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Governor Christie And Camden Officials Announce New After-School Program

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Tags: [Education](#)

Six Schools To Participate In Pilot Initiative Designed To Encourage Student Success

Trenton, NJ – Governor Chris Christie today joined Camden Mayor Dana Redd and Superintendent of Schools Paymon Rouhanifard to announce a new pilot program that will help Camden students in need and their families. The After School Dinner Program, in partnership with ARAMARK, is being offered to all students at six participating schools in the district: Dudley Elementary; Octavius V. Catto School; HB Wilson Elementary; Hatch Family School; U.S. Wiggins School; and Camden High School.

"In Camden, we are beginning to see real progress on education issues from creating safety corridors to tackling the problem of high-school drop-outs," said Governor Christie. "This new After School Dinner Pilot Program is another innovative way to ensure children have an opportunity for a nourishing meal, which is a critical element to improving student performance and achievement."

The new pilot program currently has 75-125 student participants a day at each of the six schools. Meals are pre-packed prior to serving and consist of hot food items. Students only have to select fruit and milk. Dinner service begins at 3:30 p.m. and ends by 4:00 p.m.

"The After School Dinner Pilot Program is a great initiative that will truly help many of our Camden families who are working hard to provide basic necessities for their children," Mayor Redd said. "I am confident that the success of the pilot program will eventually allow us to extend it citywide. I thank the Governor and Superintendent for their continued commitment and support to our Camden children and families."

Studies have shown that missing a meal or experiencing hunger can impact student academic performance and behavior - from lower test scores and repeating grade levels to tardiness and increased school absences.

"We are thrilled to be able to offer this new pilot program to our students," said Superintendent Paymon Rouhanifard. "There is no doubt that nutrition is critically important to the health and success of our students."

Under Superintendent Rouhanifard, Camden is making important educational strides in just a few short months, including:

- The formation of a safety-corridor initiative that creates safe walking routes for students to and from school;

- Tackling the issue of the district's school drop-outs by going door-to-door to re-enroll students;

- The creation of three new technology demonstration centers to give students access to computer labs and tools needed to prepare for success in a 21st century economy;

- A successful 100-day listening tour which resulted in the participation of hundreds of students, parents and community members who came together on behalf of the future Camden and its schoolchildren.

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