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Comments on Court Decision in Historic State Education Funding Case

Jan Hochadel, president of AFT Connecticut, made the following remarks on today's Superior Court decision in Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding (CCJEF) v. Rell, which challenged the constitutionality of the state's PreK-12 finance system:

"More than 10 years ago we joined with parents, municipal leaders and other stakeholders in CCJEF to ensure equitable educational opportunities for all students in Connecticut's public schools. The judge's decision today calling for a new funding formula puts us on the path toward realizing that goal.

"But the court has called for much more beyond a new system for Education Cost Sharing (ECS) between the state and local communities. At 254 pages long, the decision contains a lot for our members to review, process and assess. We expect a lengthy dialogue over what it all means for Connecticut's public schools going forward.

"As a starting point, we intend to fully evaluate the judge's comments regarding accountability, which were not just disappointing, but disrespectful of education professionals. The fact is that our members have long advocated for evaluation and assessment tools that better inform classroom instruction and ultimately help improve student outcomes.

"That's why we have been actively engaged in the work of the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), in addition to many other education committees with stakeholders. That's where, by working together, we're developing accountability strategies that are not just sensible and wise, but fair and equitable.

"Importantly, the court's decision today reinforced that the state needs to be accountable to our schools and educators — not just demand accountability from them. That means ensuring all public schools and their professional educators have the resources and tools their students need in order to learn and thrive."

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AFT Connecticut represents approximately 30,000 professionals across the state, including PreK-12 teachers, paraeducators and education support personnel in 29 local and regional school districts. For more information, visit www.aftct.org or follow the labor federation on Twitter at [@AFTCT](https://twitter.com/AFTCT) and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/aftct.

Link –
September 7, 2016 [Memorandum of Decision](http://www.jud.ct.gov/CCJEFvRell.pdf) from Honorable Thomas G. Moukawsher:
<http://www.jud.ct.gov/CCJEFvRell.pdf>

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