



For More Information:

Andrea Pasquine – (609) 633-2474

July 30, 2013

## **Christie Administration Announces Fort Lee to Receive \$640,000 in Grant Funding from Schools Development Authority**

**Trenton, NJ** - Furthering the Christie Administration's commitment to providing New Jersey students with safe, modern and efficient schools, the Schools Development Authority (SDA) announced a state grant to the Fort Lee School District through the SDA's Regular Operating District (ROD) grant program.

The project at Lewis F. Cole Middle School represents \$1,600,000 in total estimated costs including a state grant of \$640,000 which leverages the local contribution of \$960,000.

"This grant program provides much-needed resources to districts like Fort Lee so that they can make repairs and renovations required to provide appropriate educational facilities for their students to learn and excel," said SDA CEO Marc Larkins.

The grant will provide funds for classroom alterations including the renovations of two existing science classrooms and associated prep rooms with new casework, finishes, lighting, and HVAC equipment; the renovation of the music room and associated practice rooms into a new instrumental music room and a vocal music room; and the renovation of the existing wood shop into a new wood/technology shop.

"This grant will go a long way towards helping to improve the learning environment for the students at Lewis F. Cole Middle School," said Acting Superintendent Dr. Sharon Amato. "Improvements at the Lewis F Cole Middle School will allow us to implement 21st century curriculum initiatives aimed at preparing our students for the upcoming PARCC assessment. In addition, we will be able to create innovative programs such as STEM and technology integration."

Since the Christie Administration announced the resumption of the ROD grant program in May 2010, the SDA has executed 909 grants. The state-grant program funds at least 40 percent of eligible costs for projects in the RODs, addressing health and safety issues, student overcrowding and other critical needs. Since the program's inception, the Fort Lee School District has received nearly \$9.8 million in grants through the SDA's ROD grant program.

The Department of Education selects school projects to receive grant funding from the SDA. The State has provided more than \$285.3 million in grants to local districts since the May 2010 announcement, leveraging projects estimated at a total of nearly \$670.9 million.

In May 2013, Governor Christie announced that nearly a half billion dollars for additional grants would be made available for needed construction projects in Regular Operating Districts and County Vocational Schools across New Jersey. The SDA's current portfolio of active grant projects represents more than \$1.5 billion in total project costs.

###