



**SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE NEW BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
~MINUTES~**

**PRESENT:** MAYOR MITCHELL, MR. BRUCE OLIVEIRA, MR. JOSHUA AMARAL (participated remotely), MS. COLLEEN DAWICKI, MR. CHRISTOPHER COTTER (participated remotely), MR. JACK LIVRAMENTO, MR. JOHN OLIVEIRA

**ABSENT:** NONE

**IN ATTENDANCE:** MR. ANDERSON, MS. TREADUP, MR. O'LEARY, MS. EMSLEY, MS. BETTENCOURT, MS. WALMSLEY, MS. FERREIRA (Recording Secretary)

Mayor Mitchell announced that School Committee members Joshua Amaral and Christopher Cotter will be participating remotely, via a speaker phone, as their geographic distance would make their physical presence unreasonably difficult due to employment commitments.

Public Comment

Arthur Kreiger, from the Law firm Andeson and Kreiger, stated that there are several municipal law issues concerning the 3/12/19 Memorandum of Understanding between the City and Alma del Mar. He explained that conveying the former Kempton School facility at no cost to Alma del Mar, would be a violation to the Uniform Procurement Act, the General Laws Chapter 40 Section 15A, and the Anti-Aid Amendment.

Jack Bartholet, NBHS teacher, noted that the the Memorandum of Understanding is short-sighted, particularly on the funding issues. He raised concerns that Alma del Mar will be able to apply for additional seats in only 3 more years, making the charter neighborhood school model an automatic pipeline to access NBPS' students.

Vasileios Kioutahialis, also known as "Lucky", questioned the Kempton school transfer to Alma del Mar and was concerned that the tax money would be going to charter school.

Ricardo Rosa, from the New Bedford Coalition to Save our Schools, shared concerns with regard to the charter neighborhood school model. He stated that the district should not engage in an "experiment" that has not yet been proven. He encouraged School Committee members to be mindful of the cost-benefit analysis when making their vote.

Superintendent MOU Review (PowerPoint Attached)

Mr. Anderson addressed the Committee and stated that his top priority is to advocate for the resources needed to advance the teaching and learning process in NBPS and navigate adverse situations into outcomes that will enhance our district. He noted that the collaborative conversations with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Alma del Mar (Alma), led to an agreement in which Alma would receive 738 less seats than the 1,188 originally requested. Thus, reducing the financial impact to the district from \$15M to \$4M.

Mr. Anderson explained the two votes taken by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) where it was decided that Alma would receive 594 seats if the conditions of the 450 seats agreement are not met. He listed the

possible scenarios if Alma is granted the 594 seats: no expansion in current programs, staff workforce reductions, larger class sizes, no school building updates, increase of Special Education cost.

Mr. Anderson commended his team for completing several tasks, over several weeks, that were needed to work through this process, a process that would normally take 10-12 months to accomplish. He stated that NBPS will continue to make strides by remaining dedicated to the teaching and learning process.

He continued with a presentation that highlighted the key points from the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and explained how NBPS' future investments are at risk. The 450 seats represent a \$4M financial impact to the district; the 594 represent \$8M impact. Mr. Anderson asked the Committee to consider the impact of the scenarios he presented and recommended a vote in the affirmative for the MOU.

Mayor Mitchell commended the Superintendent and his team for the amount of work that has been done in addition to the normal duties related to the district. He introduced the School Committee counsel, Attorney Elizabeth Valerio, to address the Committee and share the findings whether or not the concerns brought up by the Massachusetts Teacher Association's legal counsel, Arthur Kreiger, would be an impediment to the proceedings.

Attorney Valerio stated that the concerns regarding the Uniform Procurement Act and the Transfer of Property law can be addressed through the special legislation that is being contemplated (agenda item 5C). She further explained that the concern regarding the Anti-Aid Amendment is inapplicable, given that Alma del Mar is a Commonwealth charter school which is an independent public school.

Mayor Mitchell went on to explain how the district has progressed since the year NBPS was placed under State receivership and that the district could use more funding to continue to improve educational outcomes. He stated that Charter School statute creates a major cost imposition in the district at the time where finances are stretched; especially when the cap for charter schools doubled from 9% to 18% back in 2010. Mayor Mitchell noted that it was clear that New Bedford was going to get more charter seats which prompted the city and the Superintendent to move ahead and negotiate something that saved the city tremendous amount of money. The 1188 seats scenario would have put the city in financial receivership.

