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AACTE-CT Statement to the State Board of Education Meeting on 2-3-21

Good morning everyone and thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to the State Board of Education at your February 3rd Board Meeting.

My name is Carol Ciotto, and I am a member of the legislative and policy committee for the Connecticut Chapter of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE-CT). I am also the Interim Assistant Dean for Accreditation and Partnerships and the edTPA Coordinator for the School of Education & Professional Studies (SEPS) at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain. The AACTE-CT is an association of fourteen public and private colleges and universities that provide Educator Preparation Programs to students interested in the education profession. We promote and strongly support high quality teaching and education in the state's schools and are advocates for robust educational leadership.

On behalf of the AACTE-CT, thank you to the Board of Education, Commissioner Cardona, the Department of Education, especially to those individuals with whom the AACTE-CT works with frequently.

The AACTE-CT member institutions are working diligently to ensure their individual Educator Preparation Programs are attracting and preparing their students to become excellent future teachers and educational leaders here in Connecticut. While COVID-19 continues to transform the landscape of learning, teachers and leaders remain constant in doing what they do best: facing each challenge head on and figuring out how to effectively respond to support their students and move our programs forward. We believe we must look beyond the immediate concerns to what may be possible for education in Connecticut on the other side of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past several months, our teachers and leaders have learned to quickly pivot from operating in crisis mode to viewing our programs through a lens of potential and innovation. With the General Assembly underway, we would like to work in collaboration with the Department of Education where possible on legislation and policy of mutual interest so that we can advance our programs and continue to effectively produce highly qualified, competent, and compassionate teachers and leaders for Connecticut schools.

As an organization, we want to continue working together with the Department of Education, the Board, and the various educational stakeholders such as the Connecticut Association of Public-School Superintendents, the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, and other education organizations where appropriate. Please continue to feel free to reach out to our association on issues of mutual interest. Thank you again for the opportunity to address the Board.

Carol Ciotto
Interim Assistant Dean for Accreditation and Partnerships
School of Education & Professional Studies (SEPS)
Central Connecticut State University
Clarence Carroll Hall 148
Phone: 860-832-2177
Email: ciottocaj@ccsu.edu