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For Release: December 18, 2001

### Commissioner of Education Renews Thirteen Charter Schools

Commissioner of Education Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr. today announced that he is renewing for five years thirteen charter schools. These schools were first granted their charters for four years in 1998. Commissioner Gagliardi's decision was based on the high quality of education offered to the children attending these schools since their opening in September 1998. Currently, New Jersey has 50 operating charter schools with nearly 12,000 students. Under the charter school law the Commissioner must decide whether to renew existing charter schools after their original four-year charter expires.

"These charter schools are an example of what we had in mind when the charter school law was first enacted in 1996," said Gagliardi. "Charter schools in our state are providing parents and students with excellent educational choices. In the thirteen schools we are renewing there are nearly 1500 students on waiting lists. Our charter schools are clearly high demand. I would like to congratulate the founders and the boards of trustees of these schools for rising to the challenge and providing high quality educational opportunities for children, especially in our inner cities."

The 13 schools whose charters were renewed are:

- PleasantTech Academy Charter School, Pleasantville
- Pleasantville Charter School for Academic Excellence, Pleasantville
- Teaneck Community Charter School, Teaneck
- Camden's Promise Charter School, Camden
- East Orange Community Charter School, East Orange
- Hoboken Charter School, Hoboken
- Jersey City Golden Door Charter School, Jersey City
- Emily Fisher Charter School of Advanced Studies, Trenton
- Greater Brunswick Charter School, Edison, Highland Park and New Brunswick
- Academy Charter High School, Allenhurst, Asbury Park, Avon, Belmar, Bradley Beach, Deal, Interlaken, and South Belmar
- Red Bank Charter School, Red Bank
- Unity Charter School, Morris County
- Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton

Among the strengths of the renewed charter schools are the provision of services to at-risk students, positive school climates, strong accountability plans, high levels of parent involvement, effective school governance and management and high levels of student achievement. The performance highlights for each of the renewed charter schools are as follows:

**Emily Fisher Charter School of Advanced Studies:** Strong efforts in serving students at the greatest risk of academic failure and strong efforts to support at-risk students toward the goal of school completion.

**Unity Charter School:** Strong indicators of positive school climate, well-executed approach to designing and implementing individual learning plans for students, and well-executed approach to engaging students in democratic problem solving.

**Academy Charter High School:** Well-executed accountability plan that includes undertaking improvements based on the examination of student achievement results, well-executed plan for at-risk students, and strong and well-executed plan to monitor curriculum implementation and assess student progress.

**East Orange Community Charter School:** Strong school-to-parent communication and partnership, strong indicators of positive school climate, and well-executed plan to make critical learning visible through performance-based assessment.

**Camden's Promise Charter School:** Well-conceived and executed accountability plan that includes multiple measures of student achievement, well-executed plan to intervene with students who are at-risk, and strong and effective school governance and management.

**PleasantTech Academy Charter School:** Strong indicators of positive school climate, and consistent enhancements to the learning environment to improve students achievement outcomes.

**Pleasantville Charter School for Academic Excellence:** Strong indicators of positive school climate and strong and consistent school-to-parent communication.

**Teaneck Community Charter School:** Strong alignment with curriculum goals, instruction and assessment, strong and steady focus on creating a school of self-directed learners, and well-executed approach to facilitating critical thinking skills while ensuring student competency in underlying skills.

**Hoboken Charter School:** Well-conceived and executed plan to make critical learning visible through performance-based assessment, well-executed approach to experientially-based learning, and well-conceived and executed approach to integrating civic responsibility into the school's core mission.

**Jersey City Golden Door Charter School:** Well-executed plan to intervene with students who are at-risk, strong indicators of positive school climate, and well-executed approach to undertaking improvements based on the examination of student achievement results.

**Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton:** Strong academic standards that are clearly articulated to parents, teachers and students, and well-executed accountability plan that includes multiple performance measures.

**Greater Brunswick Charter School:** Well-executed plan to strengthen language arts literacy, and well-conceived assessment plan to ensure that assessment data are used effectively to improve students achievement.

**Red Bank Charter School:** Strong school-to-parent communication and partnership, well-executed assessment system to ensure that assessment data are used effectively to improve student achievement outcomes and exemplary efforts to intervene with newly-enrolled students with academic weaknesses.

In addition to the thirteen charter school renewals, the Commissioner placed three charter schools on probation for 90 days, which will allow the schools to remain operating while they develop remedial plans to correct their deficiencies. These schools are International Charter School, Trenton, Granville Charter School, Trenton and Englewood on the Palisades Charter School, Englewood. These schools must file their remedial plans with the department on or before January 3, 2002. The Commissioner has also decided not to renew the charter of the Greater Trenton Area Academic and Technology Charter School, Trenton.