

March 2004 Monthly Report

Introduction

March marked another month of vibrant activity for the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation with contract awards, events and grants touching every part of the state. Construction notices to proceed in the amount of \$102,390,000 were issued for several projects. Design awards were issued for projects with construction cost estimates of \$102,500,000 also in the month of March. Staff participated in events marking various construction milestones, business forums and legislative testimony.

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I. **NJ Schools Construction Corporation Testifies before Joint Committee on the Public Schools**

NJ Schools Construction Corporation testified before the Joint Committee on the Public Schools, along with Department of Education Commissioner William Librera, in order to provide the Legislature with updates on progress being made across the state. The committee members were given an overview of the program and discussed the successes SCC has made toward fulfilling the mandates set out in the Educational Facilities Construction and Financing Act of 2000.

The focus of the message was on the overall theme of "Building a Better New Jersey" and underscored accomplishments within SCC's various missions of not only remaking New Jersey's educational infrastructure, but also building stronger communities and a robust economy.

It was conveyed to the legislators that educating our children is among the highest priorities of the State of New Jersey and our nation. For SCC, clearly our mission is simple – we are building 21st Century Schools for 21st Century leaders. The investments we are making will strengthen communities, our economy and the quality of life for our families for years to come.

Several policy areas that had been implemented program-wide – including incorporating LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) criteria in school design, focusing on diversity and small business and on schools as centers of communities – were also touched on. Moreover, the school construction program was framed in terms of providing living wage workforce opportunities, supplying prospects for targeted growth and its benefits for direct property tax relief.

Committee members were provided with pertinent data on how taxpayer dollars were being spent in an efficient and fiscally responsible manner with concrete examples. Through the course of the program, the State through SCC has provided temporary classroom space, acquired sites for new schools to be built upon, executed grants with districts where SCC does not manage construction, as well as procured awards for design and construction contracts.

One significant aspect of the program that was noted that did not receive a great deal of media coverage was the fact that this agency completed over \$660 million worth of basic health and safety repairs at over 344 schools.

Legislators were informed that large school additions had been opened in districts like Woodlynne, Passaic and Burlington City in 2003, with anticipated openings all over the state this year in Union City, West New York, Orange, Paterson, Perth Amboy and Gloucester City. In 2004, SCC has had starts in Newark with the Science Park and Central High Schools, Camden with the Early Childhood Center, and 7 in Trenton alone. SCC anticipates more construction starts in Newark and Camden, and in places like Irvington, Elizabeth, Perth Amboy, Gloucester City, Harrison and West New York, just to name a few.

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II. 1,100 Students Take Part in 'Beam Signing' At Manchester Twp. High School

SCC Funding \$12 Million for the District



Over 1,100 students participated in a “Beam Signing” ceremony to mark the progress of construction of an addition and renovations to Manchester Township High School as part of an expansion program by the Manchester School District and SCC.

During the course of the school day, the students signed a white-painted steel beam that was later hoisted into place as a permanent part of the 43,373-square-foot addition to the high school on Colonial Drive. It will entail a new science wing with eight lab classrooms, an instrumental music room, auxiliary gym, renovated cafeteria, and improved specialty areas, such as a TV studio, art classroom and technology labs. The high school, middle school and Whiting Elementary School in this Ocean County community are undergoing extensive additions and renovations as a result of a \$30 million bond referendum overwhelmingly approved by township voters. The work is targeted for completion in 2005. Under a special agreement with the district, SCC is managing the project while providing approximately \$12 million – about 40 percent – toward the costs as part of the State’s \$8.6 billion school construction program.

In addition to the high school expansion, the 25,200-square-foot addition to the middle school will include 18 new classrooms, four small group rooms, four resource centers, a conference room and teacher workroom. Renovations will add classroom and cafeteria space to the existing building. The 5,040-square-foot Whiting School project will include four new classrooms, a covered connecting walkway and media center renovations.

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III. **SCC, NJIT Team Up to Accelerate Environmental Review of Potential School Sites**

Partnership Will Allow School Projects to Proceed Faster

SCC announced in March that it has teamed up with the New Jersey Institute of Technology to ensure the environmental safety of potential school sites in a faster, more comprehensive and effective way.

