



## Christie Administration Acts to Protect Public Education in Atlantic City in Face of Looming Fiscal Challenge

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:** Michael Yapple  
Richard Vespucci  
609-292-1126

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**Trenton, NJ** – The Christie Administration today announced a key appointment to help see Atlantic City's schools through an unprecedented fiscal challenge. Commissioner of Education David C. Hespe announced the appointment of Dr. Gary P. McCartney as state monitor to work closely with local school officials who are seeking to maintain quality educational programs despite a dramatic drop in local revenue. Dr. McCartney will also work collaboratively with the emergency manager, special consultant and state monitor that are already working closely with the municipal government to confront similar challenges.

"Gary McCartney brings the skills and experience to help Atlantic City's school leaders overcome the challenges confronting them," Commissioner Hespe said. "He has an impeccable reputation as a leader who fosters quality and success wherever he goes."

"I am confident that Dr. McCartney and the city's school board and school administration will work together to carry out a plan that will ensure the efficient and effective operation of schools with a minimum amount of disruption to students and their families," Commissioner Hespe said.

In recent years, Atlantic City has experienced a significant decline in the assessed value of property for taxation, which has severely hampered the city's ability to raise local revenue required to maintain both municipal and school services. Specifically, the value of all taxable property in Atlantic City fell from \$20.4 billion in 2010 to \$11.3 billion in 2014.

Commissioner Hespe noted that city school officials began a dialogue with the Department of Education about its challenges last fall. Today's appointment, he said, represents a next step in helping the city's schools navigate those challenges.

"It became clear that the best way for Atlantic City and the state to collaboratively address the school's fiscal woes would be for the state to establish an ongoing presence in the district itself," the Commissioner said. "It's a commitment that we're proud to make."

McCartney's immediate attention will be needed to assess the district's remaining challenges for the current fiscal year and to prepare a balanced budget for the next school year, which begins July 1, Commissioner Hespe said.

"Dr. McCartney has pledged to me that in every decision the district makes, it will keep foremost in mind the need to maximize resources in the classroom so that the students are not shortchanged," Commissioner Hespe said.

Dr. McCartney is a lifetime educator whose career has spanned six decades. He has worked in school districts in New Jersey and Pennsylvania and has taught college courses at five different colleges in Pennsylvania, including Penn State and the University of Pennsylvania. He is a past Superintendent of the Year in Pennsylvania and is currently the president of the Board of Trustees for the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

He was named superintendent for the South Brunswick School District in 2004, a position he held until he retired in 2014. In addition, he served as president of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators during the 2013-14 school year.

His academic credentials include a doctorate in education administration from Temple University, a master's degree from Temple, and a bachelor's degree in secondary education from Millersville State University.

Dr. McCartney's appointment is for one year.