

Plainfield schools launches innovation and technology center

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The property at 1800 W. Front St. will be utilized for the expansion of current programs and for the creation of a center that will focus on math, science and technology. (Photo: ~Courtesy of Plainfield Public Schools)

PLAINFIELD – The former National Starch Co. property at West Front Street and Rock Avenue will become an innovation and technology hub for Plainfield Public Schools.

The property at 1800 W. Front St. will be utilized for the expansion of current programs and for the creation of a center that will focus on math, science and technology, according to a district news release. The school district acquired the property when the Schools Development Authority transferred ownership to the district in the fall of 2015 for \$1.

On Friday, Feb. 12, Lt. Governor and Secretary of State Kim Guadagno joined Superintendent of Plainfield Public Schools Anna Belin-Pyles, Plainfield Board of Education members and Board President Wilma G. Campbell, Assemblyman Jerry Green, Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders Sergio Granados, district students and other guests at a ribbon-cutting Ceremony today to launch the new effort.

“The acquisition of this wonderful facility is extremely important to our district. We are grateful for the opportunity to bring our students additional resources,” Belin-Pyles said. “We have plans to expand our STEAM Programs and we looking towards the future in developing an academy where we will be able to train our district’s students in 21st Century careers.



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“We want to prepare our students so they will be able to go into fields that require a strong academic background, problem solving, and a broader set of learning skills that will enable them to prepare for the future,” she added.

In addition, the new center, which has not been named yet, will become the innovation and technology hub for the district where students from Plainfield High School and the Barack Obama Academy for Academic and Civic Development will also be able to attend.

The adjacent location which is part of the acquisition, at 1700 W. Front St., is being used to house different Plainfield Public Schools as renovations and new constructions are carried out at their permanent locations. Currently the building houses Jefferson Elementary School, which serves approximately 450 grade K -5 students, and the Plainfield Academy for the Arts and Advanced Studies, which serves approximately 400 students in grades 7-12.



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Guadagno said Plainfield’s investment is on par with the state’s initiatives to increase educational opportunities for students throughout the State of New Jersey.

“We are investing in communities throughout the state, with a dozen projects currently under construction as of this past June,” Guadagno said. “These projects represent a state investment of \$705 million for first rate, state-of-the-art education facilities. We are keeping our promise to the State of New Jersey’s parents and students by continuing to create environments for our children to receive the best possible education.”

“I am very pleased with the support we have received from Lt. Governor and Secretary of State Guadagno,” Campbell said. “I am particularly excited about today’s visit from our state’s highest office because it validates what we have in Plainfield, great opportunities and resources for our students.”

During the event, Green presented five students from the Plainfield Academy for the Arts and Advanced Studies with General Assembly citations for their academic excellence, effort as scholars, peer leadership, and good citizenship. The students awarded the citations were: Jordann Powers, eighth grade; Anthony Martinez, 12th grade; Maryam Muhammad, 12th grade; Tammia Rosero, 12th grade; and Kayla Reaves, 12th grade.