



## **Advocacy Group Presses to Reverse Reforms, Get More Money for Government Schools**

Kenneth Artz

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Too many states rely on standardized testing, have too many charter schools and other school choice options, and don't pay teachers enough, states a new report by the Network for Public Education, a group led by education historian and policy advocate Diane Ravitch.

"Valuing Public Education: A 50-State Report Card," rates the states on an A to F scale based on the group's policy positions in areas such as teacher evaluation and compensation, testing, and financial support for traditional public schools.

### **'A Hit Piece on School Choice'**

Jason Bedrick, a policy analyst for the Cato Institute's Center for Educational Freedom and a former member of the New Hampshire state legislature, says Ravitch's study is useless because it doesn't look at educational outcomes.

"It's nothing more than a hit piece on school choice," Bedrick said.

The Ravitch study is a response to education researcher Matthew Ladner's Foundation for Excellence in Education study, the 20th edition of the *Report Card on American Education*, published in November 2015, which grades states on school choice positively, Bedrick says.

"The research shows school choice not only helps the students enrolled in school choice programs, but those also in public schools," Bedrick said.

### **Educational Left's 'Manifesto'**

Ladner, a senior advisor for policy and research at the Foundation for Excellence in Education, says the Ravitch study will have no impact outside the circles it was designed to reach, because Ravitch is preaching to the choir.

“She should be measuring outcomes, but instead she’s writing for a group of far-left college educators, and this is their manifesto,” Ladner said. “This is clearly an ideological statement because there are no considerations for outcomes like test scores or test score trends. Her report says, ‘We like these policies, and we’re going to write favorably about them,’” Ladner said.

The biggest problem with the Ravitch report, Ladner says, is the relationship between its findings and the results in the classroom.

“They are very much at odds,” Ladner said.

### **‘Looking Forward to an F-’**

For instance, Ladner says, Arizona got an “F” in the Ravitch report even though the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data shows that in the period between 2003 and 2015, Arizona did much better than other states.

“In fourth grade math, Arizona had the ninth largest state gains, and in eighth grade math the third largest,” Ladner said. “In fourth grade reading, Arizona students had the seventeenth largest gain, and in eighth grade reading the second largest state gain. If that’s an ‘F’, I’m looking forward to an ‘F-’,” Ladner said.