



**Testimony of Melody A. Currey
Commissioner of Administrative Services**

**Education Committee
January 25, 2017**

Good morning Senator Gayle Slossberg, Senator Toni Boucher, Representative Andrew Fleischmann, Senator Beth Bye, Senator Heather Bond Somers Representative Robert Sanchez, Representative Gail Lavielle and distinguished members of the Committee.

My name is Melody Currey and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services ("DAS"). I am here before you pursuant to Section 10-283(a) (2) of the Connecticut General Statutes to present the 2017 School Building Project Priority List submitted to Governor Malloy on December 15, 2016.

By way of background, the projected costs used in this report are taken from the projected costs identified by the school districts in their applications. My staff reviews the projected costs for statutory compliance for grant commitment purposes. We will engage in additional reviews of authorized projects prior to plan approval. Those additional reviews may lead to reduced total project costs and grant commitments.

In our letter to this committee, which is page 2 of this report, you will find a listing and description of the four tables that comprise the School Building Project Priority Category List:

- Table 1 is an alphabetical listing of 49 projects with estimated project costs of \$778,306,838 that will have a grant impact of \$450,469,953. The 49 projects consist of elementary schools, middle schools, high schools and vocational agricultural projects. While the number of projects has increased by 21 projects compared to the 2016 priority list, the total cost of projects is \$32,188,166 less than 2016. The grant impact to the State of Connecticut is \$68,345,335 less than 2016. A great deal of those savings are due to substantive policy and procedural changes made in our office.
- Table 1A summarizes projects by type, i.e., magnet schools, new construction and Vocational Agricultural schools, etc.
- Table 2 provides a detailed description of all the projects listed within Table 1, categorized by priority. The definitions of the priority categories are found on page 1-4 of the report. The School Construction Grants and Review staff reviewed each application and determined the appropriate placement category.



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The descriptions in Table 2 are based upon the Educational Specifications submitted with the project applications and highlight the programmatic needs sought to be met.

- Table 3 provides a historical perspective by summarizing the costs for the priority lists of the past five years.
- Table 4 summarizes projects with significant changes to cost or scope requiring re-authorization.

I am pleased to report that the list for reauthorizations has decreased from last year. This year, districts were requested reauthorizations for changes in project scope and to finalize their current projects thus preparing them for audit. Changes in procedure and policy to ensure industry best practices has assisted in the reduction of those reauthorizations. The total cost of this year's request for is \$3,972,615 less than the \$28,796,213 requested last year.

- Table 4-1 includes the detailed descriptions for the Table 4 list.

Finally, section 10-283(a) (2) requires that DAS review enrollment projections for each eligible project to ensure statutory compliance. As is summarized in Attachment A, DAS reviews enrollment projections three times, including a final review for compliance and costs conducted by the Director of the Office of School Construction Grants and Review, before they are submitted to me for my review and approval. All projects included in this report are in accordance with statutory and regulatory authority.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.