Jeb Bush, is clearing the way for public schools to succeed. Those public schools that do well will receive additional state money; where schools consistently fail, children in those schools will have the opportunity to choose another, be it public or private where they can succeed.

Radical - some detractors say, it will hurt public schools, but history bears out that radical changes can and do spur rational reforms, and where accountability efforts across the nation have been implemented, we are already seeing improvement through-out these educational districts.

In other school choice news, **Citizens for Educational Choice Communicator**, an on-line information source for educational choice, has begun to inform residents in Laramie who are interested in starting a Back to Basics School of Choice (BTB) or a Charter School. They have and continue to face considerable opposition in their efforts. The Superintendent, Dr. Charles Head, has decided to close all task force meetings to the public. And now, unfortunately, those recipients of the on-line update service have had to request that copies go out "blind" as those that have jobs within the Public School System fear "unpleasant ramifications." Nancy Hamilton, the writer of CEC states, "this is a sad comment on our public school system..." For more information contact Nancy at 307-721-9541.

As we found out a couple of weeks ago, accountability in some districts across the nation is spurring some public school administrators to take drastic measures—cheating. Now in **Texas** resignations have been demanded and prosecutors are investigating whether criminal charges should be brought. 17 indictments have been issued and one plea entered. These are not criminals but teachers, principles and a deputy superintendent. Annette Cootes, spokeswoman for the 80,000 member Texas State Teachers Union says, "You can be fired if the children aren't performing." Well now I wonder why they aren't performing well?????

Consider this, says Jeanne Allen, president of CER, "Children who fail to obtain the necessary skills to move on to the next grade shouldn't be the only ones penalized. What of Teachers? What of the boards of education whose policies may have failed these children?...The fuss you might hear is about how inconvenient change and consequences will be to grown-ups."



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