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JON S. CORZINE
Governor

For Kids

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Governor Proposes Streamlined Charter Approval Process

PATERSON - Governor Jon S. Corzine today announced significant growth in the number of and enrollment in New Jersey's charter schools. Since 2006, the number of charter schools has increased by 34 percent while student enrollment rose almost 55 percent.

In addition, as a result of Governor Corzine directing Education Commissioner Lucille Davy to review the charter school approval process, he also announced today a recommendation to the State Board of Education that a new process be adopted to expedite charter approvals. This expedited process will cut the approval process time from 18 months to about 11 months, allowing more charter schools to open within a shorter time frame.

"Community Charter School in Paterson mirrors the growth that is occurring at charter school throughout the state," Governor Corzine said. "I am proud of the work that is occurring at charter schools in New Jersey, as well as the work ongoing in many of our traditional public schools. Both our traditional public schools and our charter schools are preparing our students with the skills they will need to compete in the ever-evolving global economy and to secure a brighter economic future."

Currently, there are 68 charter schools operating in New Jersey. Six of these will open for the first time in September. Approximately 14,496 students attended charter schools in 2006. That number is projected to increase to more than 22,000 by October 2009.

The Governor toured the Community Charter School of Paterson (CCSP) which first opened last September. Founded by the New Jersey Community Development Corporation, the school served 350 kindergarten through third grade students in its first year. This year, the school has expanded to fourth grade and will serve 450 students.

"New Jersey is fortunate to have a number of charter schools that have been providing high-quality educational programs to children for nearly a decade," said Commissioner Lucille E. Davy. "New Jersey should welcome people with a track record of success who want to open additional charter schools by providing an early decision process. The proposed application procedures will recognize the effective work of proven charter school operators but still give additional time to applicants who are new to the process."

Charter schools are public schools operated by a charter granted by the Commissioner of Education. A charter school is open to all students on a space-available basis with preference being given to students from the district of residence or region of residence of the charter school. All classroom teachers and professional support staff must hold appropriate New Jersey certification.

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