

August 2001 Monthly Report

Introduction

August was a very busy month as the NJEDA accomplished the final site planning and installation of approximately 110 temporary classroom units (TCUs) in 10 Abbott school districts. In addition, NJEDA began the procurement process for regional project management firms that will oversee critically needed health and safety projects and permanent school facilities for the Abbott districts. Health and safety work continued in the Abbott school districts, and NJEDA executed a Memorandum of Understanding with the State Department of Labor to provide for construction jobs training programs. All of this progress combined to move the school finance and construction program forward at a steady clip. The highlights of the month follow.

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I. Early Childhood Modular Classrooms Ready for Abbott Preschool Programs

As the opening of the new school year fast approached, NJEDA Division of Design and Construction worked closely with the project management firms, Gilbane Construction Company and Bovis Lend Lease, to coordinate and manage the installation of approximately 110 TCUs at 29 sites in 10 Abbott school districts. These TCUs will provide the space needed to provide early childhood education for an additional 1,600 preschool children, ages three and four.

The 29 sites for the TCUs were excavated to prepare them for installation of the TCUs and equipped with electric power, water, sewer, live communications, and fire alarm systems. Additionally, each TCU has ramps to accommodate the disabled, a bathroom suitable for young children, a drinking fountain, and air conditioning (and heating) systems. Each TCU also comes fully furnished and ready for pre-K classroom use.

Two school districts that were part of the DOEs initial request for TCUs, Perth Amboy and Passaic City, have had special circumstances arise. Perth Amboy school district was successful in securing another site for its early childhood program, thereby making the 25 TCUs allocated for the school district unnecessary.

Land acquisition in the Passaic school district continues to pose the greatest challenge to the placement of 88 TCUs that are necessary for the school districts early childhood program. Two school sites are designated to receive a total of 15 TCUs, which will provide space needed to provide early childhood education for approximately 225 children. Site preparation is ongoing for 11 TCUs at another site, and three other sites are currently under investigation for an additional 47 TCUs to house 705 preschool students. The NJEDA continues to work with the school district and the DOE to identify more sites for 15 additional TCUs.

On August 22, 2001, one day prior to the scheduled installation of the TCUs at the Jefferson and Roosevelt school sites, the Passaic Zoning Board issued a "stop work order" halting excavation work on these sites. The City of Passaic claimed that approval from the Passaic City Zoning Board of Adjustment was a necessary precondition for the site work. In a legal Action brought by the State Attorney General in the Superior Court of New Jersey, the State sought and obtained a judicial order on August 27, 2001 preventing Passaic City from enforcing the stop work order. Once the court issued its order lifting the stop work order, site preparation on the two sites resumed immediately.

An additional four school districts, Elizabeth, Neptune, New Brunswick and Pleasantville, were

identified by the DOE on May 14, 2001 as requiring TCUs for their early childhood programs. NJEDA completed negotiations and entered into an agreement for the lease of vacant land to site 20 TCUs designated for the Neptune school district. In Elizabeth, 50 TCUs are expected to be installed in October and the City of Elizabeth has offered to place additional TCUs on parking lot sites. With respect to the remaining two school districts, NJEDA is continuing to work closely with the school districts and the DOE to address the particular circumstances of each school district so that the installation of TCUs can take place at the earliest possible date.

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II. Project Management Services Sought for Five Regions in New Jersey

The NJEDA has divided the State of New Jersey into eleven (11) regions and will engage project management firms (PMF) to provide project and construction management services for the school facilities projects assigned in each of these regions. In addition, the PMFs will assist the NJEDA and the Abbott school districts with establishing time frames and sequencing of facilities projects contained in the Abbott districts long range facilities plans and the districts first year priority projects.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) for project management services for school facilities projects in five regions of the state was issued by the NJEDA on August 16, 2001. The five regions covered by the RFP are Camden, Elizabeth, Newark, Jersey City and Paterson. The NJEDA will assign up to \$300 million of school facilities projects in both Camden and Elizabeth, \$400 million in facilities projects in Patterson, and \$500 million in facilities projects in both Newark and Jersey City.

A mandatory pre-bid conference was held at NJEDA headquarters on August 23, 2001. More than 75 firms were represented at the conference with more than 30 of these firms currently classified by the NJEDA as possessing the qualifications to manage an unlimited dollar value of construction work. Proposals are due on September 6, 2001, and the NJEDA's Contract Procurement Division anticipates completing the PMF proposed selections in October. The procurement of PMF for the remaining six (6) regions of the State is expected to occur in November 2001.

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III. Abbott Districts Health and Safety Projects

The NJEDA Division of Contract Procurement issued three Notice-To-Proceed for the construction phase of facilities projects in the Keansburg, Neptune and Pemberton school districts. In addition, a Notice-To-Proceed was issued for the design work for a health and safety project at the Benjamin Franklin School in the Elizabeth school district. Additional health and safety and new facilities projects were assigned to Gilbane Construction Company and Bovis Lend Lease, the PMFs that are managing the "pilot program," increasing the total estimated costs of facilities projects being managed by the firms to approximately \$100 million.

NJEDA Division of Contract Procurement met throughout the month with architects that have existing contracts with Abbott school districts for the design of school facilities projects. There is no need for the NJEDA to "reinvent the wheel" where design work for a facilities project has already commenced. Therefore, where appropriate, the NJEDA will accept an "assignment" of an architects contract and assume payments under the contract thereby expediting new facilities work.

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IV. Memorandum of Understanding with Department of Labor

On August 22, 2001, at a ceremony in the City of Camden, the NJEDA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Jersey Department of Labor to develop construction jobs

training programs for women and minorities, especially those located in the Abbott districts. The DOL will be issuing Requests for Proposals to third party vendors including community groups and apprenticeship organizations to provide life skills and apprenticeship training targeted to Abbott residents.

The DOL will be issuing RFPs on a pilot basis in three cities in order to test the program. The three pilot cities selected are Trenton, Newark and Camden. Once the DOL has had an opportunity to evaluate the program, it will open up the training program to other Abbott districts.

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V. Conferences/Presentations by NJEDA Staff

Presentations regarding the NJEDA's implementation of the school construction program were made at the following events:

Conference on High Performance Schools
August 1, 2001, Edison State College, Trenton, NJ
August 2, 2001, Richard Stockton College, Pomona, NJ

Presentation to Plainfield Minority Contractors' Association
August 7, 2001, Rose of Sharon Church, Plainfield, NJ

Presentation to NJ Association of School Business Officials
August 9, 2001, Wyndham Garden Hotel, Mount Olive, NJ
August 16, 2001, Double Tree Hotel, Mount Laurel, NJ
August 23, 2001, Holiday Inn, Jamesburg, NJ

Trenton Community Schools Meeting
August 21, 2001, Mercer County Community College, Trenton, NJ

Presentation to Human and Civil Rights Association of NJ
August 22, 2001, Monmouth Park Racetrack, Oceanport, NJ

Presentation to Hispanic Organization
August 23, 2001, Holiday Inn, Jamesburg, NJ

Graduation 2001-Essex County Construction Careers Summer Pre-Apprenticeship Program
August 24, 2001, The Robert Treat Hotel, Newark, NJ

Presentation at Newark Community Meeting
August 30, 2001, Metropolitan Baptist Church, Newark, NJ

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Prepared by Barbara J. Bohi, September 11, 2001