



Education

Major Reforms to Ensure All Students Graduate High School Well Prepared for the 21st Century

This year, the General Assembly passed the most significant piece of education reform legislation in a generation—one that will raise academic standards, improve the supply of top quality school leaders, and increase parental involvement in schools.

To strengthen all schools, we established an expanded data system that will track students' academic growth (while protecting their privacy) from pre-kindergarten through high school graduation. With the help of a Performance Evaluation Council, we will link teacher and administrator evaluations to student academic growth, so that, for the first time, evaluations reflect how much students learn, and schools can see how best to improve instruction. We created an alternate route to certification for school administrators to increase the supply of top quality school principals in Connecticut.

To help turn around the state's lowest performing schools, we enacted a number of reforms, including giving parents a greater say in their children's education and establishing a new "innovation school" model that will allow for changes to school curriculum, calendar, and hours.

Finally, we restructured high school graduation requirements for the Class of 2018, setting up a new approach that ensures students have the English, Math, and Science skills needed to succeed in college or the workplace in the 21st century. Taken together, these changes will help our students continue to be among the best educated in the world.

State Representative
ANDY FLEISCHMANN

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State Representative

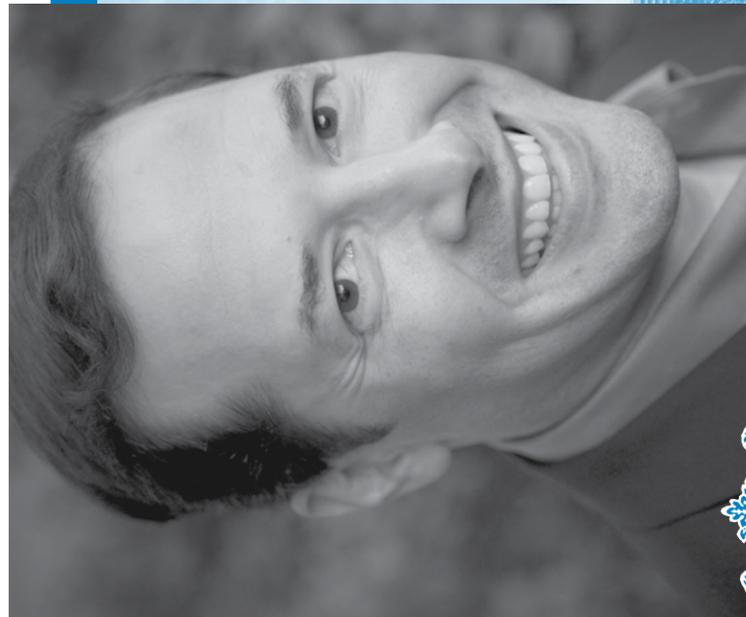
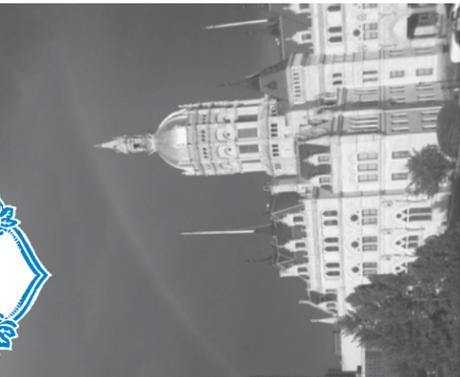
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STATE REPRESENTATIVE — CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Andy with West Hartford Schools' Superintendent Karen List

BALANCING THE BUDGET

— On Time and On Target

The General Assembly—working together with the executive branch—enacted a budget on time and with no new taxes. This new budget:

- » Includes \$163 million in additional spending cuts across state agencies
- » Reduces borrowing by \$300 million from a previous plan
- » Makes no cuts in aid to cities and towns
- » Includes \$338,547 in Town Aid Road funding for West Hartford
- » Contains \$16,935,866 in Education funding for West Hartford
- » Preserves funding for programs that assist seniors and the disabled
- » Includes funding for hospitals, schools, libraries and courthouses,

