



For Immediate Release:

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**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVES SWEEPING REORGANIZATION PLAN
FOR STATE AGENCY**

Restructuring Will Help Agency Realize Governor Malloy's Education Reform Agenda

Governor Dannel P. Malloy has declared 2012 the year for education reform. The reorganization of the State Department of Education lays the essential groundwork for realizing reform by creating the structure and capacity to carry out legislation and other measures under consideration this year.

Today, the State Board of Education approved the Commissioner's reorganization plan for the State Department of Education. The reorganization addresses Governor Dannel P. Malloy's six principles on education reform, including: (1) Enhancing families' access to high-quality early childhood; (2) Turning around Connecticut's lowest-performing schools and districts; (3) Expanding the availability of high-quality school models; (4) Removing red tape and other barriers to success; (5) Ensuring that our schools are home to the very best teachers and principals; and (6) Delivering more resources, targeted to districts with the greatest need-provided that they embrace key reforms that position our students for success.

Governor Malloy said of the reorganization, "We are embarking on unprecedented education reform in Connecticut with a redefined State Department of Education. Education reform is long overdue in our state and we have no time to waste closing the achievement gap. As a critical next step, I look forward to a very productive legislative session to move our collective agenda forward."

State Board of Education Chairman Allan Taylor said, "The Board's support for the reorganization of the Department sets into motion a new era for education reform grounded in high expectations for every student in Connecticut's public schools. Chief among our goals is to harness the strength to overcome deep achievement gaps in our system. This reorganization plan provides the right framework for progress."

Commissioner Stefan Pryor commented, "This reorganization plan sets the stage to accomplish the significant education reforms presented by Governor Malloy. We will position a talented team and operating structure that's second to none, making Connecticut a national education leader once again."

A reorganized State Department of Education begins with a first-class leadership team. These top level personnel will be supported by reorganized divisions. Key examples include:

-Chief Operating Officer will be charged with advancing priority projects and improving the effectiveness, responsiveness, and efficiency of the Department's programs and services.

Today, the State Board of Education appointed Ms. Charlene Russell-Tucker as Chief Operating Officer. Ms. Russell-Tucker is currently an Associate Commissioner at the Connecticut State Department of Education responsible for the Division of Family and Student Support Services. She provides leadership and support in developing and implementing effective family and student support programs and services to assist schools in improving student performance. Additionally, Ms. Russell-Tucker manages cross-agency initiatives and special projects that include a wide range of stakeholders.

The COO will also oversee the Governor's goal of removing the unnecessary red tape and bureaucracy that can impede student learning. The COO will also oversee a new, cross-bureau function to study the creation and support of community schools providing support services linked to schools, as well as engaging families and communities.

-Chief Academic officer will focus on the Governor's goal of "creating academic excellence for all," and will work to align efforts around preparing students for college and careers. The Chief Academic Officer will work with school leaders to fully align the instruction, ongoing assessment, curriculum and new Common Core standards to prepare students for college and career.

-Chief Talent Officer will implement strategies in pursuit of the Governor's fifth principle: to develop and attract a first-rate, diverse corps of educators to Connecticut's classrooms, principals' offices, and district offices by improving the entire professional experience and human resource system for teachers and leaders. This would include working collaboratively around the state to develop and expand robust and meaningful professional development to prepare teachers for Common Core standards and the 21st Century classroom. The Chief Talent Officer will also engage the state's education stakeholders to produce a fair system of educator evaluation for State Board of Education consideration and approval.

-Chief Performance Officer will ensure that across multiple indicators, Connecticut's school districts receive actionable and timely information on student performance-fulfilling the Governor's charge to use performance-based accountability to drive continuous improvement. The Chief Performance Officer will build a robust data infrastructure to help identify trends, problems, and opportunities in Connecticut's schools-developing metrics for status, progress, and goals for every school, district, and student group in the state.

-Chief Turnaround Officer will lead the design and administration of intervention and support strategies in low-performing schools and districts (the Governor's second principle). This office will seek out best practices from the state and the country and work to promote high-quality school models (the Governor's third principle).

-The Department will help enhance access to early childhood opportunities (the Governor's first principle) through work of the Early Childhood Office (ECO). The ECO, a part of the Office of Policy and Management, will be housed with the Department to ensure maximum coordination with the state's K-12 programs.

-The Department will continue to be guided in the financial domain by the Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer will pursue fulfillment of the Governor's sixth principle-the delivery of additional state resources to districts with the greatest need, provided these districts adopt key reforms for academic achievement.

These senior personnel roles are the linchpin to the Department's reorganization plan. The goal of the reorganization plan is to match top candidates to key leadership roles and functions. All positions will be advertised through a competitive process seeking the greatest talent to drive education reform in Connecticut's public schools.

As part of the reorganization, the State Department of Education is in discussion with Commissioner Donald DeFronzo and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) on a plan to merge a portion of the existing information technology operation at the State Department of Education with the information technology division at DAS. These discussions are ongoing and are intended to maintain and improve services and efficiencies across both state agencies.

This organizational design, even with new leadership roles, will be accomplished within existing budget and headcount limits.