New Jersey School Boards Association

P.O. Box 909 ● Trenton, NJ 08605-0909 ● Phone: 609.695.7600 ● Fax: 609.695.0413 ● Web: www.njsba.org/PI

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Frank Belluscio (fbelluscio@njsba.org)

Mike Yaple (myaple@njsba.org)

(609) 278-5202

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Voters Approve Nearly \$140 Million in School Construction Projects

TRENTON, December 13, 2006 - Voters on Tuesday approved school construction proposals totaling \$139.9 million, ending 2006 with one of the most lackluster years for school construction, according to the New Jersey School Boards Association.

Throughout 2006, New Jersey saw the fewest number of school construction proposals and the fewest number of approvals since NJSBA began tracking referendum questions a decade ago. Voters this year approved 60.6 percent of the 52 proposals that school boards placed on the ballot, authorizing slightly more than \$390 million—also the smallest dollar amount of school construction spending that voters approved in any one year over the past decade.

In comparison, the most successful year for school construction proposals was 2003, when voters approved more than 78 percent of all proposals, authorizing a total of \$1.42 billion in construction.

New Jersey's Educational Facilities Construction and Financing Act of 2000 set a minimum state funding level of 40 percent of state-determined eligible costs per project. The up-front cash grants that were available through the Facilities Act dried up last year, leading to a sharp downturn in voter approvals. Before the Facilities Act was passed, 240 school districts received no state aid for school construction and another 108 received less than 25 percent. However, the state is meeting its 40-percent obligation through "debt service aid" that it pays to school districts in annual installments. The state's debt service aid is funded through its annual budget.

In addition to the 15 school districts that asked voters to approve new school construction on Tuesday, voters in the Cherry Hill Township Board of Education approved the refinancing of existing debt at a lower interest rate.

A 2001 state law limits school bond elections to five dates within a school year: the fourth Tuesday in January; the second Tuesday in March; the third Tuesday in April; the last Tuesday in September; and the second Tuesday in December. The next bond election date will be Jan. 23.

Following is a 10-year chart of school construction proposals, and the results of the Dec. 12 ballot.

New Jersey School Boards Association Annual Bond Referenda Survey Overview: 1997 - 2006

	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
# of Elections	52	89	71	93	102	67	89	89	75	74

# of Proposals Approved	31.5*	52.5*	48	73	72	50.17*	68.66	63.5*	45	39
% of Proposals Approved	60.6%	58.9%	67.6%	78.5%	70.5%	74.9%	77.2%	71.3%	60%	52.7%
Total Spending Proposed	\$910 million	\$1.858 billion	\$1.58 billion	\$1.69 billion	\$2.012 billion	\$1.274 billion	\$1.298 billion	\$1.199 billion	\$893.919 million	\$867.91 million
Total Spending Approved	\$390.65 million	\$1.083 billion	\$1.039 billion	\$1.42 billion	\$1.329 billion	\$970.1 million	\$1.043 billion	\$779.867 million	\$487.215 million	\$473.91 million
% Spending Approved	42.9%	58.3%	65.7%	84%	66.1%	76.1%	80.4%	65%	54.5%	54.6%

New Jersey School Construction Referendums Tuesday, December 12, 2006

STATEWIDE

Total amount approved: \$139,994,697Total amount requested: \$310,153,986
Information derived from ballot questions:

BERGEN COUNTY

Park Ridge - Rejected (all three proposals)

Proposal 1:

Expansion and renovation of the high school and two elementary schools.

Total Amount - \$58,317,975

State Debt Service Aid - 20.2% of total

Proposal 2 (contingent upon approval of Proposal 1):

Upgrade high school track and field, and install artificial turf.

Total Amount - 1,020,000

State Debt Service Aid - 40% of total

Proposal 3 (contingent upon approval of Proposal 1):

Construct larger multipurpose rooms in two elementary schools than set forth in Proposal 1; construct full-size gym; and various HVAC improvements.