We also provided a helping hand, through:

- » Reduced co-pays for home care services by up to \$240/month (endorsed by AARP)
- » A \$500 individual property tax credit to help offset local property taxes
- » Funding for programs that help prevent mortgage foreclosure

West Hartford Aid Fiscal Year 09-10

Total Education Grants	\$16,935,866
Town Aid Road Fund Grant	\$338,547
Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP)	\$463,667
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$1,358,559
Pequot/Mohegan Aid	\$270,591
Total State Funds to West Hartford	\$19,367,230



Andy with constituent Flo Woodiel

Health Care

Moving forward on health reform

The recent passage of the historic federal health care reform law will lead to welcome improvements in the quality, access and affordability of health care for Connecticut residents. This session, we built on the federal law, taking steps to further lower costs and enhance transparency and accountability in health care. New legislation:

- » Enhances patient safety by improving hospital reporting of medical errors
 - » Extends state COBRA coverage from 18 to 30 months so laid off employees can keep their health insurance for a longer time as they look for new jobs
 - » Requires insurance companies to disclose denial rates so consumers can compare the quality of different plans
- In addition, two bills I introduced will:
- » Allow two or more towns or boards of education to join together to purchase health care benefits at lower costs
 - » Require insurance companies to refer consumers to the state Office of the Healthcare Advocate for assistance with denials of coverage

Protecting Families

Responding to domestic violence in our communities

Unfortunately, it seems hardly a week goes by without a tragic incident of domestic violence in Connecticut. Last year, the Speaker of The House assembled a task force to find ways to curb this disturbing trend and help victims and their families. We responded with the most sweeping reforms to our domestic violence laws in the past 25 years. I was proud to co-sponsor legislation that:

- » Trains educators to recognize and respond to warning signs of domestic violence
- » Creates a pilot GPS tracking program to monitor offenders
- » Provides relief to victims who terminate their housing rental agreements to protect their safety
- » Increases staffing at domestic violence shelters
- » Improves enforcement of protective orders
- » Adds three dedicated domestic violence court dockets
- » Improves employment protections for domestic violence victims
- » Permits prosecutors to consider older and out of state crimes for persistent family violence offenders



West Hartford residents Jon Tucker and Dan Firestone share concerns with Andy

Jobs

Our Top Priority - To Help Our State During the Recession

The best thing state government can do during this recession is help create jobs. To that end, this spring we passed a new jobs bill that will help put the state on the road to economic recovery. The new law establishes a number of new tools to create jobs:

- » Up to \$500,000 in loans and lines of credit for small businesses and nonprofits
- » Student loan reimbursement and training grants for education and careers in green technology, life sciences and health information technology
- » Personal income tax credits for investments made in new, emerging technologies
- » Sales tax exemptions for machinery, supplies, and fuel for renewable energy industries
- » Tax credits for small businesses of up to \$200 per month, per new employee
- » A community-technical college advisory board to assess the training needs of unemployed residents
- » Up to \$150,000 in pre-seed financing and technical services to businesses developing innovative concepts
- » Streamlined environmental rules that speed up the business permitting process and maintain environmental protections

Looking Out for Senior Citizens

The General Assembly took a number of steps this year to help make sure that, in the midst of this difficult recession, seniors—particularly those most vulnerable—receive the sort of support they need. The legislature:

- » Reduced seniors' cost-share for the state-funded Home Care Program for Elders from 15% to 6% - saving up to \$240 per month
- » Made it easier for seniors to qualify for automobile insurance discounts by completing a shorter, 4-hour, driver-safety course
- » Re-opened the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program that provides up to 30 days of respite care relief to family caregivers
- » Protected seniors' assets when a spouse enters a nursing home under Medicaid, allowing the at-home spouse to keep up to \$109,560 while still qualifying for Medicaid