SCC, overseeing the largest school construction program in state history, entered into an agreement with NJIT's York Center for Environmental Engineering and Science (YCEES) to develop a new program for environmental site investigations modeled after the "Triad Approach," a nationally recognized environmental review process. This new plan will accelerate the school construction projects by more effectively identifying any environmental issues on land SCC is considering for potential school sites. This will help expedite the process for land acquisition, which is one of the most challenging aspects facing SCC, especially in New Jersey's built-out urban areas. The three-pronged "Triad Approach" involves:

- An improved system with clear goals and uniform site activities to ensure thorough, effective and timesaving environmental reviews.
- On-site decision-making for field project teams and clearer direction on how to handle environmental review activities.
- Better use of on-site equipment for rapid sampling and analysis of soil and other subsurface environmental conditions to eliminate time-consuming, costly off-site analysis.

SCC is always looking for better ways to ensure that any potential site for a new school is safe and environmentally sound. With NJIT's help, we will develop a better way to evaluate a site's environmental conditions. Project teams will be better prepared and mobilized in the field with their equipment. They will be better able to use on-site analytical tools, interpret data on what they've encountered and take appropriate action more effectively.

Typically, traditional environmental investigations require repeated site visits for further sampling and take months to complete – expending time, effort and money. With Triad, it all can be done in the field on one trip to determine the environmental conditions of the site. The process usually can be completed within weeks. Once the necessary information is gathered, remediation cost estimates can be defined and informed decisions can be made with respect to land acquisition.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) and United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) support streamlined approaches like Triad for sampling, analysis and data management activities conducted during site assessments. Under the SCC agreement, YCEES will develop the necessary technical and program-related information to support SCC's broad-based use of the Triad Approach as well as to provide general technical support related to the school site acquisition process.

The YCEES will also establish a New Jersey Schools Facility Site Characterization and Acquisition Program (NJSFSCAP) that will increase SCC's knowledge of selected properties it intends to acquire, remediate and develop for school use.

The agreement will be in effect from April 15, 2004 through December 31, 2006. SCC will compensate NJIT for its services on an invoice basis up to a maximum \$375,000 for the rest of this year, and up to \$500,000 per year for 2005 and 2006.

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IV. **SCC, Trenton Students, Educators Break Ground For New Martin Luther King**

Jr./Jefferson School**Event Marks 7th School Project Now Under Way in the City**

Enthusiastic students joined SCC representatives and Trenton Public School District educators, city officials and community supporters at a groundbreaking ceremony to launch the start of construction of the new \$25.8 million Dr. Martin Luther King Jr./Jefferson Elementary School that will replace two antiquated facilities.

The milestone marked SCC's seventh recent groundbreaking for school construction in Trenton – with more projects on the horizon to benefit city students. SCC now has over \$90 million in school projects under way in Trenton as part of Governor McGreevey's visionary goal of revitalizing New Jersey's schools and communities.

This latest SCC project in Trenton will consolidate the student enrollments of the King Middle School – built in 1904 – and Jefferson Elementary School – built in 1916, expanded in 1950 – into one state-of-the-art facility. The new school, providing educational opportunities for 900 pre-

Kindergarten through 8th grade students, will be built on open space between the existing schools, which students will attend until the completion of construction, anticipated by early 2007. Jefferson School will then be razed. King School, because of its significant historical and architectural value, will be turned over to the City of Trenton for disposition.

The new 119,825-square-foot, two-story elementary school will comprise three distinct classroom wings – one for pre-K through 2nd, one for grades 3rd through 5th and one for grades 6th through 8th. Overall, the wings will encompass 37 classrooms. The project also features a cafeteria, gymnasium, science and computer labs, a TV studio, library, art and music rooms, faculty and administrative areas.



Jefferson School Choir

The project allows the Trenton School District to replace two of its oldest buildings with a single pre K - 8 facility designed to ensure that neighborhood students have access to the best possible educational programs. The project involved a great deal of community in the design phase.

