

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COALITION OF LEADING EDUCATION, PARENT, BUSINESS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ENCOURAGES EDUCATION COMMITTEE TO OPPOSE EFFORTS TO WEAKEN STATE’S EDUCATOR EVALUATION SYSTEM

*Today, the Connecticut General Assembly Joint Committee on Education will hold a public hearing on **SB 380, AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXCLUSION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE RESULTS ON THE MASTERY EXAMINATION FROM TEACHER EVALUATIONS.** The bill explicitly removes the Smarter Balanced assessment from evaluations starting in 2016-2017, saying that multiple indicators of student achievement growth shall not include the statewide mastery exam.*

Hartford, CT – (March 7, 2016) – A coalition of education, community and business organizations encourages members of the Connecticut General Assembly’s Education Committee to oppose efforts to prematurely revise the teacher and principal evaluation system, as proposed by SB 380 that will be discussed in a public hearing today.

The coalition includes the Connecticut Parent Teacher Association (PTA), the Urban League of Southern Connecticut, Hartford Parent University, the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, the Connecticut Association of Schools, the Connecticut Business and Industry Association, the Connecticut Council for Education Reform, the Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now and the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents.

Ongoing and effective evaluations are an essential tool to help both teachers and principals to identify their strengths, areas of growth and professional development. We oppose the measure being considered in SB 380 for the following reasons:

First, Connecticut’s Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) is a group that represents the key stakeholders, including superintendents, boards of education, principals and teachers, who are responsible for implementing the evaluation system. The PEAC developed and unanimously agreed on the original evaluation framework and continues to meet to discuss ways to improve the system. Our organizations believe that there is no need to legislate this matter when the key stakeholder groups are actively working together on this issue.

Second, the bill under consideration today would undermine the process that the Legislature itself established and that needs to take place if an effective evaluation system is to be fully implemented in our state. In Connecticut, student achievement growth should be the most significant consideration of an educator’s evaluation. Furthermore, the system requires the use of multiple measures to assess growth in student achievement. The bill prematurely excludes one of these measures, the results of state tests before any data has been collected to justify that exclusion.

Third, research shows that, teacher evaluations tied to multiple measures, including student achievement growth, can dramatically improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Research has also suggested that student achievement growth has a real place in a modern and effective teacher evaluation system.

For example in our own state, New Haven, CT has maintained an effective evaluation system that includes student achievement results and has been in place since 2009. We can learn from the experience in New Haven where the Board of Education, the administration and the bargaining agent for teachers are collaborating for the benefit of the children being served by that school system. The bill under consideration would

prohibit a full examination of the experience in New Haven and in other places where effective evaluation systems are evolving.

This evidence substantiates what we already know anecdotally: Excellent teachers and school leaders can help transform students' lives.

A modern evaluation system ensures Connecticut can recognize our teachers and school leaders for a job well done and identify those who need extra support in order to make certain they are best prepared for the job ahead. Also, teacher effectiveness is directly tied to our state's economic future. We all depend on effective teachers to prepare students for college and for the work force. That preparation has become even more important in an increasingly competitive global economy.

By providing teachers and school leaders with the feedback and support they need to refine their craft, we keep our promise to parents that their children, regardless of where they live or how much money they make, that they will get the world-class education they need and deserve.

We've made progress in recent years, it is imperative we continue that progress with an evaluation system for Connecticut designed to support and develop our teachers while improving student achievement in our schools.

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The Big 6 partnership includes the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA), Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now (ConnCAN), and the Connecticut Council for Education Reform (CCER).

Since 1969, the [Urban League of Southern Connecticut](#) has helped residents of Southern Connecticut improve their economic situations. Through its programming, the League seeks to empower individuals and families as they create brighter futures for themselves and build stronger communities.

The mission of the [Connecticut PTA](#) to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

The [Hartford Parent University](#) (HPU) is a parent-led and community collaborative 501(c)(3) independent organization that engages, empowers, mobilizes and trains parents to advocate and support not only their child's learning but their own personal learning.