

*serving the interests of  
Connecticut school administrators  
for over 35 years*

**Connecticut Association of School Administrators, Inc.  
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Tolland, CT 06084**

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**HB 6977 An Act Establishing Qualifications for the Commissioner of Education**

Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, Senator Boucher, Representative Lavielle and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit this testimony on behalf of Connecticut school administrators. I am speaking on behalf of the Connecticut Association of School Administrators (CASA). We represent over 700 school administrators, below the rank of assistant superintendent, in elementary, middle, and secondary schools or working in their board's central office.

**We strongly support this proposed legislation and thank the Committee for raising it for a public hearing.** It is critical that the Commissioner of Education in Connecticut have the credibility and expertise to lead the educational system of the state. This means credibility among all stakeholders: students, parents, teachers, administrators, and local boards of education

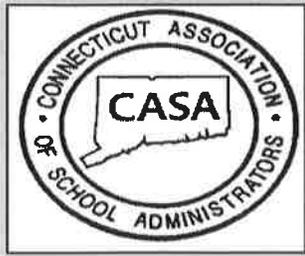
An effective, credible Commissioner of Education needs first-hand knowledge of what happens every day in Connecticut schools, someone who understands the challenges faced by the public schools. The day to day operations of our schools present complex problems. Understanding the teacher and administrative perspectives based on first-hand knowledge is critical in making the decisions which will impact our ability to lead.

The Commissioner needs to have the experience necessary to understand the practicalities of policies and how they translate into actions in our schools. Educators today are required to implement mandates which in some cases are fraught with unintended consequences. A Commissioner who has taught and has been responsible for the administration of these mandates would be best able to inform policymakers about potential ramifications of their decisions.

Again, we thank the Committee for taking up this legislation and look forward to supporting its passage.

Sincerely,

Anne Jellison, Ph.D.  
CASA Chair



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**HB 6980 An Act Concerning the Timing of Teacher Performance  
Evaluations**

**Dr. Anne Jellison, Chair, Connecticut Association of School  
Administrators (CASA)  
Principal, Israel Putnam Elementary School, Meriden, CT**

Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, Senator Boucher,  
Representative Lavielle and distinguished members of the Education  
Committee:

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit this testimony on  
behalf of Connecticut school administrators. The Connecticut  
Association of School Administrators (CASA) represents over 700 school  
administrators, below the rank of assistant superintendent, in  
elementary, middle, and secondary schools or working in their board's  
central office.

We appreciate the Education Committee scheduling this public hearing  
and respect all of the work done by stakeholders to reform education  
policies in Connecticut.

The last three years have been incredibly difficult for school  
administrators. While change is always a challenge, we believe that  
school administrators have been saddled with new mandates and  
requirements that will not improve the quality of education in our state.  
In fact, the level of frustration on the part of many lifelong educators  
has reached a point well beyond that experienced during the NCLB days.  
Currently administrators are wrestling with an evaluation process which  
demands an unrealistic time commitment. Time is a precious  
commodity in our schools. We need a process that allows us to spend  
the majority of our time providing support to teachers and helping them  
grow professionally. Instead much of this time is usurped by  
cumbersome paperwork and navigation through data systems which  
have proved more of a hindrance than a help.

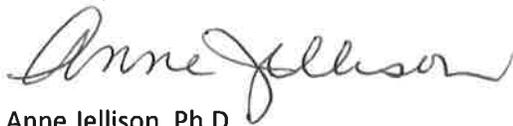
Our evaluation process needs to be tailored to the individual needs of  
teachers and we need to be able to differentiate the level of support  
and intervention necessary to ensure that every classroom is guided by  
a highly skilled educator. Let the administrators and teachers decide  
based on a number of data points what the evaluation plan should  
entail for each teacher.

While we appreciate the flexibility options enacted last year by PEAC, we offer the following overall recommendations for the consideration of policymakers:

1. Shift responsibility of developing the evaluation and support programs from the State Board of Education/SDE/PEAC to local school districts with the broader goals for these evaluations outlined in statute.
2. Include in state statute a representative of the Connecticut Association of School Administrators (CASA) on PEAC, to ensure the perspective of school administrators is represented.
3. Ensure that school administrators are part of a collaborative process at the local level related to developing evaluations and other professional development activities.
4. Among statutory goals, include peer collaboration and professional learning community provisions and require that SDE collect and disseminate model programs.
5. Eliminate use of standardized test scores in the evaluation of teachers and administrators.
6. Require teacher observations every three years, while allowing more frequent observations as determined by administrators/evaluators.
7. Eliminate "ineffectiveness" from statute as a criterion for the termination of a school administrator.
8. Delay implementation of these provisions to allow local schools districts ample time to comply.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit this testimony. We stand ready to work with you to implement the most educationally effective reforms possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anne Jellison". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Anne Jellison, Ph.D

CASA Chair