Total Amount - \$4,700,000

State Debt Service Aid - 25.5% of total

BURLINGTON COUNTY

Hainesport - Rejected (both proposals)

Proposal 1:

Renovations and additions to the elementary school, and renovations for a new library.

Total Amount - \$9,259,281.63

State Debt Service Aid - 40% of total

Proposal 2 (contingent upon approval of Proposal 1):

Replace or upgrade of heating, ventilation, electrical and air conditioning systems at the elementary school.

Total Amount - \$2,696,829.37

State Debt Service Aid - 40% of total

CAMDEN COUNTY

Berlin Township - Rejected

Additions and renovations to the John F. Kennedy Elementary School and the Dwight D. Eisenhower Middle School.

Total Amount - \$7,389,955

State Debt Service Aid - 40% of total

Gloucester Township - Approved

Roof replacement at one elementary and two middle schools

Total Amount - \$7,800,000

State Debt Service Aid - 52.7% of total

Laurel Springs - Approved

Renovations to the Laurel Springs Elementary School.

Total Amount - \$2,855,711

State Debt Service Aid - 40% of total

ESSEX COUNTY

Nutley - Approved

Renovations and improvements to four elementary schools and one high school; addition and renovations to the Spring Garden School.

Total Amount - \$38,500,000

State Debt Service Aid - 40% of total

GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Monroe Township - Approved (both questions)

Proposal 1:

Additions and renovation to four elementary schools, the middle school and high school.

Total Amount - 36,551,312

State Debt Service Aid - 55.8% of total

Proposal 2 (contingent upon approval of Proposal 1):

Additions to four elementary schools

Total Amount - \$ 7,088,115

State Debt Service Aid - 55.8% of total

HUDSON COUNTY

Kearny - Approved

Renovations of facades at four schools

Total Amount - \$12,725,651

State Debt Service Aid - 40% of total

MERCER COUNTY

Lawrence Township - Approved

Replace roofs, windows or doors at high school, intermediate school and four elementary schools; complete an asbestos abatement program in various schools.

Total Amount - \$9,800,237

State Debt Service Aid - 40% of Total

MORRIS COUNTY

Lincoln Park - Rejected

Renovations and additions to elementary school and middle school.

Total Amount - \$8,965,534

State Debt Service Aid - \$40% of Total

OCEAN COUNTY

Little Egg Harbor Township - Proposal 1 Approved; Proposal 2 Rejected

Proposal 1:

Renovations to the Little Egg Harbor Township Intermediate School and the George J. Mitchell School.

Total Amount - \$17,764,375

State Debt Service Aid - 49.878% of Total

Proposal 2:

Construct a new elementary school adjacent to George J. Mitchell School.

Total Amount - \$17.805.448

State Debt Service Aid - 49.878% of Total

Ocean Gate - Approved

Renovations to the Ocean Gate Elementary School

Total Amount - \$1,186,916

State Debt Service Aid - 56.30% of Total

Toms River Regional - Rejected

Improvements and additions to nine elementary, two intermediate and three high schools.

Total Amount - \$13,426,148 State Debt Service Aid – 29.67% of total

PASSAIC COUNTY

Clifton - Proposal 1 Rejected; Proposal 2 Approved

Proposal 1: Construct a new school; renovations to two middle schools. Total Amount - \$46,578,118
State Debt Service Aid – 40% of total

Proposal 2:Construct a walkway bridge at high school. Total Amount - \$2,417,380 State Debt Service Aid – 40% of total

SOMERSET COUNTY

Branchburg - Approved

Replace HVAC and electrical equipment at three schools; install solar panels at the middle school. Total Amount - \$3,305,000 State Debt Service Aid -40% of total

The New Jersey School Boards Association, a federation of district boards of education, advocates the interests of school districts, trains local school board members, and provides resources for the advancement of public education.