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NEWS RELEASE

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Statement of Gov. Christie Whitman on Assembly Education Committee's Approval of School Choice Bill

"Today, parents moved another step forward toward gaining the flexibility to choose the best educational program for their children.

"A school choice program will improve the quality of education for all children in the state by motivating school districts to continually improve in an effort to attract students to their districts and by encouraging cooperation and the consolidation of services among school districts.

"Currently, choice is only available to those who can afford to send their children to other schools and to teachers, who may elect to send their child to the school in which they teacher, rather than their home district. The bill released from the Assembly Education Committee today will expand choice to many more parents and students throughout the state.

"I am pleased that the Assembly Education Committee has taken this action today and that the discussions between the administration and the legislature have been fruitful. Together, we can make a real difference in the education of our students."