



## Newsroom

[Event Photos](#)

[Features](#)

[Press Releases](#)

[Featured Videos](#)

[Audio Clips](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[Speeches](#)

[Executive Orders](#)

[RSS Feeds](#)

[Home](#) > [Newsroom](#) > [Press Releases](#) > [2009](#) > Sep-08-09 Governor Corzine Kicks-Off First Day of Class at New Camden H.B. Wilson Elementary School

JON S. CORZINE  
*Governor*

**For Immediate Release:**

**Date:** September 8, 2009

**For More Information:**

Robert Corrales

**Phone:** 609-777-2600

## Governor Corzine Kicks-Off First Day of Class at New Camden H.B. Wilson Elementary School

*Highlights Progress in Closing Statewide Achievement Gap*

*Watches Obama Speech with Students, Lauds it as "The Right Message for our Future."*

**CAMDEN** -Governor Jon S. Corzine celebrated the first day of school today at the new H.B. Wilson Elementary School.

During his visit, the Governor joined a classroom to watch President Obama's address to the nation's schoolchildren. He called the speech "The right message to send kids to make sure we have a brighter future in our State and our nation." Of any political criticism of the speech, the Governor reiterated his comments from last week, saying, "If a message that staying in school and working hard is a political agenda, then I agree with the President's agenda."

The Governor also highlighted a recent report by the National Center for Education Statistics that shows New Jersey is one of only three states to narrow the achievement gap between black and white students in fourth grade reading and one of only 15 states to narrow the gap in fourth grade math between 1992 and 2007.

"We have a moral commitment to improve educational opportunities for the children of Camden and throughout New Jersey," Governor Corzine said. "These results are a clear validation of our state's intense focus and commitment to preschool and early literacy interventions over the past few years and of our shared commitment to early childhood education."

Through this period, the reading score gap between white and black New Jersey students in fourth grade dropped from a high of 40 points in 1994 to 26 points in 2007. The biggest change came between 2005 and 2007, when the gap decreased from 33 points to 26 points. In math, the fourth-grade gap dropped from 38 points in 1992 to 23 points in 2007. In both subjects, the scores for white and minority students increased between 1992 and 2007, indicating that minority students made larger gains to close the gap. Both white and black students score above the national average for their group.

"The fact that New Jersey is making such strong strides in closing the achievement gap is a tribute Governor Corzine's commitment to education and to the efforts of educators in districts throughout the state who are focused on preparing students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century," said Commissioner Davy. "They know that expectations are much higher these days, and they are dedicated to helping our students meet these new standards."

Investments in education investments have increased by more than \$1.8 billion, including federal funds, under Governor Corzine ensuring a brighter economic future for children throughout the State.

Wilson (1907) and Camden's Thomas H. Dudley Elementary School (1904) are the two oldest schools replaced by the SDA this September in New Jersey. 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.

"Governor Corzine has created the nation's largest school construction program," SDA CEO Kris Kolluri said. "Today's event, along with 11 other SDA school openings across New Jersey this September, demonstrates how we continue to deliver modern, affordable schools to our students."

Wilson and Dudley, which will have its ribbon-cutting ceremony on September 17, are the third and fourth schools completed in Camden under SDA management. Octavius V. Catto Community School opened in 2007 and Early Childhood Development Center No. 25 opened in January 2009. Morgan Village Middle School is under construction.

Camden has three additional projects included in the SDA's Capital Plan - Camden High School, Lanning Square Elementary School and Pyne Poynt Family School. All told, the SDA has spent or allocated \$687.8 million to date for projects in Camden.

###

Get our press releases via RSS at: <feed://nj.gov/governor/news/news/2009/approved/rss.xml>

Photos from Governor Corzine's public events are available at [www.nj.gov/governor/news](http://www.nj.gov/governor/news)

Video from the Governor's Office is available at [www.nj.gov/governor/news/video](http://www.nj.gov/governor/news/video) and [www.youtube.com/user/jonscorzine](http://www.youtube.com/user/jonscorzine)