

Office of the Governor

PO BOX 004
TRENTON, NJ 08625

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Gene Herman
609-777-2600

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Gov. Christie Whitman today signed the following piece of legislation:

A-2606, sponsored by Assembly members Tom Smith (R-Monmouth) and Paul DiGaetano (R-Bergen/Essex/Passaic) and Senators Joseph A. Palaia (R-Monmouth) and Raymond J. Lesniak (D-Union), provides a supplemental appropriation of \$2.7 million for incentive grants to implement whole school reform in the Abbott districts for the 1998- 1999 school year. The bill provides grants of \$50,000 to schools for the purpose of implementing whole school reform as directed by the New Jersey Supreme Court in the Abbott v. Burke decision.

Specifically, the funds will be used to support first-year planning efforts, development of school based budgets, and other measures essential for implementation of whole school reform that have occurred during the current school year. The commitment of state funds provided by the bill also makes the state eligible to receive federal Title 1 and Eisenhower funds to support whole school reform. It is estimated that the Department of Education will receive \$850,000 in federal funds to fully fund the grant program for the first group of schools implementing whole school reform this year.