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Christie Administration Announces the Approval of Five Additional School Construction Projects Throughout New Jersey

Trenton, NJ – The Christie Administration today announced the approval of five projects to be added to the New Jersey Schools Development Authority’s (SDA) Capital Portfolio that will remedy the needs of students in some of the state’s neediest districts. The projects, approved at the January 2, SDA Board of Directors Meeting, became part of the portfolio following expiration of the gubernatorial veto period on January 21, 2014.

“The significant reforms instituted at the SDA by the Christie Administration over the past four years, especially in terms of the efficient, cost-effective advancement of Capital projects, have positioned this agency to positively impact the educational opportunities afforded thousands of New Jersey students,” said SDA CEO Charles McKenna. “The facilities projects announced today, combined with those previously approved, bring us one step closer to fulfilling our mission of providing all the children of New Jersey with appropriate learning facilities.”

These five projects, with a preliminary estimated value of at approximately \$200 to \$250 million, alleviate facility deficiencies and in one instance alleviate an overcrowding problem. The projects include:

Projects Addressing Overcrowding Needs

1. Vineland New Middle School

Projects Addressing Facilities Efficiency Standards (FES) Compliance Needs

2. East Orange George Washington Carver Elementary School
3. Irvington Madison Avenue Elementary School
4. Pemberton Denbo Elementary School
5. Plainfield Woodland and/or Cook Elementary School

“Proper educational facilities are a vital component to improving the academic achievement of our students,” said Irvington Superintendent Dr. Neely Hackett. “The SDA’s commitment to address the conditions at the Madison Avenue Elementary School will help us to deliver our educational program.”

“We are extremely excited the SDA has advanced this project to address overcrowding and facility upgrades in our District,” said Plainfield Public Schools Superintendent Anna Belin-Pyles. “We are happy this project will provide Plainfield Public Schools with the opportunity to enhance the education programs in the Plainfield community.”

With the inclusion of these projects, SDA’s Capital Project portfolio stands at nearly 40 projects statewide with total project cost estimates of more than \$1 billion. As a result of the significant reforms implemented, construction activities have already advanced on nearly half of these projects.

The projects announced today were evaluated using the same factors established in 2011, including high educational need, facilities needs and efficient construction factors. In addition, the SDA reviewed the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) 2013 Educational Facilities Needs Assessment (EFNA) to ensure the utilization of the most relevant up-to-date information.

The SDA's current portfolio of active projects is valued at more than \$2 billion – including the Capital Project Portfolio (approximately \$1.5 billion), emergent projects (\$100 million) and Regular Operating District grants (\$450 million state share).

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