

# Expansion of New Bedford Teacher Home Visit Program

At a press conference in City Hall yesterday, Mayor Jon Mitchell joined with Interim Superintendent Michael Shea, teachers, principals and parents to announce the expansion of the New Bedford Public Schools Parent Teacher Home Visit Program, a family engagement



program that brings teachers to students' homes to foster better communication and improve academic performance.

Mayor Jon Mitchell said, "Expanding this invaluable program was a promise I made very early on, so it gives me great pleasure to be able to able to applaud today all the administrators and teachers who worked hard to deliver on that commitment. This program is going to make a real difference in the lives of hundreds of families with children in New Bedford Public Schools."

New Bedford's Parent Teacher Home Visiting Project was piloted in 2010 at Carney Academy Elementary School to great success. The program has expanded from Carney Academy and is now offered at Hayden-McFadden Elementary School, Normandin Middle School, Roosevelt Middle School, and New Bedford High School.

The program is modeled after a project in California and is founded on the core belief that parents and teachers are equally important co-educators – the parent is the expert on the individual child's needs, strengths, and weaknesses. The teacher is the expert on the curriculum that must be mastered for success. Teachers conduct the visits in pairs and are compensated for their time. Each family is visited twice a

year. The first visit is to establish trust and a professional relationship and the second visit is focused on providing resources and information based on student need and grade level.

While the primary focus of the program is to foster school and parent engagement, at the secondary level teachers are sharing information about college planning and other post-high school opportunities. Funding for the NBPS Home Visit Program is provided by grantors including the Island Foundation and Bay Coast Bank as well as through federal grants including Race to the Top.