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Acting Commissioner and Chief of Staff Named at Department of Education

Friday, August 27, 2010   ●   Tags: Education

Trenton, NJ – Today, the Governor's Office announced that Rochelle Hendricks, Assistant Commissioner for the Division of School Effectiveness and Choice at the New Jersey Department of Education, will serve as Acting Commissioner of the department while a national search for a new commissioner commences. Gregg Edwards, Director of Policy in the Office of the Governor, was named Acting Chief of Staff for the Department of Education.

"I am glad to step into this new role at the department to ensure that Governor Christie's bold reform agenda moves forward without interruption," said Hendricks. "The governor has made educational excellence and high student achievement a top priority, and that commitment will continue to be the driving force in the activities of the Department of Education. I am proud to share in the Governor's vision and look forward to continue working diligently on behalf of children and parents to ensure that the opportunity, hope and empowerment that comes with parental choice is available to every family."

Rochelle Hendricks has more than 20 years of experience working on education issues in New Jersey.   Hendricks joined Governor Kean's Department of Education in 1987 and has previously served in various capacities within the department, including work as the Director of the Office of Vocational-Technical, Career and Innovative Programs, Director of the Office of Innovative Programs and Schools, and managing the Charter School Unit within the Office of Innovative Programs and Schools. Prior to joining the Department of Education, she worked for over 15 years at Princeton University in numerous capacities including, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Educational Opportunities Program and Interim Director of the Women's Program. Hendricks began her career as a teacher at the Rumson Fair Haven Regional High School District, where she taught for three years.

As Assistant Commissioner for School Effectiveness and Choice, Hendricks oversees key reform initiatives and areas, including the Offices of Board Development, Small Learning Communities and School Culture, District Schools, Turnaround Partnerships, Inter-District Choice and Opportunity Scholarships, Charter Schools, Career and Technical Education, and Online Education. She has also served previously in the department as a Director of the Professional Development Office, Manager of the Office of Policy and Planning in the Administration Division, and Assistant to the Deputy Education Commissioner.

While serving as Acting Chief of Staff in the Department of Education, Gregg Edwards will temporarily relinquish his current position as Director of Policy in the Office of the Governor, where he develops and implements policy initiatives for the Christie Administration. Prior to joining the Governor's Office, Edwards was the founding President of the Center for Policy Research of New Jersey and a long-time, respected voice for education reform and academic achievement in New Jersey. Edwards is a former member of the Hamilton Township Board of Education, including two-term Board President, Executive Director of the New Jersey State Senate, and Chief of Staff to the late former Congressman Bob Franks.

Hendricks and Edwards will assume their respective duties effective immediately.

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