



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

TAHESHA L. WAY
Lt. Governor

KEVIN DEHMER
Acting Commissioner

December 17, 2024

Dr. Robyn Kim, Superintendent
Mercer County
Lawrence Township School District # 2580
2565 Princeton Pike
Lawrenceville, New Jersey 08648

RE: DEBT SERVICE AID REQUEST

Title: PRELIMINARY ELIGIBLE COST: (PEC) DETERMINATION OF A SCHOOL FACILITIES PROJECT FOR A DISTRICT NOT REQUIRED TO USE THE AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE THE PROJECT, PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-5 AND DETERMINATION OF PRELIMINARY ELIGIBLE COSTS PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-7.

THIS PROJECT DOES IMPACT EDUCATIONAL ADEQUACY AND IS SUBJECT TO DOE FINAL EDUCATIONAL ADEQUACY REVIEW.

Lawrence Middle School

State Project No.2580-050-25-1000

Description: Addition, Renovation and Site Improvements

A MARCH 2025 REFERENDUM IS PLANNED

Dear Dr. Kim:

Your district has submitted an application for a school facilities project pursuant to Section 5 of the Educational Facilities Construction and Financing Act, P.L. 2000, c. 72 ("EFCFA" or "Act") and the New Jersey Department of Education implementing regulations at N.J.A.C. 6A:26-1 et seq. ("Regulations"). This project application has been deemed complete by the New Jersey Department of Education-Office of School Facility ("Department"), has been reviewed under the Act and the Regulations, and, as a result, the Department now makes the following defeminations regarding the above referenced project.

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December 17, 2024

I. Department determinations:

1. This school facilities project qualifies as a school facilities project eligible for State support under the Act.
Yes ☒ No ☐
2. This school facilities project is consistent with the District's approved long-range facilities plan ("LRFP") as approved or as amended.
Yes ☒ No ☐
3. This school facilities project meets the educational adequacy requirements.
Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐
4. This school facilities project is consistent with the District's applicable approved programmatic model contained in the District's approved LRFP, if any, or with the facilities efficiency standard ("FES") and the area allowances per FTE student, and does not exceed the model or the FES, as applicable, except for spaces for which the District is not seeking State support.
Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐
5. This school facilities project or a portion of this project qualifies as new construction because it is needed for ☒ unhoused students or for ☐ another educational adequacy purpose*.
Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐
6. This school facilities project or a portion of this project qualifies as rehabilitation as it is required to keep the school facilities functional for its original purposes or for new purposes but does not increase the gross square footage of the school facility and does not include any routine maintenance or required maintenance but may include capital maintenance.
Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐
7. This school facilities project may be subject to the environmental assessment or environmental impact statement requirements of Executive Order 215.
8. This school facilities project is a new school, and therefore must incorporate the guidelines developed by the United States Green Building Council known as "Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design ("LEED"), Version 2."
Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable ☒
9. This school facilities project has been determined to be an Emergent Project by the County Superintendent.
Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable ☒

II. Description of the approved school facilities project

The approved school facilities project consists of the following components:

ELIGIBLE

- **Construction of a 2-story approximately 62,500 GSF classroom addition consisting of arts, science, general classrooms, small group instruction, nurse's office suite, main office, guidance office suite, main entrance with security vestibule, and toilet rooms and courtyard,**
- **Construction of a one story approximately 15,750 GSF gymnasium,**
- **Construction of one-story approximately 5,850 GSF cafeteria addition,**
- **Renovations to the auditorium and stage area, cafeteria and kitchen areas, music classrooms, science classrooms, general classrooms, life skills classroom, and various multiple and single occupant toilet rooms.**
- **Roof replacement,**
- **Electrical service upgrades, emergency generator replacement, and domestic hot water heating system,**
- **Reconfigure the main office area into to child study team office suite,**
- **Reconfigure general classrooms into small group instruction O.T./P.T. classrooms**
- **Reconfigure a general classroom into an athletics team storage,**
- **Reconfigure the existing small group instruction classroom into a receiving area,**
- **Reconfigure the existing girls' and boys' locker rooms into toilet rooms and gymnasium storage,**
- **Installation of new security gates with card readers at driveway to rear of high school building and at driveway from Berwyn Place.**
- **Drop off/pick up driveway alterations.,**
- **Reconstruction and re-paving of parking area, traffic lane, and adjustments**
- **Installation of an underground stormwater basin at the synthetic turf field, with sidewalk access to existing paths,**
- **Ineligible**
 - **Construction of a new staff and athletics stadium parking lot with accessible route to stadium,**
 - **Construction of a new concession stand building with restrooms and maintenance garage,**
 - **Construction of new shot put and javelin throwing fields,**
 - **Installation of new ball stop nets at existing turf field,**
 - **Installation of a new multi-sport synthetic turf field with**
 - **Installation of new sports lighting system,**

December 17, 2024

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Building System	Impacted Systems (X)	Description
General Conditions	X	
Site Improvements	X	
Demolition	X	
Hazardous Material Abatement	X	
Foundations	X	
Superstructure	X	
Exterior Closure	X	
Interior Construction	X	
Vertical Movement	X	
Plumbing	X	
HVAC Sprinkler System	X	
Electrical Distribution	X	
Communications	X	
Fixed Furnishings	X	
Soft Costs	X	

December 17, 2024

III. Preliminary eligible costs ("PEC") for the approved school facilities project:

The District's aid percentage as defined in section 3 of the Act, N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-3 is 0.0000 % and State share will be equal to 100% of that percentage, except that it will not be less than 40% of final eligible costs.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-7 the following is the PEC for the approved school facilities project:

