



AFT Connecticut
AFT, AFL-CIO

Dear Educator & AFT Connecticut Union Member,

As your AFT Connecticut elected leaders, we would like to welcome you back from a much-deserved break and offer our best wishes for a smooth and successful school year. And if you are retired, we would like to once again express our appreciation for your service in the classroom and our hope for your continued involvement in your union.

We intend to stay in touch and keep you informed of significant developments in public education policy, as we did throughout the last school year and over the summer.

We have continued over the past six weeks to work on your behalf and ensure your voice was heard on outstanding issues heading into the new school year. We have made real headway thanks to our continued collaboration with the Malloy-Wyman Administration and ongoing partnership with our public education allies.

In mid-August, the administration announced there would be a change in leadership at the State Department of Education (SDE) and that the commissioner would not serve a second term. This was a watershed moment in the Malloy-Wyman team's evolving approach to public education policy and creates an opportunity to help further shape the agency's role in implementing it.

An update on the leadership change at SDE was emailed to members and is available among "Recent Alerts" at the "Take Action" section of our website's home page. There you can sign up with your personal email address to receive updates if you haven't already.

A week later, the administration appointed AFT Connecticut Vice-President and Meriden Federation of Teachers President Erin Benham to the State Board of Education (SBOE). In selecting a 35-year veteran classroom teacher to serve on the SDE's governing body, the Malloy-Wyman team demonstrated that their responsiveness to your concerns is worth more than words. It also showed a respect for the profession that has deepened since the tragic events in Sandy Hook nearly two years ago.

Brief comments on Erin's appointment we shared with the media are at our website's "News" page in the "Press Releases" section. We also posted them at our Facebook page, at www.facebook.com/aftct, and our Twitter feed, at <https://twitter.com/AFTCT>. We encourage you to "like" and "follow" both for real-time updates and news if you don't already.

We have also continued efforts to address issues related to the new Foundations of Reading survey required for K-3 teachers under the 2012 education "reform" law. At the direction of the Malloy-Wyman Administration, the legislation's proponents agreed to engage in discussions with us which we expect will resolve concerns over implementation and application. In the meantime, SDE has delayed its timeline for rolling out the survey until late fall.

A practice survey is linked to our website's main "Professional Development" page, along with additional information from SDE on who will be impacted by the new requirement.

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As districts prepared for “back-to-school” activities across the state, your innovative and ground-breaking work both in your schools and in your communities were in the spotlight. For example, at J.C. Clark School, where last spring we beat back a hostile take-over by charter operators, our Hartford Federation of Teachers members helped organize a neighborhood celebration. And at J.M. Wright Tech in Stamford, our State Vocational Federation of Teachers joined the governor for the reopening of the high school the previous administration five years ago shut down.

We look forward this school year to working together, in partnership, toward our shared goal of reclaiming the promise of a great public education.

More to come, and in solidarity;

Melodie Peters

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Stephen McKeever

AFT Connecticut First Vice-President

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AFT Connecticut PreK-12 Jurisdictional Vice-President

P.S. See photos of AFT Connecticut member teachers at several education-focused events over the summer at our Facebook page.