



***Occasional* Letter to Friends**

FALL 2020

Dear Friends:

If you're reading this *Occasional* Letter to Friends, thank you! This fall has been an incredibly busy time, with multiple initiatives to continue the fight for advancing innovation, freedom, and flexibility for all learners, regardless of zip code—all while we've endured Covid's impact on families, schools, and our world in general.

Despite the challenge, CER's consistent, relentless focus on innovation and opportunity—for 27 years as of this week!—has ensured principled successes throughout these many difficult months.

NO TIME FOR TIMID

We have been actively reaching out to parents, policy makers, educators, and entrepreneurs across the globe. We strongly believe that these four groups are paramount to helping us ensure we **#FundTheFamilies** (not the systems!) and make schools work better for every learner.

The majority of our nation's schools at every level however remain closed to students, with no end in sight. Our kids' chances at achieving their dreams—the American Dream, which promises freedom and prosperity to all who practice and cherish the principles on which our nation was founded—slip further and further away every day. Even before Covid, our results were, as we have unceasingly said, just bad. Failing.

This is not just a national crisis; it is an INTERNATIONAL one—and we need to tackle it head on together.

But Americans are innovators at heart, and they've been creating their own new schools, new tech, new approaches, and new policies to get the upper hand in the battle with the pandemic.

CER IS—AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN—ABOUT ACTION

We have elevated those innovators, created new ones, established new frontiers to fight, and succeeded in organizing a national assault on education failure that—no matter what our challenge—puts parents and students in the driver's seat.

So here, for a very brief look at what's been happening and what you need to know to make sure your own families, kids, and communities overcome the educational challenges of the pandemic, is what CER has been doing (so you don't have to do it yourself)...

When COVID-19 hit our world, CER didn't skip a beat.

We did what we have done for 27 years: we immediately reached out to colleagues and innovators nationwide and brought them together to share how they were addressing the challenge and its effects on education. They became inspirational models for others.



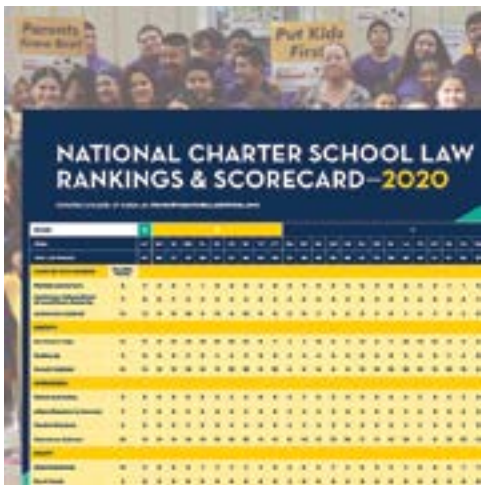
In the landmark *Espinoza v. Montana* case, CER helped achieve a breakthrough 144 years in the making.

Through fervent media pressure and public education, our efforts shined a spotlight on one of the most monumental education and civil rights cases to be heard before the U.S. Supreme Court in decades. And on June 30, 2020, we celebrated a victory for students—and a defeat for discrimination—as the Court affirmed the right of parents to direct the education of their children.

With the U.S. battling tension and inequity, CER offered a historical perspective.

A moving program from CER asked powerful questions about our democracy, with interactive sessions, Constitutional experts and authorities on civics, and contests and credits for students.





Our annual ranking of states' charter school laws continued.

CER extended its push for opportunity and innovation, publishing its nationwide analysis highlighted by the no-holds-barred Scorecard.

We took our message to the global stage.

When international travel resumed, we convened the first global Ed Tech event in Italy, with a concentration on innovations and technologies that amplify, engage and educate the world's students in the arts and sciences.



We made our Parent Power! Index online tool even better.

With Covid's dramatic disruption of traditional learning, we enhanced our interactive resource detailing each state's structural and behavioral policies, enabling families to make informed decisions about kids' education.

And in October, we celebrated 27 years since CER kickstarted the movement.

Through four presidential administrations—with 2020 perhaps the most challenging year yet—we've stayed true to our mission. Together our work has changed hearts, minds, laws and legal rulings. And we're just getting started!



Let me once again tell you how grateful I am for the involvement in numerous ways of our loyal supporters, friends, and even adversaries from time to time. Without being pushed and pulled—and funded—these initiatives would not be possible

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

While I'm proud of what we've done over the past couple of months with an all-virtual team of people around the country (including virtual interns), there is so much more to do. And yes, here's how you can help:

- Stay informed! If you are not getting our weekly *Newswire* e-newsletter, please send me an email right now at jeanneallen@edreform.com and I'll make sure you are on the list. We do not spam you, sell lists, or send you things you do not want.
- Keep your eyes on edmaven.com, the network we started building last year that you will want to join so that you can continue the relationships and networking in a solely education-focussed platform that will make LinkedIn and others pea-green with envy (and bring in new sources of revenue that lighten the load on donors).
- Speaking of which—all of this takes substantial resources, but we feel the payoff of innovation in education is priceless. Enclosed is an envelope if you can afford a gift of any size. You can also contribute online at edreform.com/donate.

As the brilliant Malcolm Gladwell recently reminded us in his virtual fireside chat with CER Chairman Michael Moe during the 2020 ASU+GSV Summit, these major societal shifts take time and patience, as well as steadfast effort to produce meaningful, sustainable change.

CER remains resolute in leading the charge. I do hope we can continue to count on your support.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeanne".

Jeanne Allen
Founder & CEO