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JON S. CORZINE
Governor

For Immediate Release:

Date: September 9, 2009

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Governor Corzine Touts Contributions of School Construction Program to Enhanced Educational Opportunities for New Jersey's School Children

Announces Completion of 144 Major Construction Projects, including 45 New Schools, Generating 46,000 Jobs, Providing Approximately 45,000 New Student Seats - Streamlined, Accelerated Processes Working

PERTH AMBOY - Citing the importance of school construction investments to improved educational opportunities, Governor Jon S. Corzine today visited the Edmund Hmieleski, Jr., Early Childhood Center in Perth Amboy to announce the New Jersey Schools Development Authority (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.

Joining the Governor were SDA CEO Kris Kolluri, Education Commissioner Lucille Davy, Richard Delisi, Dean, Rutgers Graduate School of Education and Perth Amboy Mayor Wilda Diaz. During the visit, the Governor 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.

"The school construction program is building a better future for students throughout New Jersey as well as for our state's economy," Governor Corzine

said. "Not only do the students of today benefit from these projects, but future generations of students will benefit for decades to come. This program is playing a critical role in helping New Jersey take the lead in recovering from this economic recession, creating and saving thousands of jobs."

Forty-five of these 144 construction projects are new schools. The others include additions and/or renovations, address overcrowding, provide additional program space for early childhood education and deliver up-to-date technology such as interactive smart boards.

"Building 21st century school facilities gives students access to 21st century curriculum and programs that help to prepare for success in college and the workforce," said Education Commissioner Lucille Davy.

In addition to projects in SDA Districts, the SDA provides grants of at least 40 percent of costs to Regular Operating Districts. Approximately 80 percent of RODs throughout New Jersey have benefited from these grants.

The SDA continues to advance projects to meet the Governor's direction to mitigate the effects of the national recession. It is on track to begin preliminary or full construction of 27 Capital Plan projects in 2009. Overall, the SDA will invest \$1.3 billion in these projects. Over the life of the projects, the SDA expects to create or save approximately 11,000 jobs. This funding was made possible by legislation signed by the Governor in July 2008, authorizing \$3.9 billion in new school-construction funding, creating the largest state school construction program in the country.

Kris Kolluri, CEO of the SDA, said: "This agency is committed to delivering safe, affordable schools that provide the tools that students need to succeed in today's world. We will continue to advance projects as directed by the Governor to ensure that we renovate and replace schools throughout New Jersey as efficiently as possible, building them on time and within budget."

New Jersey's school construction program has achieved these milestones while undergoing significant reforms. The SDA has streamlined and accelerated processes. Now, all SDA projects are required to have a comprehensive budget, scope and schedule before receiving SDA Board approval and beginning work on a project. In addition, the SDA now operates under a Capital Plan, developed in 2008, that allocates funding and dedicates reserves to 52 projects to ensure all projects are completed.

Initiatives to recover funds where possible have also been launched by the SDA. An Environmental Cost Recovery Initiative Team was established to recover funds from responsible parties for the costs of environmental remediation of project sites. The SDA's Office of Chief Counsel is working to recover funds from responsible parties for project delays and design errors. So far, the SDA has recovered \$15.6 million.

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