PEC Calculations:

Preliminary Eligible Cost Calculations for SP#:					2580-050-25-1000	Lawrence Middle School
	Functional Capacity (FC)	Projected Enrollment (PE)	Unhoused Students (UH)	Area Allowance / FTE Student (AA)	****Maximum or Actual Gross Square Footage (GSF)	Preliminary Eligible Cost (PEC)
*New Construction	551	815	264	134.00	Max: 35389	\$ 5,060,627.00
					Actual: 70779	\$ -
Other Eligible Costs for Educational Adequacy (Based on \$143/SF)					0	\$ -
**Rehabilitation						\$ 25,614,357.00
TOTAL PEC						\$ 30,674,984.00
Ineligible Excess Costs (Based on \$143/SF)					35,309	\$ 5,049,187.00
Ineligible Excess Costs (Based on estimated actual cost for rehabilitation)						\$ -
TOTAL Ineligible Excess Costs						\$ 5,049,187.00
Total Project Cost						\$ 88,100,000.00
*New construction costs are calculated using \$143.00 per square foot times the GSF.						
**The rehabilitation costs are compiled from the architect's line item cost estimate of the scope of work to be performed during the school facilities project.						
FY 24 DAP =		0.0000%			or 40% whichever is greater.	40.0000%
***The preliminary eligible costs for new construction will be calculated based on the maximum allowable additional gross square footage or the actual gross square footage, whichever is smaller. The final eligible costs may not equal preliminary eligible costs, pursuant to the district's right to appeal preliminary eligible costs under N.J.A.C. 6A:26-3.6. A change in final eligible costs will mean a change in State and local share of those costs.						

- New construction cost is calculated based on \$143.00 per square foot times the GSF.
- Rehabilitation cost is based on architect's line item cost estimate of scope of work to be performed during school facilities project. Costs were reviewed and approved by the Department.
- PEC for new construction is calculated based on maximum allowable additional gross square footage based on Unhoused Students, or actual gross square footage, whichever is smaller.

IV. Actions to be taken

A. Introduction: If a district constructs the school facilities project, the district will receive State support in the form of State debt service aid (pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7G-9). The district also has options on whether to accept or appeal the Department's determinations of space eligible for State support and PEC. Further, the district will need to take certain actions depending on whether the project is subject to educational adequacy requirements. **Please note that the above review is limited to the spaces in the approved programmatic model for the above-referenced school facilities project.**

B. District elected options: Thirty (30) days from the date of this PEC letter, the Department will issue a FEC letter with "debt service" as the State funding source. If the District does not agree with these elections, they must notify the Department prior to this action.

The following information is only for non- acceptance of the PEC elections.

The District has the option to defer the acceptance of the PEC **only on new construction** (related to \$143/sf). If the District chooses to defer a decision they must develop detailed plans and specifications by a design professional. At this time the District may appeal to the Commissioner of the Department for an increase in PEC (based on \$143/sf) in an amount not to exceed 10% of the PEC, if such plans indicate that the cost of constructing the approved school facilities project exceeds the PEC as determined by the Commissioner.

C. Educational adequacy and Uniform Construction Code review. If the other capital project **does not require** final educational adequacy review, the district is not required to make a final educational adequacy submission to the Department or pay the Department final educational adequacy review fees. **The district may advance the project, including review for Uniform Construction Code ("UCC") compliance as required to the local municipal code enforcing agency. If the local code enforcement agency declines to perform the plan review or is not classified at the appropriate level for the project in question, then the project may go to an appropriately classified local code enforcement agency or to the Department of Community Affairs. Because of added security requirements, plans and specifications for the construction of new schools will continue to be reviewed by the Department of Community Affairs.**

If this project **requires** final educational adequacy review, the district needs to apply to the Department for such review, and submit the total review fees, in the amount as determined under N.J.A.C. 6A:26-5.5, \$ 87,606.58, to the Department prior to proceeding with review of its construction documents for UCC conformance.

Note: The district must demonstrate to the Department that extraordinary circumstances require an award of the entire approval project scope in separate phases.

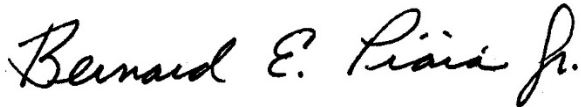
December 17, 2024

D. Executive Order 215. School facilities projects meeting certain State assistance percentage (at least 20% of total project costs) and cost thresholds (total construction costs in excess of \$ 1 million) and not otherwise exempted (exemptions include rehabilitation and new construction not increasing the building's capacity by more than 25 percent) are required to comply with E.O. 215, including the preparation and submission of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement as applicable, prior to site preparation and/or construction activity.

E. Final eligible costs and local support. A district may not seek approval of the local support (e.g., school bonds, lease purchase, etc.) for the school facilities project until the Department has notified the district of the FEC for the project. Also, no school facilities project may be constructed unless, if there is a local support amount, such local support has received approval as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:26-3.7. However, a district may seek approval of the estimated local share in its annual budget prior to a determination of FEC, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26-3.6.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, contact Anthony Brun by email at tony.brun@doe.nj.gov.

Sincerely,



Bernard E. Piaia, Jr.
Director, Office of School Facility Projects

BEP:ab

c: Amanda Schultz, Executive Director, Division of Finance and Business Services
Daryl Minus-Vincent, Executive Mercer County Superintendent
Thomas Eldridge, Lawrence Township School District Business Administrator
George R. Duthie, Fraytak, Veisz Hopkins Duthie Architects
Frank Ladvas, Planning Associate, Division of Finance
Anthony Brun, Office of School Facility Projects