

# Candidate Survey on Education Reform



## Candidate Survey

### Know the Score

The Center for Education Reform is pleased to provide you with some tools to help you assess the potential effectiveness of a school board candidate or other education official in your community.

All states and communities differ in their needs and approaches to reform. And today school boards and other governing authorities are often extremely limited in what they can do to improve schools. Government oversight and opposition from vested interests often hamstring their ability to make substantial changes, but it is still critical that these governing bodies take a strong leadership role in introducing new and effective ideas to their communities, and in working to implement real reform.

To help you in your efforts to bring about reform, The Center provides this questionnaire to help you know the score and evaluate the candidates and officials crafting education policy in your community.

### Getting the Answers

There are a number of ways in which candidates present their views to the community or in which the community can approach the candidate about those views: public forums, debates, campaign appearances, radio talk shows, etc. Members of your group should take advantage of these opportunities not only to find out for yourselves where the candidates stand, but to make sure the right questions get asked, and to help bring issues important to you and the community to the forefront of public discussion.

1. Please rank the following problems facing our nation's schools in order of significance.

- \_\_\_ financing; \_\_\_ lack of accountability
- \_\_\_ regulation; \_\_\_ lack of parental choice
- \_\_\_ lack of focus on core subjects

2. What three goals do you hope to accomplish during your tenure in office and why?

3. Are the community's /state's resources (tax dollars) being used as efficiently as possible? What changes would you make?

4. Should teachers whose students repeatedly fail to learn be held accountable? If so, how?

5. What role do parents play in the education process?

6. Do you believe poor children should have the opportunity to attend a private or religious school of their choosing? Should everyone?

7. What is your position on charter schools and other autonomous public schools? Should parents have the right to start a charter?

8. What is your position on contracting out services in schools under your authority? Contracting with private organizations to run a school or school district?

9. Should students be required to take "high-stakes" tests that determine their suitability for the next grade, or do you favor an outcome-based approach? *for graduation?*

10. What role should standardized testing play in evaluating our education system? Would you support district and school level comparisons?

11. Do you favor alternative certification for teachers? For principals?

12. If you could dictate one area where the Annenberg Grant for educational reform was spent where would it be?

13. What is the most neglected aspect of school board involvement in education?

14. Do you believe more strongly in any particular approach to teaching and learning, such as cooperative vs. competitive learning?

*What organizations/people would you rely upon most heavily to advise your decisions*

*Parents? Unions? PAs? Community? Civic Groups?*