He highlighted that the district and school committee's goal have always been to get as close to 0 seats as possible; however, under the difficult circumstances, the district was able to achieve something that allows for the realignment of resources that is not available under the choice format and would save the city about \$4M. Mayor Mitchell said that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) left the district with a binary choice, we can either pay \$4M or \$8M.

Mayor Mitchell took the opportunity to emphasize that the district's position is the same as the community that advocates for no more charter seats. However, with the political and legal reality, it is the district's job to negotiate the best deal possible and make sure the tax payers are not severely impacted. Mayor Mitchell stated that the 594 scenario would come with cuts and massive tax increase as well. He explained that the former Kempton School facility, is an older building that is not worth that much in the market. Mayor Mitchell concluded by saying that it has been a difficult undertaking, but the district is ready to continue to work to improve the schools and see every student in the city succeed.

Bruce Oliveira agreed with Mayor Mitchell's remarks and stated that although he will support the approval of the MOU, it is not a pleasant situation. He believes that given the circumstances, this is the best scenario option for the students and the city.

John Oliveira commended the Superintendent for the hard work and agreed that the district has made great improvements over the recent years. However, he raised concerns that the terms in the proposed MOU reflect a fundamental change in public education and there was very little time to gather community's feedback. He was most

concerned that the school choice would be taken away from the families, as they would be assigned to the charter neighborhood school. He was disappointed that the decision took place even before it was presented publicly.

Jack Livramento expressed that it is a very difficult decision to make, but he takes into consideration the impact of the \$4M difference between the choices of 450 seats and 594 seats. He stated that the Superintendent and department heads have completed their work to identify the path that is less impactful. Therefore, he would be supporting the process of the MOU.

Colleen Dawicki stated that the school committee believes in the district's ability to educate all students and the importance to get as many resources to the district as possible. She noted that the Committee has a fiscal responsibility to allocate resources to our students, even though there are disagreements on the strategies, the goal is the same. She continued saying that the numbers represent a significant impact within the next 5 years which would affect people, students, teachers and facilities. She shared her frustration on how this process has divided the community that believes in public education and encouraged everyone to use the same energy to move forward and come together on behalf of our students.

Christopher Cotter was concerned that even though the district is praised by DESE for their progress and released of state monitoring, it appears that they continue to control New Bedford indirectly. He commended NBPS' administrators for their hours of work as they were taken from their primary jobs to run the schools district to address this issue. Mr. Cotter shared his disagreement on how DESE is demanding allocation of seats to Alma del Mar II and the MOU is more in favor for Alma. He continued saying that he also has concerns for the financial impact on the district, but cannot approve the MOU as the community voted against charter expansion and DESE is dictating what the district needs to do.

Joshua Amaral stated that this has been a very frustrating process, especially when the community opposed charter schools and the state policy makers seemed to have the intention to expand charter schools. He also believes that there has not been enough time for public process and the short timeline was around the needs of the charter school. He explained that the difference of \$4M between the two options, would be a financial impact that the district cannot afford. Mr. Amaral highlighted that NBPS has good leadership and good teachers and we cannot afford to stop the momentum that the district has built. He stated that the decision is very hard as he has to choose from two methods of charter expansion. He commented that no one runs for School Committee to have to make a choice of two undesirable outcomes.

### New Business

On a motion by Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Jack Livramento, the Committee voted to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between New Bedford Public Schools and Alma del Mar Charter School.

The roll call vote was as follow:

John Oliveira – No	Joshua Amaral– Yes
Christopher Cotter – No	Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell – Yes
Bruce Oliveira – Yes	

5 – Yeas      2 – Nays      0– Absent

On a motion by Bruce Oliveira and seconded by John Oliveira, the Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY to table item 5B on the agenda, concerning the transfer of the former H.A. Kempton School.

The roll call vote was as follow:

John Oliveira – Yes	Joshua Amaral– Yes
Christopher Cotter – Yes	Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell – Yes
Bruce Oliveira – Yes	

7 – Yeas      0 – Nays      0– Absent

On a motion by Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Jack Livramento, the Committee voted to request that the New Bedford City Council approve a home rule petition that would enable the implementation of the MOU between the New Bedford Public Schools and Alma del Mar Charter School.

