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Officials to Announce Reconstruction Plan for a New Eastside High School

Reconstruction of Eastside High School Marks an Equitable New Era in Camden Education

Camden, NJ (September 18, 2023) – On Monday, September 18, 2023, Superintendent McCombs was joined by Congressman Donald Norcross, Senator Nilsa Cruz-Perez, Mayor Victor Carstarphan, NJSDA CEO Manny DaSilva, NJ Department of Education Chief of Staff Julie Bunt, Camden County Commissioner Director Lou Cappelli, Jr., Board President Wasim Muhammad, Council President Angel Fuentes, Eastside High School staff, students, and alumni to announce the State’s estimated \$105 million “Investment in Equity” at Eastside High School.

“We are thrilled to announce the reconstruction of a brand-new Eastside High School, a symbol of our unwavering dedication to providing equitable opportunities for every student in our community,” said State District Superintendent Katrina T. McCombs. “This project represents the next bold step in our journey towards creating a brighter future, ensuring that every child feels seen, heard, and supported. We’re not just building a school; we’re building a stronger, more equitable future.”

This project will help the district create several pathways to train our future educators, tradesmen, and prepare our children for a sustainable future.

“Our children's education and the quality of the educational facilities should not be determined by a zip code. Eastside High is long overdue for a new school and it was clear after touring the school last fall that the original investment would not live up to the promise we have made to our children. I am proud to have worked with our community, students, and every level of government to get our kids what they need and deserve. We know that children learn best in a healthy and safe environment, and that’s exactly why we are making this substantial investment,” Rep. Norcross said. “When the new Eastside High is finished our students will have a state-of-the-art facility that will lead to enhanced opportunities. Eastside High has a long and proud history and tradition, and this investment will continue that legacy for generations to come.”

“This announcement signifies an investment in the East Camden community, a commitment to the academic futures of our students, a pledge to support the needs of school staff, and a long-term pledge to offer quality school by the Camden City School District,” said Camden Mayor Victor Carstarphen. “Eastside High School has a long and storied history but the current building simply no longer meets the needs of our students. Numerous upgrades and repairs have been made to the ninety-three years old school. The school will be the last of the secondary educational facilities in the City to be replaced. Thanks to the unwavering commitment of Congressman Donald Norcross and Senator Nilsa-Cruz Perez, Camden will be home to the best collection of educational facilities in this region.”



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The reconstruction is being supported by funding for the New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA) included in the 2023 Fiscal Year budget approved by Governor Murphy and the Legislature.

“The SDA is delighted to once again have the opportunity to work alongside the Camden School District, Congressman Norcross, state and city officials to bring another new high school to the students, staff and community of Camden in the coming years,” said Manuel Da Silva, SDA Chief Executive Officer. “SDA is committed to advancing school construction projects in Camden and throughout the State that meet high priority needs. This school construction project will be instrumental in addressing facility deficiencies by providing a state-of-the-art facility that will be equipped with educational spaces and resources that will benefit generations of Eastside High School students.”

“The reconstruction of Eastside High School is a testament to our State’s dedication to equity in education,” said Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education. “We are not just building a school; we are building a stronger, more equitable future for every child in the community. This project represents the Murphy Administration’s commitment to the academic futures of our students, a pledge to support our school staff, and a long-term commitment to offering quality education in Camden. With this reconstruction, we are ensuring that every student feels seen, heard, and supported in a state-of-the-art facility that will benefit generations to come and bring about a renewed sense of pride for East Camden.”

“Eastside High School, a historic institution dating back to 1929, needs to be transformed. In short, the current facility is antiquated and inadequate for the students of Camden City and deserves more,” Senator Nilsa Cruz Perez said. “Our classrooms fall short of modern educational standards, hindering our mission to prepare the next generation of students for the future. This is a great day for the city and my district to be able to announce the construction of a brand new facility that will pave the way for both college and career success for our students for the next 100 years.”

Eastside High School is one of two public high schools run by the district. The building was opened in 1930 as a 29,300 square-foot school that serves students in grades 9 through 12.

“Creating a 21st century learning environment for the children of Camden County is critical for us to grow and evolve as a community,” Camden County Commissioner Director Lou Cappelli said. “Eastside High has served this community well through the 20th century, but now it is time to grow, it is time to provide equity for the city of Camden and it is time to give every Camden student the opportunity to learn in a classroom that they so richly deserve. I want to thank Governor Murphy for recognizing that need and keeping his promise to the children of Camden through the SDA.”

“As a proud Eastside High School alumnus, I am delighted to be a part of this historic event,” said Camden City Council President Angel Fuentes. “Although the building brings fond memories to many graduates, the current conditions are not conducive to learning or achieving at a high level. Our students, teachers, and staff deserve to have access to a quality school. The new high school will not only offer a much improved learning environment but will bring about a renewed sense of pride for East Camden.”

The reconstruction plan is expected to include:

- Automotive Lab
- Construction Trades Lab
- Medical Arts Lab



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- Nursing Assistant Lab
- Plumbing Lab
- Welding Lab
- Cosmetology Lab
- HVAC Lab
- Media Center
- Video Production & Digital Media
- Computer/Technology Lab
- Performing Arts Lab
- Business Entrepreneurship
- Music Lab
- SIFE/Alternative Pathways Programs
- Special Education Life Skills Classrooms
- Auditorium
- Gymnasium
- Cafeteria/Kitchen

The district will commence the planning and development phase for the new Eastside High School once the architect is engaged by SDA. Community engagement initiatives and input sessions will be organized to ensure that the new school aligns with the needs and aspirations of the community.

“Equity in education has always been at the core of our mission, and this new high school is a testament to our commitment to inclusivity and excellence,” said Board President Wasim Muhammad. “Our students aren't just the future; they're our present, and investing in their education now ensures our community's prosperity.”

The Camden City School District looks forward to working collaboratively with the community and all stakeholders as it embarks on this exciting journey toward a brighter, more equitable future for its students.

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