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Governor Corzine Breaks Ground for New Phillipsburg High School

State-of-the-art facility to eventually replace 31 portable classrooms and house more than 1,700 students

PHILLIPSBURG -Governor Jon S. Corzine joined New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA) representatives, state and area officials, and Phillipsburg Board of Education leaders today to break ground on the new Phillipsburg High School. The ceremony signaled the start of site preparations for the building of foundations to support the structure of the main high school, which will comprise 320,000 square feet of academic space. It will house more than 1,700 students upon completion in 2013.

"Today's groundbreaking is a significant milestone for Phillipsburg, marking the start of a long-awaited new high school that the students and faculty genuinely deserve," said Governor Corzine. "The need for a new high school here couldn't be more obvious with its portable classroom units that ultimately have become permanent fixtures. Once this building is completed, students will have access to the 21st Century technology and facilities that will pave the way for a brighter tomorrow."

The new facility will replace the existing Phillipsburg High School, where overcrowding has caused the district to house students in numerous classroom trailers. Plans call for the present high school eventually to be converted into a middle school.

"Through projects like this, we will continue to support Governor Corzine's efforts to spur the economy through creating and saving jobs while delivering

21st century schools vital to the needs of New Jersey's students now and for their future," said SDA CEO Kris Kolluri.

The high school will be the second new educational facility constructed in Phillipsburg under SDA management. In 2006, the SDA opened the new Phillipsburg Early Childhood Learning Center for 530 pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students - becoming the first new school in the Phillipsburg district in over 25 years.

Phillipsburg School Superintendent Mark B. Miller remarked, "The groundbreaking for the new Phillipsburg High School is a step for the future of the Phillipsburg District. The students will be able to move from a high school with 31 trailers to a state-of-the-art facility that will be the true centerpiece of the community. The new building will continue the pride and tradition that is Phillipsburg."

The new high school is being built on Belvidere Road on a 129-acre former farm. Seven athletic fields, and access roads, were built at the site by the SDA prior to suspension of the high school construction project in 2005 due to lack of funds.

The Authority's Capital Plan, consisting of 52 projects - including Phillipsburg High School - was approved by the SDA Board in July 2008 as Governor Corzine signed legislation authorizing \$3.9 billion in school construction funding. A Rutgers University study estimates these projects will generate 46,000 jobs over five years.

The school construction program is central to the state's effort to mitigate the effects of the national recession. For 2009, the SDA has accelerated projects to advance Governor Corzine's Economic Assistance and Recovery Plan to spur the economy and generate jobs. Capital Plan projects worth \$1.4 billion are being advanced into preliminary or full-scale construction in SDA Districts in 2009.

The Phillipsburg project architect is Design Ideas Group. Heery International, Inc. is managing it for the SDA. The SDA is doing preliminary work to prepare to seek bids for a general contractor for construction of the new high school.

Overall the SDA has completed 613 projects in SDA Districts. In addition to the 50 new schools built since 2006, 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.

Work on the new \$174.4 million Phillipsburg High School is projected to create/save approximately 1,500 jobs over the duration of construction.

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