The roll call vote was as follow:

John Oliveira – No	Joshua Amaral– Yes
Christopher Cotter – No	Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell – Yes
Bruce Oliveira – Yes	

5 – Yeas      2 – Nays      0– Absent


At 7:35 P.M., on a motion by Jack Livramento and seconded by Colleen Dawicki, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

The roll call vote was as follow:

John Oliveira – Yes	Joshua Amaral– Yes
Christopher Cotter – Yes	Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell – Yes
Bruce Oliveira – Yes	

7 – Yeas      0 – Nays      0– Absent

Respectfully Submitted by,

  
Adlybeiry Ferreira  
Recording Secretary

Reviewed by,

  
Thomas Anderson  
Superintendent, Secretary/School Committee

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

New Bedford Public Schools



School Committee  
Special Meeting  
March 21, 2019

New Bedford Public Schools

New Bedford Public Schools

Infrastructure:  
2,776,843 sq. ft.  
212.87 acreage

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

New Bedford Public Schools

- 2010 "Act Relative to the Achievement Gap" doubled Charter spending from 9% to 18% (up to 1,200 additional seats are available)
- **Alma del Mar applied for an additional 1,188 seats in August 2018**
- If the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education had approved (January 22, 2019 vote), it would have been an impact of more than **\$15 MILLION** on the NBPS budget and resources

THE FOUNDATION

NBPS GOALS

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4
High-Quality Teaching	Effectively use data systems to support student learning	Support a workforce that is diverse, highly skilled, and professional	Increase family and community engagement partnerships

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE (AT RISK)

INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

Staffing Levels

- Maintain Appropriate Class Sizes
- ELL and Special Education (inclusive practices)
- Student Supports (counselors and nurses)



Capacity Building (Professional Development)

- Instructional Leadership Development (Teachers and Administrators)
- Data Management and Use of Information Systems
- Educational Equity
- Social Emotional Supports

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE (AT RISK)

INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

Curriculum

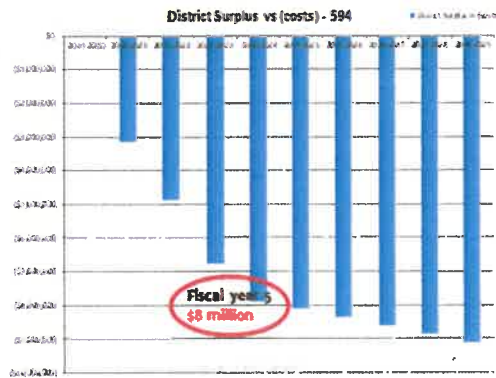
- Globalization of schools (enhance materials and access)
- STEAM Integration: Literacy focus (3<sup>rd</sup> grade more intense reading comprehension and writing)
- Reading Comprehension Program / Writing Strategies with MATH focus
- Refine/Assessment Process: K-5 School Based Literacy Leadership

## MOU KEY POINTS

To see the full MOU: [CLICK HERE TO READ THE MOU.](#)

- Under BOE vote (January 22, 2019), Alma Del Mar may enroll up to 450 additional students over a staggered 4 year period
- All students are drawn from a city determined neighborhood zone
- DESE will grant NBPS transition grants of \$1.5M over three years
- Neighborhood model increases opportunity for funding to "follow the student" as the district can reduce costs in neighboring schools

## 594 SEAT IMPACT



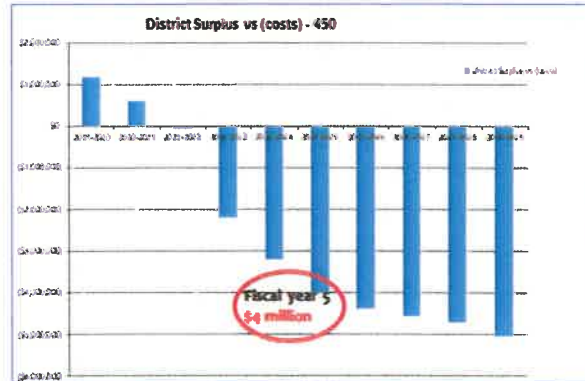
## SPECIALIZED SERVICES

New Bedford Public Schools

### SPECIAL EDUCATION GAP Impact

- Eliminate positions – no in-district options / more costly out of district placement
- Special items such as iPads, laptops, communication devices, physical therapy equipment (standers, walkers, specialized seating devices), etc., could potentially have to be eliminated from the budget
- students would only have access to used district equipment
- Staff ratios would be drastically impacted
  - less paraprofessional supports
  - larger substantially separate class sizes
  - larger related service groups
- NO additional social emotional and academic supports
  - possible reduction of clinical staff
- Diversion of funds:
  - funding for mandated services will impact non-special education services.

