

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Members of the Authority

FROM: Larry Hanover, Senior Public Information Manager

DATE: September 30, 2009

SUBJECT: New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA)
September Progress Report

Introduction:

Each year, the first day of school is a milestone in the lives of children. This September, however, the words “back to school” took on greater significance for thousands of New Jersey students who entered 12 brand new, expanded or modernized schools under the direction of Governor Jon S. Corzine and the efforts of the New Jersey Schools Development Authority in collaboration with SDA school districts and communities.

The SDA has increased the capacity of student seats at these facilities to 9,000, representing an investment of \$575 million to stimulate the economy and creating or saving 5,000 jobs for New Jersey.

From the end of August through September, the SDA held ceremonies for one or more schools each week – from deep in South Jersey to upstate North Jersey and towns in between – with the traditional fanfare and community richly deserved. Some ceremonies were held even earlier.

Governor Corzine attended five SDA events – openings for Newark’s Park Elementary School, Camden’s H.B. Wilson Elementary School, Orange’s Park Avenue School and Union City High School, as well as a September 9 event at Perth Amboy’s Edmund J. Hmieski Early Childhood Center touting the completion of 144 school-construction projects since the Governor took office in 2006. The Governor, SDA CEO Kris Kolluri and other officials joined students, teachers, district and local leaders and residents as they cut ribbons with a pair of oversized scissors to formally open their 21st century educational facilities.

Here are the ceremonial openings held for SDA projects opening this fall:

Barnegat Township: Ribbon-cuttings for additions and renovations to the **Robert Horbelt Elementary School** and the **Lillian M. Dunfee Middle School** on May 20 and May 21, respectively. Dunfee and Horbelt are the sixth and seventh projects completed in Barnegat Township through New Jersey's school construction program.

Egg Harbor City: Ribbon-cutting for a new addition and extensive renovations to **Charles L. Spragg Elementary School** on August 27. This event celebrated efforts to enhance the teaching of literacy through a new technology-enhanced library/media center.

West New York: Ribbon-cutting for a new addition and extensive renovations to **Public School No. 2** on August 28. The ceremony noted that the school was honored by former President Bill Clinton earlier in the month, receiving the Healthy Schools Program National Recognition Bronze Award for 2008-09 for improving the learning and working environments of students and staff.

Perth Amboy: Ribbon-cutting for the new **Edmund Hmieleski Jr. Early Childhood Center** on September 2. Parents and teachers and area officials joined U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg for the festivities to celebrate the fact that preschoolers were beginning their educational journey, cutting the ribbon for the first school they are attending in their young lives.

Newark: Ribbon-cutting for the new **Park Elementary School** on September 3. "This is a terrific day for Newark Public Schools, and for the staff and students of Park Elementary School," Governor Corzine said. "There is no more important job than educating our students and helping them to achieve their potential in school and life. As more new schools come to the city of Newark, teachers gain tools to provide the 21st century education these children need. I'm proud to be here to celebrate the fresh beginning that the first day of school represents."

Camden: Ribbon-cutting for the new **H.B. Wilson Elementary School** on September 8. The old Wilson school was built in 1907. During his visit, the Governor joined a classroom to watch President Obama's back-to-school address to the nation's schoolchildren.

Orange: Ribbon-cutting for the new **Park Avenue School** on September 10. Governor Corzine made a return visit to Orange's newly expanded and renovated Park Avenue Elementary School, delivering on his commitment to build sustainable, environmentally friendly schools that provide quality educational opportunities and stimulate the economy.

Burlington City: Dedication and ribbon-cutting for the new media center addition and wing at **Burlington City High School** on September 10. The media center was dedicated to former district Superintendent Dr. Edward F. Gola Jr. at the event.

Bridgeton: Ribbon-cutting for a new media center addition and extensive renovations to the existing library at **Bridgeton High School** on September 16. The construction greatly enhances the learning opportunities for students in the journalism and video production departments.

Camden: Ribbon-cutting for the new **Thomas H. Dudley Elementary School** on September 17. Dudley is the oldest school replaced by the agency this fall. The original Dudley School opened in 1904, the year after the Wright brothers made the world's first successful airplane flight.

