



New Jersey State Board of Education Approves Two Assistant Commissioners in the Continuing Reorganization of the Department of Education Focused on the Four Building Blocks of Success

For Immediate Release

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Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey State Board of Education today approved the appointment of two new assistant commissioners – Penny MacCormack and Peter Shulman. Penny will serve as interim Chief Academic Officer until she assumes the position full-time in December. Peter will fill the role of Chief Talent Officer starting November 7.

This past July, Acting Commissioner Chris Cerf reorganized the Department of Education around four building blocks of success – academics, performance and accountability, talent, and innovation. The four building blocks are an integral part of Governor Christie's bold reform agenda to ensure that all students in New Jersey graduate from high school ready for college and career.

Each of these four divisions will be led by an assistant commissioner. These two appointments today join Bari Erlichson, who currently serves as the Chief Performance Officer.

Penny MacCormack began her career in education as a teacher of high school science courses that included AP chemistry. A former teacher of the year, her career path has taken her through positions as dean, principal, and assistant superintendent in two urban districts – New Haven and Hartford, CT. Her latest assignment was as the Chief Academic Officer in Hartford, which is an urban district with 22,000 students and 2,100 certified staff in 50 schools. Penny is currently finishing the Broad Superintendent Academy and is completing an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of Hartford.

As Chief Academic Officer, Penny will be responsible for working closely with school districts to ensure that they are implementing the Common Core State Standards over the next three years. The Common Core State Standards are robust, relevant standards for K-12 math and English language arts developed by a consortium of states led by the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers and adopted by 44 states plus the District of Columbia. In addition, Penny will help to design supports and interventions for struggling schools, and to develop model curricula to better help districts implement the Common Core State Standards.

While overseeing the implementation of the standards, she will also be responsible for ensuring that New Jersey has high-quality assessments that truly measure college and career readiness. New Jersey is currently a member of the Partnership for Assessment Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), a consortium of 23 other states plus the District of Columbia. The goal of the partnership is to develop and implement new web-based assessments in the 2014-15 school year.

"Defining what our students need to know to truly be college and career ready is an essential component of our work, and I cannot think of a better person to lead this effort than Penny," said Acting Commissioner Cerf. "Penny has a history of school improvement that is focused first and foremost on great instruction, and she will be the perfect person to ensure that the revolutionary new Common Core State Standards move from a plan in Trenton to one that has real impact in classrooms across the state."

Peter Shulman has combined a career path in fiscal policy and human capital strategy with experience at both large urban districts and state education departments across the country. Most recently, Peter led the Teacher Leader Effectiveness Unit at the Delaware Department of Education, where he oversaw the teacher and leader effectiveness initiatives that are part of Delaware's successful bid for a Race to the Top award. Peter also served in the School District of Philadelphia and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools in Florida, where he served as Administrative Director in Human Resources. A former Broad Resident, Peter holds an MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

As Chief Talent Officer, Peter will be responsible for implementing the Department's teacher effectiveness initiatives. This work will include the new teacher evaluation pilot project currently underway in ten districts in preparation for rollout of a new evaluation system statewide, as well as efforts to support educator effectiveness legislation, including tenure reform. Peter will also spearhead work with graduate schools of education designed to ensure that graduates are effectively prepared to achieve the mission of preparing all students in New Jersey to graduate from high school ready for college and career.

"Peter's diverse background and experience in human capital at both the state and district level will add

tremendous value to our effort to ensure that every student in New Jersey is taught by an outstanding teacher," said Acting Commissioner Cerf. "Peter will be solely focused on supporting all of our teachers and school leaders to ensure that we reward outstanding educators and help good teachers become great."