

**Message From CEO Charles B. McKenna**

I am truly gratified to have been asked by Governor Christie to replace Marc Larkins as Chief Executive Officer of the Schools Development Authority and I am thankful to the Board of Directors for electing me to lead this fine Organization as we move forward.

What I found when I got here was an organization that had been revamped by my predecessor and was doing great work with a fine, hard-working and dedicated staff. I felt lucky to have inherited such an operation. While I have worked in schools before, what I do now is a far cry from my days as a janitor and ultimately Custodian at several New York City schools. Nevertheless, I do know a flushometer from faucet and am capable of spray-buffing a terrazzo floor. The day after the Governor announced my appointment I visited Trenton Central High School to get a first-hand look at the conditions. They were not good but the spirit of the children attending the school was uplifting. It seemed to me that no measure of renovation would provide

those students with an appropriate learning environment. Thankfully, SDA management shared my concerns as did the Trenton School Board, the District Superintendent, the SDA Board of Directors and most importantly, the Community. We will now embark on building a new TCHS that will maintain some of the more iconic architecture of the existing building while providing a state-of-the-art learning environment for Trenton's high schoolers. The first order of business will be securing and outfitting appropriate swing-space which, in the case of a high school, is unprecedented for the Authority. Close work with the District Superintendent and the TCHS Principal, both of whom have been great partners, will ensure a swift relocation.

I am acutely cognizant that TCHS is not the only school in this State that has fallen into disrepair. Given the fact that there is so much aging infrastructure in the SDA districts there is a lot of work to do and only finite resources with which to do it. These schools did not deteriorate overnight and the problem is one that will not be fixed in short order. Nevertheless, we will work hard to chip away at the problem until appropriate learning facilities are attained for everyone.

I am also aware that some of our stakeholders continue to have credibility issues with the Authority. To them I say that I will work hard to gain your trust. However, that will require facing hard truths as I will not always be able to say what folks want to hear. I, along with the entire staff of the SDA, will work with all of our stakeholders – school districts, community members and legislators – to achieve Governor Christie's vision of ensuring that all students in New Jersey have appropriate educational facilities that will assist them in achieving success.

I have no illusion that the months ahead will not be without their problems and occasional disagreements. However, there will also be successes as we will be completing schools where children will be attending come September. So long as we air our disagreements in a mature and constructive manner and rejoice in our victories together we will be doing the work of fostering the education of our youth which is perhaps one of the most noble things that a society can do. I look forward to working with all of you as we move forward.

## **SDA Capital Program Continues to Thrive**

SDA continues to advance our [Capital Portfolio](#) at a steady pace. In fact, nearly half of the Capital Portfolio has advanced with construction activities. One project, the West



*Construction Progress at George L. Catrambone Elementary School in Long Branch*

New York Memorial High School, has been completed utilizing an alternative delivery method, seven projects are in active building construction and two projects are scheduled to begin construction in April. In addition, five projects have initiated design-build activities and one project has initiated early site work.

In January, the SDA Board approved [five projects](#) from five different SDA Districts, to be added to the Capital Portfolio, bringing the total to 37 projects. The projects at George Washington Carver Elementary School (East Orange, Essex County), Madison Avenue Elementary School (Irvington, Essex County), Denbo Elementary School (Pemberton, Burlington County) and Woodland and/or Cook Elementary School (Plainfield, Middlesex County) will address Facilities Efficiency Standards (FES) compliance needs. The fifth project, a new Middle School (Vineland, Cumberland County), will address overcrowding needs in the district. These five projects have total estimated costs in excess of \$200 million.



*New Trenton Central High School project layout*

Additionally, the scope of work for the previously approved [Trenton Central High School](#) project was recently revised. Initially, the project scope called for an extensive renovation/rehabilitation of the existing building. In February, the SDA Board of Directors approved a revised plan that paves the way for the construction of a new Trenton Central High School. The proposed new project approved by the Board calls for delivery of approximately 305,000 square feet of new construction along with renovation of the iconic elements of the building including the clock tower and portico - approximately 35,000 square feet which will remain.

## **Emergent Project Program Update**

The benefits of the SDA's [Emergent Project Program](#) are being realized at SDA District schools throughout the state. Of the 30 SDA-managed projects announced in 2012 - twelve have been completed; four are in construction; five are in construction procurement; five are in design; two are in the design procurement phase; and two are undergoing need verification.

