



State of New Jersey

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
125 WEST STATE STREET
PO Box 001
TRENTON NJ 08625-0001

JON S. CORZINE
Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: March 31, 2009

CONTACT: Robert Corrales
PHONE: 609-777-2600

GOVERNOR CORZINE ANNOUNCES NEW PATERSON SUPERINTENDENT

PATERSON – During a visit to PANTHER Academy, Governor Jon S. Corzine today announced the recommendation of Dr. Donnie W. Evans as Paterson’s new Superintendent of Schools. Evans formerly served as Superintendent of Public Schools in Providence, Rhode Island.

“The future of education is at a critical juncture,” said Governor Corzine. “In Paterson, that future depends on the ability of the city and its school system to produce a generation of hard-working, productive people who love learning. That means fostering positive, dynamic learning environments in the schools of Paterson, and adopting curricula to prepare students for the 21st century, knowledge-based economy. Dr. Evans is just that person because he is passionate on the potential of our young people and he cares deeply about fostering positive change.”

Education Commissioner Lucille Davy will formally propose Dr. Evan’s appointment to the State Board of Education. At that time, the State Board of Education will cast a vote to make the Evans appointment official.

Dr. Evans said that the number one priority in Paterson “is creating an atmosphere in which children can succeed in order to jumpstart student achievement and prepare our students for life in the competitive, 21st century economy. To reach that overall goal, we need to build on initiatives that have already begun in Paterson in four specific areas.

“We have to make sure that the academic programs that we use are research-based and proven to be effective. Second, we need to create healthy school cultures throughout the district. Our schools must be safe, caring, orderly places where students and staff feel connected and engaged,” said Dr. Evans.

--more-

“Third, we need students’ families and the Paterson community as a whole to work with us in the development of this greater vision for Paterson schools, because none of us can succeed without their involvement and support. And finally, we need to continue to show that we can operate in a cost-effective manner. We must prove that we can get the most out of every single dollar we have and still provide our students with the quality educational opportunities they need and deserve,” Dr. Evans said.

Dr. Evans recently completed a three-year term as Superintendent of Providence Public Schools in Providence Rhode Island. During his tenure there, the number and percentage of schools making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) increased from 17 percent to 58 percent. In addition, reading proficiency for grades 3-8 increased at every grade level from 8 percent to 20 percent. Math proficiency also increased in grades 3-8 at every grade level from 4% to 15%.

Previous to his work in Providence, Dr. Evans served as Chief District Academic Officer for the Hillsborough County Public Schools System in Tampa Florida. While there, the number of schools making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) increased by 25 percent for the year 2004-2005. Moreover, *Newsweek* listed ten of 23 Hillsborough high schools in their 2005 America’s Best High Schools. Three of those schools ranked in the top 100 high schools.

Dr. Evans also held joint appointments as Associate Professor in the University of South Florida’s Department of Educational Leadership and Department of Special Education for three and a half years. During his time at USF, Dr. Evans managed the statewide Leadership Development Institute for Principals and Special Education Administrators. He also created a doctoral program in special education administration.

He also served eighteen years in the Durham County Public School System in North Carolina holding positions such as Director of Programs for Exceptional Children, principal, assistant principal and math teacher.

“I also want to thank all the members of the search committee for making today possible,” said Governor Corzine. “Through your tireless deliberation and dedication in doing what is right for the children of Paterson, you have selected an individual whose life’s work and character suggest he will be equally as committed to making this great city the best it can be.”

An 18-member search committee was formed in June 2008 to explore potential Superintendent candidates. Chaired by Dr. Leslie Agard-Jones, a former Dean of the College of Education at William Paterson and consultant for the Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation, other members of the search committee included Willa Spicer, Deputy Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Education; Herman Badillo, former Congressman and former New York City Deputy Mayor; Ken Morris, Paterson City

Council ; Dr. Jonathan Hodges, Paterson Board of Education; Errol Kerr, Paterson Board of Education; Willa Mae Taylor, Paterson Board of Education; Wendy Guzman, Paterson Board of Education; Linda Crescione, Principal, Charles J. Riley School #9; Rev. James Kuykendall, President, Paterson Pastor's Workshop; Rev. Jose Luis Castro, Pastor, Central Baptist Church; Evangeline Gomez, Immediate Past Board Chair, Paterson Education Fund; Linda Smith President, NAACP- Paterson Chapter; Robert Guarasci, President, NJ Community Development Corporation; Zynide Banks, Nurse, PANTHER Academy (Paterson Education Association representative); Norberto Curitomai, President, Express Service Bus Shuttle Company; Maritza Davila, Assistant Director of Admissions, Passaic County Community College (parent representative) and Nina Odatalla, Teacher and Acting Administrator, International High School.

Dr. Dennis Clancy has been serving as Interim Superintendent of the Paterson schools since June 2008.

Paterson is the third largest city in New Jersey. The Paterson School District enrolls approximately 30,000 students who speak over 25 different languages and employs over 6,000 people, including 2,654 certified teachers. Students attend 34 different elementary schools that encompass pre-K to grade 8 in various grade configurations.

###