



## **NJDOE News**

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### **DOE Recognizes Excellence in Charter Schools *Gov. McGreevey Increases Aid to Charter Schools by \$5.2 million***

Commissioner of Education William L. Librera today joined local officials in praising the good work at the Village Charter School in Trenton and Charter Schools statewide on the heels of the 2005 Budget, which increases aid to such schools by \$5.2 million. The total amount of money allocated for Charter Schools in 2005 is \$16 million.

"We have said all along that the Governor and the Department of Education support diverse and multiple paths to success," Commissioner Librera said. "Charter Schools are excellent examples of that diversity, which, when successful, allow our children some of the best opportunities to grow and learn.

"We understand that many of our Charter Schools throughout the state serve students who are at-risk or in low-income households," Dr. Librera continued. "This is all the more reason to recognize successful programs that work, and work well, and that is the case here at Village Charter School and other Charter Schools statewide.

"As with anything, we understand there is much work to do, but we are certainly proud of where we are," the Commissioner said.

The recently passed 2005 Budget includes an approximate increase of \$5.2 million for Charter School education. Charter Schools, plus other school choice programs, provide educational opportunities for more than 14,000 students and their parents statewide.

The Village Charter School in Trenton focuses on the following mission: to develop a community of learners focused on stimulating and building upon each student's intellect, social skills and character. The original charter was granted to the Mercer Street Friends in January of 1998. It opened officially in 1999, serving children in Kindergarten through grade six.

By the end of 2005, the school projects an enrollment of 323 students. It opened with 153 in Kindergarten through second grade.

As of the current academic year, there are 48 Charter Schools who serve more than 14,000 students in pre-Kindergarten through 12th-grade. Five additional Charter Schools are expected to open in the beginning of the 2004-05 school year.

For more information, please contact the Department of Education Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.