Education Commissioner Celebrates
Computer Science Education Week and Hour of Code

(HARTFORD, CT) – Commissioner of Education Dianna R. Wentzell today joined Acting Superintendent of Hartford Public Schools Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez at Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy (HMTCA) to celebrate the commencement of Computer Science Education Week and Hour of Code, global events designed to increase students' interest in computer programming.

During the event, students at HMTCA displayed their proficiency with computer programming through a variety of mediums, including robotics demonstrations, and taught younger students and adults about the basics of computer programming.

"Our students need to have a clear understanding of the principles and practices of computer science in order to be prepared for careers in the 21st century," said Commissioner Wentzell. "The creativity, problem solving, and computational thinking skills that students gain from engagement with STEM subjects, including computer science, equip them with the tools they will need to be successful in life and the workplace. Computer science is an integral part of a well-rounded education and we are working hard to ensure every Connecticut public school student has access to computer science courses."

Nationally, a projected 51 percent of all science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) jobs will be in a computer science-related field by 2018. In light of this, Connecticut has taken concrete steps to increase the availability of computer science courses across the state and ensure that more of our students are graduating from high school prepared for in-demand careers.

Earlier this year, Governor Dannel P. Malloy signed a petition asking Congress to support computer science in every K-12 school. Last year, Governor Malloy signed into law Public Act 15-94, which requires districts to include computer programming as a part of their curriculum beginning in the 2016-17 school year.

Most recently, Connecticut's Computer Science Advisory Group presented a position statement to the State Board of Education supporting increased access to computer science courses for all students,

especially those who are traditionally underrepresented in the field of computer science, namely girls, minorities, and students from low-income backgrounds.

"The Hour of Code provides an opportunity to engage students in coding, which is the wave of the future in this very digital age," said Dr. Torres-Rodriguez. "It is critical for our students to learn coding, as more than 60 percent of future jobs will entail some knowledge of coding. HMTCA has been one of our leading schools in combining coding and education, and we are very proud of the school's accomplishments."

Schools like Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy play an integral role in ensuring students from all backgrounds have access to a rigorous STEM education. HMTCA offers robotics and computer science courses to each student in its diverse student body that is 24 percent African-American and 49 percent Hispanic and Latino.

Hour of Code is a part of Computer Science Education Week, which is held every year in recognition of female computer science pioneer Admiral Grace Murray Hopper's birthday. The events were conceived by the Computing in the Core Coalition (now the Code.org Advocacy Coalition) to realize the vision of including computer science as a part of the core curriculum in every school. Since its inception, Hour of Code has reached tens of millions of students in over 10 countries across the globe.

For more information, visit the following links:
- Hour of Code
- Code.org
- Computer Science Advisory Group's position statement on computer science education

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