

New Bedford High School Receives National Academy Foundation Accreditation

New Bedford High School has received national accreditation through NAF's rigorous Year of Planning (YOP) program and is ready to graduate its three academies – Finance, Information Technology and Health Sciences – as NAF Academies in the fall of 2016.

As the most comprehensive high school in the region with the widest array of Advanced Placement courses, college dual enrollment, Division I athletics and visual and performing arts, the graduation of these academies lends national accreditation to New Bedford High School academics.

The NAF Academies serve to connect students with the business world, and graduates of one of the high school's NAF academies (all students select an academy) will receive a NAF certification on their diplomas.

"This national designation sets New Bedford High School apart from other schools in the area, and it's another reason that New Bedford High is the school of choice for students who want to be challenged in ways that make them competitive to the college selection process and attractive to prospective employers," said Mayor Jon Mitchell.

Superintendent Pia Durkin said, "New Bedford High School is a school on the rise, and this is a testament to the hard work of staff and leaders at the high school. NAF Academies are a way for our students to gain valuable real-world experience and to stand out when they go on to their incredibly bright futures as they go on to the best colleges in the country or the workforce."

“New Bedford High is one of just eight schools in the nation to graduate more than one NAF Academy at the same time, and this is evidence that our staff is committed to providing the best education for every student here,” said Headmaster Bernadette Coelho. “This distinction will serve New Bedford High alumni well as they continue their education and career pathways.”

Mayor Mitchell, Dr. Durkin, and Ms. Coelho were joined by members of the Education & Industry Coordinating Council (EICC), a group of local businesspeople who serve in an advisory capacity to the Academies’ career connections, and NBHS’s, Jane Jacobsen, Academy Coordinator and Facilitator of the EICC.

- The Academy of Finance connects high school students with the world of financial services, offering a curriculum that covers banking and credit, financial planning, international finance, securities, insurance, accounting, and economics.
- The Academy of Information Technology prepares students for career opportunities in programming, database administration, web design and administration, digital networks, and other areas in the expanding digital workplace.
- The Academy of Health Sciences addresses the critical achievement gap in STEM fields and develops a pipeline of students prepared to pursue health-related degrees and professions in one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy, including biotechnology, genetics, nursing, therapeutics, and diagnostics.

The Academy of Engineering is already NAF-accredited, and the Academy of Arts & Humanities is an independent NBHS Academy based on students’ academic interests.

- The Academy of Engineering answers an acute need for engineers in this country by educating high school students in the principles of engineering, and providing content in the

fields of electronics, biotech, aerospace, civil engineering, and architecture. Academies benefit from support provided by National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME), ConnectEd, and SME Education Foundation.

– The Academy of Arts & Humanities focuses on visual and performing arts, literature, communications and journalism, traditional humanities and liberal arts, and social sciences including legal services and criminal justice courses, preparing students to apply their education in these subjects to college and career.

NAF President JD Hoyer, said, “On behalf of the entire NAF network, I’d like to congratulate New Bedford High’s NAF Academies on this magnificent milestone and welcome them into our family! We look forward to watching our newest academies grow and flourish, as they can be confident that they will possess all the tools and resources they need to become Future Ready.”

NBHS will join NAF’s network of over 700 academies across 36 states, including DC and the U.S. Virgin Islands. NAF provides high school students with career-themed instruction and hands on experiences in viable industries including finance, hospitality & tourism, information technology, engineering, and health sciences. To start a NAF academy, interested schools must apply and then be chosen through a selective process. They then begin the eighteen month “Year of Planning” program aimed at ensuring that the new academies will fulfill their promise to students and the community. For more information, please visit [**www.naf.org**](http://www.naf.org).