

TESTIMONY

H.B. No. 5331 AN ACT CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISIONS TO THE PEAC GUIDELINES

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MARCH 12, 2014

The CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) which represents the superintendents of schools in CT along with over a hundred school system central office administrators is strongly opposed to the enactment H.B. No 5331 AN ACT CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISIONS TO THE PEAC GUIDELINES for the following major reasons.

- The implementation of the newly established core requirements for the evaluation of teachers and principals embodies a fundamental paradigm shift. No longer are educators held responsible only for what they do. Now, they are held responsible for the results of what they do. While this shift is necessary, implementing it is not something that can be done successfully in one step. Implementing shifts of this type successfully has to be regarded as a *work in progress*.
- *Works in progress* require consistent, careful and flexible monitoring. When aspects of the change that were considered valuable prove not to be so, they need to be discontinued promptly. When heretofore unconsidered actions need to be taken in relation to the change, they have to be implemented promptly. When aspects of the change require revision, they need to be revised promptly.
- The promptness required for successful implementation of a major paradigm shift in turn requires the establishment of a process whereby an agency has the authority to make necessary adjustments upon receiving recommendations from the professionals who are implementing the process.
- Enacting the latest revisions of the evaluation core requirements, revisions that were approved by the State Board of Education (SBE) upon recommendation of the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), into state statute would violate all that is required to implement a paradigm shift successfully because prompt flexibility would be made impossible. To make any change would require action by the Legislature and agreement by the Governor. This could happen at best only on an annual basis and only after the observation of a process that is traditionally fairly lengthy.

So, instead of depriving the implementation of the new evaluation core requirements of the process that is needed for successful implementation, the Legislature should seek means to enhance the ability of the SBE and PEAC to give the implementation the direction that it needs to have. This can be done by requiring PEAC to meet on a regular basis and the SBE to act promptly in response to recommendations it receives from PEAC.

In addition, the Legislature should enhance the ability of local school districts to implement the evaluation core requirements by increasing state financial support for local school districts. Implementing the new core requirements requires in most cases additional expenditures and this

additional mandate has to be accompanied by additional state funding.

Along those lines, there is another provision of H.B. No. 5331 that is particularly troubling. That provision apparently prohibits the CT State Department of Education (CSDE)'s Talent Office from spending funds in support of much of what is required for successful implementation of the evaluation core requirements.

One of the efforts that would lose funding under this provision is CT LEAD which has already demonstrated its ability to support programs that enhance the implementation of the core requirements. Among those programs are the following.

- A project that is revising the governance statements that have been established by CAPSS and the CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE). These statements which are being revised in light of the implications of the new core requirements are:
 - The description of the appropriate relationship between a board of education and a superintendent of schools.
 - The process whereby boards of education assess their own performance with an emphasis on growth in student achievement.
 - The process whereby boards of education assess the performance of superintendents of schools with an emphasis on growth in student achievement.
- The enhancement of executive coaching for school principals whose role in the implementation in the evaluation core requirements is central.
- The provision of executive coaching to superintendents of schools who have the daunting task of transforming the operation of school districts while still maintaining the operation of those districts.

All in all, then, enactment of H.B. No. 5331 would come close to destroying the necessary paradigm shift in how we evaluate the performance of educators at the very moment when the state government should be doing all that it can do to enhance this *work in progress* so that it continually moves towards an evaluation system that is in the best interests of the state's children.