



## STATE OF NEW JERSEY SCHOOLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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### **SDA Chief Executive Officer Marc Larkins Visits Freehold Township as Release of Grant Funding Begins**

FREEHOLD TOWNSHIP -- New Jersey Schools Development Authority CEO Marc Larkins visited the Freehold Township School District today to highlight \$485,000 in grants that have been released to the district through the SDA's Regular Operating Districts (ROD) grant program.

The grants are among the first released since last week's announcement by Larkins and Education Commissioner Bret Schundler that 142 grants were ready for release statewide. The state-funded grants represent at least 40 percent of eligible costs for projects in the RODs, addressing health-and-safety issues, student overcrowding and other critical needs.

The visit to Clifton T. Barkalow Middle School highlighted grants that are being issued to the Freehold Township School District for projects that are substantially complete at four schools, allowing it to be reimbursed for work estimated at \$1.2 million.

Larkins said: "I am glad to be in Freehold Township today to announce that its grants have been executed and to talk about their importance to the school district. These grants allow districts to perform necessary improvements to the learning environments for our children and create much-needed jobs during this difficult economic period. The SDA looks forward to continuing to provide assistance for these projects throughout the state."

Several projects were performed at Barkalow. The HVAC heating system was removed from the original gymnasium and stage area, and replaced. The school's original acoustical ceiling and fluorescent lighting also were replaced. The State is providing grants of \$249,000, representing its share of the overall estimated cost of \$622,000.

"State grants will help assure that our students will have safe learning environments," said Education Commissioner Bret Schundler. "Many children will benefit from this necessary investment in schools across New Jersey."

As with Barkalow, the Joseph J. Catena Elementary School had the HVAC heating system removed and replaced from the gymnasium and stage area. In addition, the tile flooring was replaced and asbestos abatement performed where material was removed. Dwight D. Eisenhower Middle School had a tile flooring project, and C. Richard Applegate Elementary School had an acoustical ceiling and lighting project. These grants total an additional \$237,000, leveraging projects estimated at \$592,000.

Freehold Township's grant funding is part of a \$36.9 million State investment, leveraging \$77.5 million in total capital investment. Funding for the program was made available from the sale of \$500 million in bonds by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA).

The Department of Education determines the selection of school projects receiving grant funds from the SDA. The Authority currently has a portfolio of approximately 1,000 ongoing grant projects in the RODs, 50 projects in SDA districts in various developmental phases, 12 projects already under construction and 129 emergent projects addressing health-and-safety issues across the state.

Since its 2001 inception, New Jersey's school construction program has completed 621 projects in SDA Districts. In addition to building 54 new schools, the program has provided funding for 45 extensive additions, renovations and/or rehabilitations, and more than 500 other projects.

The program also has provided more than 3,000 grants to RODs, totaling more than \$2.3 billion. Including contributions from local school districts, these grants have leveraged projects estimated at \$7.4 billion overall.