



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee General Obligation Bonding Subcommittee March 22, 2021

Good afternoon Senator Moore, Representative Borer, Senator Martin, Representative Piscopo and members of the Bonding Subcommittee. My name is Charlene Russell-Tucker, Acting Commissioner of the State Department of Education. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the Department of Education's bonding needs.

The Department appreciates your continued support for our capital needs at the CT Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) and the grants we provide to local school districts.

The CTECS currently has \$3.1 million unallocated for minor alterations and improvements to buildings and grounds, the purchase of new and replacement equipment and vehicles, and technology upgrades at the schools. We are grateful that the Governor's Budget recommends \$15.1 million and \$14.1 million over the biennium for these purposes. The CTECS will continue to prioritize the available funding to meet technology needs and infrastructure repairs that arise during the 2020-21 school year.

The most recent Charter School Facility bond awards were approved by the State Bond Commission in July and August of 2018 to provide funds to assist state charter schools in financing school building projects and general improvements to school buildings. In total, \$6.9 million was issued for this purpose based on submitted state charter school applications. There is currently an unallocated balance of \$7.2 million that is marked for Charter School Facility bond projects.

The most recent Low-Performing Schools (LPS) bond award was approved by the State Bond Commission in September 2020 to address distance learning technology needs associated with the Coronavirus pandemic. A total of \$5.5 million was issued for this purpose based on submitted LEA applications. There is currently an unallocated balance of \$4.5 million that was marked for LPS bond projects and we are appreciative that the Governor's Budget recommends authorizing \$5 million in each year of the biennium for this purpose.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and we are happy to answer any questions you have at this time.