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Christie Administration Announces Final Purchase of Former St. Joseph's High School in West New York to Expand Memorial High School
Cost Effective Methods Allow SDA to Address Facility Needs While Preserving Limited State Resources

TRENTON, NJ – Committed to meeting the needs of New Jersey students while minimizing project costs, the Christie Administration today announced the closing on the purchase of the former St. Joseph's High School property in West New York to address the overcrowding concerns that exist at the city's Memorial High School. This acquisition is the realization of the Schools Development Authority's (SDA) goal to identify and pursue cost-effective alternative delivery methods to address facility needs that exist throughout the state.

“The acquisition of this property is enabling the SDA to deliver more educational space than would have been possible through a traditional delivery method for this project,” said SDA CEO Marc Larkins. “The pursuit of alternative delivery methods, such as acquiring vacant schools, enables the SDA to satisfy district facility needs while preserving limited state resources.”

The SDA purchased the property from the Church of Saint Joseph of the Palisades for \$12 million. Following the closing on December 28, 2012, the SDA immediately transferred title to the District. The 127,113 square-foot facility was a former Catholic High School and includes 35 classrooms (including labs), a cafeteria, kitchen and auditorium/gymnasium. This property will be utilized by the District as a Freshman and Sophomore Academy that can accommodate 850 students.

As part of this project, the SDA will also perform renovations to laboratory space at the existing Memorial High School and the acquired school to provide the type of educational facilities needed to help students meet their science education requirements. The District will be responsible for performing any additional improvements to the building and providing furniture and technology upgrades.

“This property is a much-needed resource and a wonderful asset for our community,” said West New York Superintendent John Fauta. “It will alleviate the severe overcrowding in the high school, afford us the science laboratories needed to meet our curriculum and provide an opportunity to set up a campus-style environment. I want to commend the SDA for their professionalism and their assistance throughout this whole process.”

The acquisition of the St. Joseph's property proved to be the most appropriate solution to the overcrowding need that existed at the high school grade level. The acquired school provides more square footage than original plans for this project would have provided, and does so immediately. According to the District, students will occupy the facility in time for this coming school year. This unique approach to addressing the needs of the District realizes more than \$40 million in savings when compared to prior proposed plans.

The SDA has previously completed four major school projects in West New York including a new Middle School, rehabilitation to Number 2 Elementary School and new construction of Number 3 Elementary School and Number 4 Elementary School. The SDA has invested nearly \$186 million in completed projects in West New York alone since the inception of the school construction program.

The SDA's current portfolio of active projects is valued at over \$2 billion – including the 2011 and 2012 Capital Project portfolios (more than \$1 billion), additional projects in construction (\$132 million), emergent projects (\$43 million) and Regular Operating District grants (\$743 million state share).

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