Other SCC groundbreakings in Trenton since September include:

- \$20.5 million construction of the new Joyce Kilmer Elementary School
- \$15.7 million construction of the new Christopher Columbus Elementary School
- \$11 million addition and renovations at Parker Elementary School
- \$7.6 million complete renovation of the Patton J. Hill Elementary School
- \$7 million addition and renovations at Mott Elementary School
- \$3.9 million addition and renovations at the Gregory Elementary School
- SCC also is due to break ground later this year for construction of the new Roebling School and an expansion of Trenton Central High School.



Dr Martin Luther King Jr. / Jefferson School Rendering

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V. **Construction Update** **Construction Starts**

The SCC awarded 4 construction packages during the month of March for combined construction cost estimates totaling \$102,390,000. These awards will involve the following: Hunt Construction Group was issued a notice to proceed for the Central High School in Newark. The project award was for \$65.5 million and has an anticipated completion of January 2006. A construction NTP was also issued to Ernest Bock and Sons for the Wilbur Watts Intermediate School in Burlington City in the amount of just under \$26.2 million. The New Emerson Elementary School in Plainfield saw a construction notice to proceed issued to the Fletcher Harlee Corporation in the amount of approximately \$9.7 million. In Vineland, the Horizen Group of New England was awarded a contract for \$682,000 for a roof replacement at the Landis Intermediate School. A full list is attached as [Exhibit A](#).

As of March 31, 2004, SCC has entered into 389 construction contracts that total \$1,715,508,691 since the program's inception. In 2004 alone, 24 construction notices to proceed have been issued for contract amounts totaling \$393,806,597.

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VI. **Contractor Procurement**

The SCC advertised 5 construction packages for 5 school districts in the month of March, which will impact 9 schools. ([Exhibit B](#).) Design bids were sought for 13 schools in 5 districts in March as well. ([Exhibit C](#).)

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VII. **Design Update**

Three design awards were issued notices to proceed in the month of March. Construction cost estimates for the projects total approximately \$113,200,000. The new Lincoln High School design in Jersey City was awarded to DMR Architects; the school is anticipated to cost \$41,500,000. Similarly, NJ K-12 Architects, LLC received a notice to proceed for the design award of the \$64,000,000 Phillipsburg High School. The Brackman Middle School addition in Barnegat has a construction cost estimate just under \$7.7 million and was awarded to Thomas Associates.

As of March 31, 2004, SCC has entered into 236 design contracts with a total value of \$274,523,032, as well as assumed an additional 72 architectural assignments that

totaled \$89,221,049. Since the beginning of 2004, 9 notices to proceed have been issued for design awards.

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VIII. **Predevelopment & Land Acquisition**

At the March Board meeting, the directors granted contingent approval for land acquisition to take place for several projects. One such approval was for a 2.82-acre tract of land for the New Elementary School #3 in Jersey City. The new school will be a 131,000 gross square-foot facility that will serve 796 students K through Fifth grades.

Another acquisition approved at the Board's March meeting was for 7.7 acres in Newark. This property will be used for the New University High School. The overall project involves a 223,000-square-foot facility to serve a projected enrollment of 1,200 students.

The Directors also approved acquisition of property also in Newark for the Oliver Street Elementary School. The site is just under 4 acres and will be for a new 140,000-square-foot elementary school designed to serve upwards of 670 students.

Similar approval was granted for property acquisition in the City of Orange Township. The Cleveland Elementary School is to be expanded by 29,750 square feet to 71,150 and serve a projected enrollment of 464 students.

As of March 31, 2004, SCC has entered into 537 site acquisition contracts for appraisals, site evaluations, environmental investigations, title services and actual acquisitions totaling \$161,293,208.

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IX. **School District Grants**

SCC executed 41 Section 15 grants with 17 districts that receive less than 55% of their funding in state aid. The total project costs for these grants are expected to be \$120,088,487, with a state share anticipated to be worth \$40,574,934 of that total.