## 450 IMPACT



## 450 IMPACT

New Bedford Public Schools

### BENEFIT OF THE SITUATION

- NO Schools will close based on this expansion
- There will be a very small number of staff reassignments, which is consistent with previous years
- NO Layoffs/Reduction in Force
- Financial impact of \$4 million (fiscal year 5)

## SPECIALIZED SERVICES / SUPPORTS

New Bedford Public Schools

### FUNDING IMPACT

Decrease in district programming = Increase in out-of-district expenses

EXAMPLE: 6 placements (does not include travel time and time away from home district)

\$45,000 (tuition) + \$30,000 (transportation) = \$75,000

**Total: \$450,000.00 (leaving the district)**

OR

Invest \$120,000 (for staff, resources) and retain:

**\$320,000.00 to support other programming**

## TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

New Bedford Public Schools

### TECHNOLOGY GAP Impact Items

#### Reductions

- Loss of 2 full time Technology Field Technicians
- Reduction in maintenance of equipment
- No replacement of 605 laptops
- No replacement of 120 Teacher Laptops

#### Professional Development

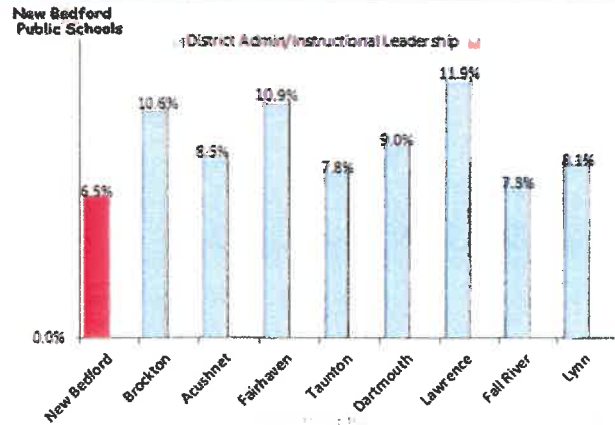
- Loss of technology integration training for teachers

#### High-Speed internet access at school buildings

- Loss of new high speed internet connections at 17 schools



## CAPACITY BUILDING: NEED FOR INVESTMENT



## THE \$8 MILLION IMPACT: SUMMARY

### Additional 594 seats = \$8 MILLION IMPACT

The collaboration is rooted in the state board of education's vote to give Alma an additional 450 seats in a neighborhood zone (January 22, 2019):

- **Conditional – based on successful MOU**
  - State voted to grant Alma an additional 144 seats (total of 594 seats)
- Filled by the traditional lottery system at Alma.

**The financial impact of 594 charter seats to New Bedford Public Schools would be an enormous sum of money – \$8 million dollars within 5 years**

#### This would mean:

- Larger classes for all schools
  - A reduction of about 35 teachers and staff
  - No increase in computers and other technology/tools
  - No replacing outdated computers
  - Limited upgrades to our school buildings – windows, doors, security measures
  - No new schools for several years
  - No increased staff and teacher training
  - No increased support for our students with the most severe needs
  - And limited strengthening of our curriculum to advance our students

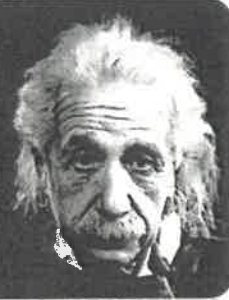
## SHIFT OUR THINKING

### IS THIS OUR VISION??



## THOUGHT

"WE CANNOT SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS WITH THE SAME THINKING WE USED WHEN WE CREATED THEM"



## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION VOTES

The basis for this agreement were the State Board of Education's two votes on January 22, 2019 <http://www.doe.mass.edu/beselminutes/2019/0122reg.docx>

#### VOTE 1: Alma del Mar Charter School (enrollment increase from 450 to 900)

1. The school will participate in good-faith negotiations with New Bedford Public Schools that will result in a memorandum of understanding that supports effective implementation of the proposed collaboration...

If the Commissioner determines that these conditions have not been met or that necessary legislation has not been enacted, this enrollment increase of 450 seats is null and void. The Commissioner shall report to the Board on progress toward meeting the conditions.

#### VOTE 2: Alma del Mar Charter School (enrollment increase from 450 to 1,044)

The Board grants this increase of 594 seats if the Commissioner determines that either good-faith negotiations on the memorandum of understanding between the school and New Bedford Public Schools have irretrievably broken down or the necessary legislation has not been enacted in sufficient time for planning and implementation of the model proposed in the letter of intent among the parties. The Commissioner shall report to the Board if he determines that this enrollment increase of 594 will take effect.

*BOTTOM LINE*

**\$4 MILLION (450 SEATS)**

**Or**

**\$8 MILLION (594 SEATS)**

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19

*SHIFT OUR THINKING*

**OR IS THIS OUR VISION??**



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*NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS*

**THANK YOU**

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21