East Orange: Ribbon-cutting for the new **Cicely Tyson School of Fine and Performing Arts** on September 24. Ms. Tyson, the Emmy Award-winning and Academy Award-nominated actress, was a guest speaker at the event for the community magnet school, which provides a 21st century educational core curriculum, along with studies in the arts, for 1,300 students from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

Union City: Ribbon-cutting on September 25 for the new **Union City High School and Athletic Complex**. The school provides educational opportunities for 1,800 students, serving as a hub of athletic, cultural and community events for students and residents.

Press releases for these events are available on the SDA Web site at <http://www.njsda.gov/Archive/2009/index.html>.

The school construction program is central to the state's effort to mitigate the effects of the national recession. In 2009, the SDA accelerated projects to advance the Governor's Economic Assistance and Recovery Plan to spur the economy and generate jobs.

Other SDA Events:

- September 9: **SDA Economic Stimulus Event:** Citing the importance of school construction investments to improved educational opportunities, Governor Corzine visited Perth Amboy's **Edmund Hmieleski, Jr., Early Childhood Center** to announce the SDA has completed 144 major construction projects, including 45 new schools. All told, the SDA has invested \$5.293 billion in projects since January 2006, generating an estimated 45,800 jobs and creating approximately 45,000 new student seats. Corzine said New Jersey's school construction program has emerged as a vital component in the education of students while also creating jobs to stimulate the State's economy.
- September 9: **NJ SEED Event:** Chief Operating Officer Jerry Murphy spoke to the New Jersey Society for Environmental, Economic Development group regarding the SDA's impact on job creation and building sustainable schools.

- September 16: **BASF High Performance Buildings for Education Summit:** Kolluri spoke on SDA's work to construct high performance schools at the BASF summit in NYC. In his remarks, Kolluri discussed the strides SDA is making in its 21st Century Schools Design Manual, constructing LEED certifiable schools and developing user-friendly protocols that will enable local districts to manage their green buildings.
- September 16: **Joint NJDOT/NJSDA Infrastructure Jobs Event:** SDA Chief of Staff Tom DiGangi joined NJDOT Commissioner Steven Dilts to announce August 2009 Infrastructure Jobs creation by the State of New Jersey.
- September 18: **Building Contractors Association (BCA):** Kolluri spoke at a meeting of the BCA membership on the impact SDA's construction program has on the state economy and job creation for the construction community.
- September 23: **New Jersey Chamber of Commerce:** Kolluri spoke to the chamber regarding the SDA's construction program and its impact on job creation and business opportunity.
- September 23: **Trenton Central High School Facilities Meeting:** Kolluri made a presentation to the Trenton Facilities Advisory Board regarding SDA plans for a new \$149 million **Trenton Central High School**. City preservationists want the existing building rehabilitated. Kolluri noted the scope of their renovation plan does not appear sufficient to address layout and architectural inefficiencies of the existing school.
- September 30: **Bond Buyer Forum:** Kolluri appeared at a forum on "Municipal Finance in the Stimulus Era," explaining the role of the SDA program and its economic impact. The event was held in Washington, D.C.

Upcoming Events:

- October 5: **New Phillipsburg High School:** A groundbreaking will be held on the site of the new school on Belvidere Road. The ceremony will include blasting to mark the start of site preparations for the construction of foundations to support the structure of the main high school building. Construction of the new facility is slated to begin next summer.

Construction Update:

Overall the SDA has completed 613 projects in SDA Districts. In addition to the 50 new schools; it has opened 44 extensive additions, renovations and/or rehabilitations; five

demonstration projects and more than 500 other projects. Also, it has completed 22 projects in Regular Operating Districts: five new schools and 17 extensive additions, renovations and/or rehabilitations.

Construction Contracts:

As of September 29, 2009, the Authority has entered into construction contracts totaling \$3,653,605,179.62 since the inception of the school construction program in 2002.

Section 15 Grants

In 2009, the SDA has executed **207** Section 15 grant agreements in **19** counties impacting **162** schools in **91** Regular Operating Districts. In the month of September, the SDA executed **35** Section 15 grants in **11** counties impacting **27** schools in **21** districts. From its inception in 2002 through July 31, 2009, the SDA has executed **2,772** Section 15 grant agreements in all **21** counties. To date, **1,471** schools in **479** districts have been impacted by the Section 15 grant program. Total project costs amount to **\$7,172,064,796**, for which the State share totals **\$2,241,290,671**.



Larry Hanover