Several districts received multiple grant awards in March. Pascack Valley Regional High School District in Bergen County will receive grants for projects. The total project costs are expected to be \$42,266,795, with a state share of \$11,543,555. The Ridgewood Village school district also in Bergen County will receive \$374,790 toward projects at 2 elementary schools, 2 middle schools and the high school, worth \$936,976. Barrington Borough schools in Camden County will receive grants for 2 elementary schools with total project costs of \$9,993,951, of which the state will pay \$3,311,848. 2 elementary schools and a middle school in Long Hill Township, Morris County, will receive \$3,834,719 toward projects valued at \$15,998,957.

As of March 31, 2004, SCC has executed 1,294 Section 15 grant agreements with 365 districts that receive less than 55% of their budget in state aid for total project amounts of \$4,426,145,123, for which the state share totaled \$1,371,625,400. The program has impacted 985 schools in all 21 counties. In 2004 alone, 49 districts in 15 counties received \$107,367,414 in direct property tax relief as the state share for projects that totaled \$329,316,823 at 109 schools.

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X. **Office of Diversity and Emerging Business Markets**

SCC representatives spearheaded an outreach program for Small Business Enterprise (SBE) contractors to learn about the procurement and contracting opportunities available for Science Park High School and Central High School projects in Newark.

The program – geared toward small-, minority- and women-owned businesses in Newark and Essex County – featured a work session to inform SBEs of the process to pre-qualify for SCC certification, availability of technical assistance and other information necessary to increase local participation in the school construction program.

Over 200 people attended the 3½-hour session at Gateway Academy on Washington Street that provided SBEs with an overview of the school construction projects in Newark and the opportunity to network with those involved in them. Along with SCC, other sponsors included Newark Public Schools, Parsons Brinckerhoff+3D/I, and Hunt Construction Group – contractor for the Science Park High and Central High projects – and its major subcontractors. The program also included project managers, school designers, engineers and local service providers. This was an effort to tap into the local workforce and create opportunities for capable members of the community to truly shine and highlight their talents in this redevelopment initiative.

Programs like this will help us improve and streamline our outreach to small-, minority- and women-owned businesses, but also will help SCC realize our goal to significantly increase SBE participation in SCC projects, not only in Newark but throughout the State as well.

The Science Park High and New Central High are community-oriented projects that will bolster high-performance academic pursuits for more than 2,000 city students. The new Science Park High School will maximize 21st century educational opportunities for 800 to 1,200 students and incorporate a quality science high school within the realm of college science and technology. The \$63 million project, slated for completion in 2006, is being fully funded and managed through the SCC. Located on Norfolk Street and 13th Avenue, the new high school will be part of Newark's University Heights Science Park, a science incubator that includes several institutions of higher learning – New Jersey Institute of Technology, Essex County Community College, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and Rutgers-Newark.

The 290,150-square-foot Science Park High will include a media/technology center with an ITV lab, a long-distance learning system and CAD; classroom space divided into "Academic villages," learning modules for interdisciplinary instruction, and lecture rooms; fabrication room for robotics and other science-related activities; independent science research area; an auditorium, gym and cafeteria; and space for student services.

The New Central High School in Newark will provide 21st century educational opportunities for up to 1,200 students. The \$65 million SCC project calls for a 260,000-square-foot facility built on a previously cleared site over one city block on Spruce Street. The new facility will include classrooms, a full-service kitchen, auditorium, gym and labs. A swimming pool and recreation will be built at local expense. The new facility, which will replace the old Central High School, also is scheduled for completion in 2006.

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XI. **Conferences/Presentations**

2004 NJ Apprenticeship & Training Conference, 3/04/2004, Atlantic City

Alliance for Action School Construction Conference – "Where's the Work V?", 3/04/2004, East Windsor

Regional Alliance for Small Contractors' Clearinghouse 2004, 3/04/2004, Manhattan

Small Business Enterprise Contractors Outreach, 3/10/2004, Newark

Irvington Workshop, 3/13/2004, Irvington

Greater Camden Partnership Annual Meeting, 3/18/2004, Camden

Urban Core II Program – Strategies for NJ Revitalization, 3/18/2004, Trenton

NJ State Legislature Joint Committee on Public Schools, 3/22/2004, Trenton

Manchester High School Beam Signing Ceremony, 3/26/2004, Manchester Township

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Prepared by George Strachan, April 28, 2004