



For More Information:

Edye Maier – (609) 858-2909

May 12, 2017

Christie Administration Officials Celebrate Construction Progress of New School with Beam Signing Event in Passaic City



PASSAIC CITY, NJ – New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA) CEO Charles McKenna joined Passaic City students and local officials for a “beam signing” ceremony to highlight the progress of construction on the new Leonard Place Elementary School. Students along with school officials signed a steel beam that will become a lasting part of the new facility.

“In the short time since we broke ground, you can really see this new school taking shape with the outline nearly complete,” said SDA CEO Charles McKenna. “Today, Passaic students make their first lasting impression on their new school. Once complete, the new Leonard Place Elementary School will offer countless new opportunities to help these students learn, grow and succeed.”

The new 105,000 square-foot, three-story school will be designed to educate approximately 700 students in kindergarten through fifth grades. The school will include 30 general classrooms, five small group instruction classrooms, a science classroom, instrumental and vocal music rooms, an art room, a multipurpose room with stage, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, and a media center.

"This is a very exciting time for the Passaic Public Schools, and our entire community," said Passaic Schools Superintendent Pablo Muñoz. "This is a great opportunity to provide our students with an

education in a new 21st century facility that will prepare them for college and careers - further opening the doors to successfully compete in a global society."

The new school is being constructed on the Leonard Place site that was acquired by the SDA, across the street from the SDA-built Passaic Gifted and Talented Academy which opened to students in 2015. The Leonard Place building is anticipated for completion prior to the start of school in September 2018. Construction of the new facility continues the SDA's commitment to reduce overcrowding in Passaic schools through the delivery of several much-needed new school facilities. The SDA is also advancing a multiple-facility Educational Campus on the 12-acre Dayton Avenue site.

The Leonard Place Elementary School is being built using the design-build approach. This method differs from the traditional approach in that SDA contracts with one firm for both design and construction of a school facilities project. The design-build method also allows for some design and construction activities to proceed concurrently through phased advancement, an approach that potentially allows for improvement upon the original overall schedule.

Dobco, Inc. of Wayne, New Jersey was awarded a \$32.75 million design-build contract. As part of its design-build engagement, Dobco, Inc. is working with Di Cara / Rubino Architects also of Wayne, New Jersey on the design. The construction manager is Epic Management, Inc. of Piscataway, New Jersey. The total estimated SDA project cost for the new school is \$55.9 million.

To date, the SDA has invested \$194 million toward completed projects in Passaic City. Its current portfolio of active projects is valued at approximately \$2 billion – including the Capital Project portfolio, emergent projects and Regular Operating District grants.

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