

Office of the Governor

PO BOX 004
TRENTON, NJ 08625

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Jayne O'Connor
Gene Herman
609-777-2600

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GOVERNOR SWEARS IN DAVID HESPE AS COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Gov. Christie Whitman today swore in David Hespe, of Montgomery, as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Education.

"It gives me great pleasure to join in celebrating the beginning of David Hespe's tenure as Commissioner of the Department of Education - a time of great hope and promise for the children of New Jersey," the Governor said. "For the past decade, Dave has had his finger on the pulse of a changing educational system in New Jersey."

Gov. Whitman said for the past decade, Hespe has been significantly involved in almost every major education initiative in New Jersey, including school funding, charter schools, the Abbott v. Burke lawsuit, curriculum standards and assessments, and state operation of troubled school districts as well as higher education restructuring. He presented the state's school facilities construction plan during the Abbott v. Burke remand proceedings.

"Because he is so experienced in education issues in our state, I am certain that he will - as commissioner - set a new standard for excellence in our schools," Gov. Whitman said., "Dave's extensive work with the Legislature over the years will help smooth the path for a host of changes that we face in education as we enter the 21st century."

Hespe previously served as First Assistant Attorney General and formerly was an Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Education. He also served as Governor Whitman's assistant counsel for education policy and as associate counsel in the education section for the non-partisan Office of Legislative Services.

"I am honored that the Governor has selected me as her new Commissioner of Education. As I assume my new position, I feel a deep responsibility to ensure that the children of New Jersey receive the highest quality education. I believe that as we phase in our rigorous academic standards, all children, no matter where they live, will receive a top-flight education and my goal will be realized," Hesper said.

Hespe, who was born in Park Ridge, NJ in 1960, is married to the former Cindy Lombardi. The Hesperes have a son, Nicholas. Hesper is a graduate of Rutgers University and the Rutgers University School of Law.

