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Christie Administration Advances 17 Emergent Repair Projects for Newark Public Schools

TRENTON – As part of Governor Christie’s commitment to ensuring New Jersey’s school facilities are healthy, safe learning environments for all students, the New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA) has advanced construction of 17 emergent projects at 14 schools in Newark. More emergent projects have been completed by the Christie Administration than by any prior administration.

“We are proud to continue our partnership with Newark as part of the Christie Administration’s statewide commitment to support the improvement of educational facilities” said CEO Marc Larkins. “These emergent projects, funded by the State and managed by the Newark school district, will go a long way towards extending the life cycle of these buildings and ensuring that the students learning in them have appropriate facilities to excel.”

One emergent project will repair and/or replace windows at Newark Vocational High School.

Ten projects will allow for the repair of exterior masonry at Maple Avenue School, Peshine Avenue Elementary School, Fourteenth Avenue School, Avon Academy, Abington Avenue School, Madison School, Weequahic High School, Newark Vocational High School, Malcolm X. Shabazz High School and Arts High School.

The remaining six projects will address roof repair and/or replacement at Abington Avenue School, Chancellor Avenue School Annex, McKinley School, Dayton Street Elementary School, Ann Street School and Malcolm X. Shabazz High School.

These 17 emergent projects will impact more than 6,500 Newark students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through twelfth grade.

The SDA has invested \$530 million in completed projects in Newark alone, including ten capital projects and 93 health and safety/grant projects.

Emergent projects are those deemed necessary in SDA Districts due to potential health and safety issues. Emergent projects include the repair or replacement of roofs, windows, exterior masonry, heating and cooling systems, and plumbing, electrical, mechanical and security systems. Emergent funds are also utilized to address water infiltration issues.

Prior to the Christie Administration, funds available for these projects were nearly exhausted and project review procedures were insufficient, making it difficult to prioritize critical projects in a deliberate and cost efficient manner. In 2011, after allocating another \$100 million to the emergent program, the SDA and Department of Education (DOE) launched a statewide effort to identify and evaluate eligible emergent conditions in the 31 SDA Districts. The conditions that were evaluated and validated had been reported by the local districts.

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The SDA manages many projects identified as emergent, while others are delegated for District management. The approach is determined by a project's scope and complexity. The emergent projects above have been delegated to the Newark Public Schools for management. For those projects that are delegated, the SDA executes a grant agreement with the District, which is then responsible for procuring and disbursing payment to the consultants and contractors. The SDA maintains oversight throughout this process.

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 (\$100 million), emergent projects (\$50 million) and Regular Operating District grants (\$604 million state share).

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