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NEWS RELEASE

ELC CALLS ON INSPECTOR GENERAL TO LIFT FREEZE ON ALL SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

April 20, 2005 -- Newark, New Jersey

[In an April 20th letter](#) to Inspector General Mary Jane Cooper, Education Law Center is requesting that the freeze on school construction activity by the NJ Schools Construction Corporation (SCC) be immediately lifted in all school districts, citing spiraling cost increases and the threat to students and communities caused by the freeze.

ELC is also asking the Inspector General to publicly explain why the freeze was recently rescinded for non-urban districts, but remains in place for the urban or "Abbott" school districts.

"While we support review of the operations of the State school construction agency, this does not justify stopping vitally needed school construction projects in urban communities," said David Sciarra, ELC Executive Director. According to Mr. Sciarra, "these school facilities improvements have been ordered by the NJ Supreme Court to ensure a quality education for urban children, and they cannot be delayed indefinitely."

"The Inspector General should also publicly explain why urban construction projects remain on hold, while projects in the rest of the state are allowed to move forward," Mr. Sciarra stated. "The State has not presented any justification for treating urban school children and communities differently from everyone else," he added.

ELC serves as counsel to the plaintiff school children in the landmark Abbott v. Burke education adequacy case.

[ELC Summary of Problems Caused by Construction Freeze](#)

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