



The Voice for Children in Colorado

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Colorado Children's Campaign supports the report of the Conference Committee on SB 183 creating Charter Schools. As of May 10:

- o an appeal to the State Board has been kept in the bill
- o 80% of the total operating revenue will follow students to Charter Schools. The petitioning group will negotiate services to be received from the district and the amount to be paid for those services
- o 13 Charter Schools be set aside for high risk students, with a total of 50 for the state
- o waivers for state and district regulations will be negotiated with the district

SB 183 sponsor Senator Bill Owens said, "This is a good compromise between the House and the Senate versions. It will give parents and teachers the flexibility they want without detracting from the education that other students in the district will receive."

Barbara O'Brien, Executive Director of the Colorado Children's Campaign, said that the Charter Schools bill is the Legislature's last chance for major school reform this session. "Charter Schools will help the state move closer to meeting the goals of the Decade of the Child:

- o The high school graduation rate will increase from 75.9 percent in 1990 to 90 percent in the year 2000, with all racial groups accounting for the increase.
- o The percent of at-risk preschoolers who are in Head Start and the Colorado Preschool Program will increase from 17 percent in 1990 to 75 percent in the year 2000.
- o The percentile rank of 7th grade Colorado students in reading and language will increase from the mid 30th percentile for Blacks and Hispanics and the mid 50th percentile for Whites to the 75th percentile for all by the year 2000."



The central concept of Charter Schools is to give parents and teachers more flexibility and autonomy in the education of students in exchange for higher accountability for student performance.