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Governor Christie Names David Hespe To Lead New Jersey Department Of Education

Thursday, February 27, 2014

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Mr. Hespe's Accomplished Background And Experience Will Move Forward Christie Administration's Innovative And Bold Agenda

Trenton, NJ – Today, Governor Chris Christie announced the selection of David Hespe, a passionate and seasoned education professional and public servant, as his nominee for New Jersey Education Commissioner. Mr. Hespe's return to the Christie Administration brings an accomplished leader with nearly two decades of education and public sector experience in New Jersey back into public service at the Department of Education. That prior service included time as the Education Commissioner during Governor Christine Todd Whitman's Administration, Chief of Staff at the Department of Education in the first term of the Christie Administration, and most recently, President of Burlington County College.

Mr. Hespe's hands-on experience at both the local and state levels in K-12 education, in higher education, and his commitment to expanding excellence and opportunity in our schools will provide the leadership at the department needed to continue the bold reform agenda to ensure every child gets a great education that prepares them to compete in a 21st century economy.

"Ensuring that every child in New Jersey has access to a high-quality education, regardless of zip code or economic status, is the civil rights challenge of our time and has been a priority of my Administration since my first day in office. We have shown that we can bring people together – students, teachers, parents and administrators – to put big, bold ideas into action that address every one of our children's educational needs," said Governor Christie. "We've made great progress over the last four years, but our work isn't done. So, I am gratified that David has agreed to come back to work in my Administration and allow our students and our schools to benefit from his extensive experience, his passion for education excellence and his proven track record of getting results at every level of public education in New Jersey."

David Hespe is a recognized leader among New Jersey's education community, overseeing the development and implementation of educational programs, curricula and goals for an entire school district as well as at institutions of higher learning. Mr. Hespe most recently served as President and Chief Executive Officer of Burlington County College, overseeing an enrollment of more than 10,000 students across four campuses. He also previously served as an Associate Professor of Educational Leadership at Rowan University's College of Education, where he was Department Chair for five years. As the former Assistant Superintendent and later Interim Superintendent of Schools for the Willingboro School District, Mr. Hespe also oversaw the administration of all activities of the district and the development and implementation of goals and programs.

"Through Governor Christie's aggressive reform agenda, New Jersey has made significant strides in ensuring that our children have access to the quality education that they deserve," said David Hespe. "The progress and results we've seen in education over the past years is proof that bold and innovative ideas benefit our students, teachers and families across all levels of education. I'm honored to once again serve as Education Commissioner and I look forward to continuing to build upon the accomplishments and progress that the Christie Administration has already achieved for New Jersey families."

Mr. Hespe also developed and implemented STEM-based educational programs, activities and content for Liberty

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Science Center during his tenure there as Co-Executive Director and Vice President of STEM Education. His invaluable knowledge and experience in STEM-based programs and activities will help increase interest and awareness of the importance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics curricula and programs, all of which are crucial components to ensuring that New Jersey's students are ready to compete in a competitive, global economy.

Mr. Hespe holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Rutgers University as well as a Law Degree from Rutgers-Newark. He began his career as a law clerk at the Mercer County Superior Court and then joined a private law firm before entering public service in 1989 as an Associate Counsel at the Office of Legislative Services. Mr. Hespe went on to join Governor Whitman's Administration, where he began as an Assistant Counsel in the Governor's Office and later served as the Assistant Education Commissioner; the First Assistant Attorney General; and Education Commissioner.

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