



PRESS RELEASE

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EMBARGOED
Not for release before
17 November 2004

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National Center Launches Subsidiary to Serve More Students

Funding, Management Expertise to Fuel Expansion of America's Choice School-Improvement Efforts

Former N.J. Gov. Tom Kean to Join Organization's Board of Directors

WASHINGTON, DC—The National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) announced today that it has reorganized its highly regarded America's Choice school-improvement program as a subsidiary of NCEE, enabling it to attract the investment needed to help many more students reach high academic standards.

The America's Choice® School Design is one of the nation's largest comprehensive, K-12 school-improvement programs, helping some 325,000 students meet the demands of the federal No Child Left Behind Act in 16 states and the District of Columbia through partnerships with states, school districts and individual schools.

Building on the strength of the America's Choice School Design, the new organization will offer additional instructional systems in literacy and mathematics and in school leadership. Students and teachers will be able to take advantage of these programs during the school day, after school and at home.

America's Choice will also build on its strong history of partnership with states and school districts to offer consulting services to help school leaders build powerful, coherent strategies for raising student performance on a large scale. At the same time, the America's Choice program will remain strongly committed to the public ownership and management of public schools.

Continuing the Mission

Michael Dolan, former CEO and chairman of Young and Rubicam, will be chairman of America's Choice. NCEE president and America's Choice co-founder Marc Tucker will be vice-chairman and director of strategic planning of the new subsidiary. Judy Coddling, who co-founded America's Choice with Tucker and who has served as the program's director since its inception in 1998, will be the new organization's president.

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and chief executive officer. Their continued leadership in America's Choice as it becomes a for-profit organization, combined with their commitment to maintain the organization's current staff and program, will ensure continuity for every school that the America's Choice School Design currently serves.

America's Choice works with schools to align standards, instruction and assessments, using regular evaluations of test results to guide instruction. The program features research-based teaching strategies, extended daily literacy instruction, in-school math and literacy coaches for teachers, and a "safety-net" system for struggling students that includes unique, double-period "ramp-up" courses. A national network of America's Choice curriculum and teaching experts helps schools implement the school-improvement program through on-campus, regional and national training efforts that use a wide range of America's Choice instructional publications.

Studies have found that students in America's Choice schools outperform their counterparts in non-America's Choice schools in reading and math, that the program closes achievement gaps between racial groups, that the program is particularly effective in helping very low performing students, and that the longer students attend America's Choice schools, the more likely they are to meet state standards. The U.S. Department of Education recently featured America's Choice in its publication *The Education Innovator*.

The New Subsidiary

Through the transaction, the not-for-profit NCEE becomes the majority stakeholder in America's Choice, Inc. (ACI), as its new subsidiary is known. Outside investors have contributed funding to the subsidiary. The organization will use this financial support to conduct research, develop new school-improvement programs, and expand the capacity of the America's Choice School Design to help educators and education policymakers respond to the unprecedented demands of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

"This new arrangement has enabled us to attract the business acumen and management expertise America's Choice will need to go to the next stage of its growth, making it possible to give many more students the world-class skills and knowledge necessary to compete in today's global economy," said former U.S. Secretary of Labor and NCEE chairman Ray Marshall of ACI's creation."

ACI's largest outside investor is Quad Ventures, a New York-based firm that invests exclusively in education-focused companies. Former New Jersey Governor Tom Kean will represent Quad Ventures on the America's Choice board. Kean is the president of Drew University. He was a leading national advocate of school-improvement during his tenure as New Jersey governor and is a past member of NCEE's board of directors. He recently served as chair of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, known as the 9/11 Commission.

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“This injection of new investment could not have come at a better time,” said Tucker. “Now, just as demand for effective school-improvement solutions is reaching unprecedented intensity, we have the resources needed to bring this highly effective solution to far more students than ever before.”

About the National Center on Education and the Economy

NCEE is a Washington, D.C.-based education organization and a leader in standards-based school improvement. It created the America’s Choice School Design after conducting extensive research on the best educational practices in the United States and on the most effective education systems in Europe, Asia and Australia. In addition to America’s Choice, NCEE sponsors the Workforce Development Program and the National Institute for School Leadership.

To learn more about NCEE, go to <http://www.ncee.org>. For more information about American’s Choice, Inc., and the America’s Choice School Design, go to <http://www.americaschoice.org>.

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