Emergent projects are underway statewide from Newark to Salem City. Three emergent projects in Newark that replaced existing boilers at Hawkins Elementary School, Sussex Elementary School and Ridge Elementary School were completed in late Fall. This ensured that the students at those three schools would have heat in the upcoming winter months. A recently completed project at Salem High School remedied water infiltration issues. Another ongoing project in Salem City, at Salem Middle School, will also remedy water infiltration issues. These are just a few examples of recently completed or ongoing emergent projects managed by the SDA.

The SDA Emergent Project Program provides assistance to SDA District school facilities in need of repair and rehabilitation. Emergent projects are those deemed necessary in SDA Districts due to potential health and safety issues. More emergent projects have been completed by the Christie Administration than by any previous administration.

A complete update on the status of Emergent Projects can be found here -

[http://www.njsda.gov/Schools/Emergent\\_List.pdf](http://www.njsda.gov/Schools/Emergent_List.pdf)

### **Recent Project Activity**

Since November 2013, the SDA advertised and awarded contracts for the following projects:

Recent Advertisements:

- Gloucester City (Gloucester County) – Gloucester City New ES/MS Design-Build
- Orange (Essex County) – Orange Middle School Roof Replacement and Masonry

Proposals Currently Under Review:

- Garfield (Bergen County) – James Madison School #10 Early Site Package
- Keansburg (Monmouth County) – Joseph C. Caruso Elementary School Construction Management Services
- Millville (Cumberland County) – Millville High School and Lakeside Middle School Design Services

Recent Contract Awards:

- Bridgeton (Cumberland County) – Buckshutem Road and Quarter Mile Lane Elementary Schools Design-Build
- Bridgeton (Cumberland County) - Buckshutem Road and Quarter Mile Lane Elementary Schools Construction Management Services
- Camden (Camden County) – Bonsall Elementary School Emergent Project
- Irvington (Essex County) – Irvington High School Emergent Project
- Jersey City (Hudson County) – Elementary School #3 Construction Management Services
- Keansburg (Monmouth County) – Joseph C. Caruso Elementary School Design-Build
- Newark (Essex County) – South Street Elementary School Early Site Package
- Paterson (Passaic County) – Public School #16 Design-Build
- Paterson (Passaic County) – Public School #16 Construction Management Services

### **Single Largest School Construction Grant Allocation Approved for ROD Grant Program**

In December, the Christie Administration announced the single largest school construction grant program in New Jersey history with the approval of \$507.7 million in state grants to help fund the cost of 1,538 individual school construction projects in 331 school districts. In addition to Regular Operating Districts, the funding includes \$21.8 million in state grants to assist 15 vocational-technical school districts with 54 construction projects with an estimated \$48.2 million in total construction costs. This funding adds to the more than \$290 million in grant funding already executed during this Administration.

SDA remains committed to working with the various school districts across the State in an effort to expedite the grant process. On February 25 and 26, the SDA presented “Understanding the SDA Process” to the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials. The presentation walked school business officials through the SDA Grant process and explained the steps that need to be taken in order to receive the grant funding. Additional information about the ROD Grant Program can be found here: <http://www.njsda.gov/Schools/Grants.html>

### **SMWBE Contractor Training Program 2014**

On February 12, SDA began a free, nine-week - Small, Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (SMWBE) Contractor Training Program designed to provide firms with valuable knowledge and tools to successfully compete for work on future SDA construction projects.

Twenty-six companies enrolled to participate in the 2014 program at locations in both Trenton and Newark. The 2014 training program began with an orientation and an opportunity to meet the SDA Staff and industry professionals who will be responsible for leading the instructional sessions. Over the course of nine-weeks, a variety of subjects will be presented to participating firms.

This is the fourth program offering of classes given by the SDA since 2011. Previous graduates of the program have become prequalified with the State to do business, have obtained government contracts and/or increased their professional networks. Participating firms have consistently expressed overwhelming satisfaction with the program and its ability to help them grow and improve their businesses. For more information about the SMWBE Contractor Training Program, please visit: [http://www.njsda.gov/Archive/2013/11/11.15.13/SMWBE\\_Contractor\\_Training\\_Trifold.pdf](http://www.njsda.gov/Archive/2013/11/11.15.13/SMWBE_Contractor_Training_Trifold.pdf)



*Participants of the 2014 SMWBE Contractor Training Program*

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**For more information please visit our website at [www.njsda.gov](http://www.njsda.gov) or call 609.341.5900**

**To contact the SDA, please email the Authority at [CustomerService@njsda.gov](mailto:CustomerService@njsda.gov)**