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Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents

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**Testimony on Governor's 2022-23 Biennial Budget Proposal**

*House Bill 6439, An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June Thirtieth, 2023 and Making Appropriations Therefor*

To: Senator Catherine A. Osten, Co-Chair, Representative Toni E. Walker, Co-Chair, Senator Craig Miner, Ranking Member, Representative Mike France, Ranking Member, and distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee

The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), which represents the Superintendents of Connecticut's public schools and over a hundred other executive district leaders, is pleased to offer testimony on the Governor's Recommended Biennial Budget 2022, 2023.

CAPSS has reviewed the Governor's Recommended Biennial Budget and is alarmed by the recommendation to flat fund ECS, which essentially reduces funding and severely impacts our most vulnerable and challenged districts. As an example, Waterbury will lose more than 19 million dollars over the next two years. This recommended biennial budget is a significant step back for equity funding in this state.

In OPM Secretary McCaw's Budget Briefing Presentation of February 11, 2021, it's noted that in addition to a flat-funded ECS, the districts would be using federal aid through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER II) grant. The grant's use to make districts whole supplants funding rather than supplements it and is contrary to the grant's intent to address the negative impacts on students during this pandemic. Supplanting funds will create a considerable funding cliff in vulnerable districts in two years when the federal funds are exhausted. It once again delays the practice of equitable education funding for Connecticut's public school students.

I urge you to review and implement the [CAPSS Blueprint to Transform Connecticut's Public Schools](#), a document reflecting two years of research and development that provides a comprehensive set of 30 recommendations for implementation over 15 years. The *Blueprint* offers an alternative to the Governor's Recommended Budget. It is to be implemented in the context of other spending and redirection of funds. It makes changes in education programs for all students while focusing on English Learners and the disenfranchised. The *Blueprint* recommends ECS growth at about 2.5% annually. The current, woefully low ECS Foundation will then grow each year, and the ECS losses currently scheduled for 95 towns will be eliminated.

The *Blueprint* establishes a plan for good fiscal decision-making that will move Connecticut closer to assuring that every child receives the high-quality teaching and learning they deserve.

CAPSS cannot support the Governor's Recommended Biennial Budget as proposed; however, I would be happy to review with you the recommendations in the *CAPSS Blueprint to Transform Connecticut's Public Schools*. This plan offers a reasonable yet impactful approach to transforming public education.

Respectfully submitted:

Fran Rabinowitz

Executive Director

Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents