

# **New Bedford Public Schools opens 7 “Family Engagement Centers”**

New Bedford Public Schools has opened seven Family Engagement Centers, located throughout the City of New Bedford school district. A public opening ceremony and reception for the new network of centers was held today at Hayden McFadden Elementary School. The event was attended by families, students, staff, community resource partners, school committee members, special guests and included a ribbon cutting with students. Speakers included Superintendent Thomas Anderson, Jariel Vergne, District Wraparound Manager, and Tammy Morgan, Hayden McFadden Principal.

The Family Engagement Center (FEC) program first began with pilot centers at Parker and Renaissance Schools. Today's launch celebrates a total of seven Family Engagement Centers. The FECs will be located at New Bedford High School, Normandin MS, Keith MS, Roosevelt MS, Gomes/Renaissance, Hayden-McFadden and Jacobs Elementary Schools. FECs will provide multilingual services to families, referrals, parent workshops, computer access, family resources and support, as well as special activities and events for families of New Bedford Public Schools.

Jariel Vergne welcomed guests, noting that the new centers and the services they will provide to families is the culmination of two years of planning to create “an alternative access entryway and collaboration point for our schools. We really want to think about how we take family engagement at every single one of our schools to the next level, and this is one of the ways; by creating another entry point where we can work together – collaborate – partners, families and schools

together, to really bring home that home/school partnership.”

Superintendent Anderson remarked “This is an amazing opportunity to further our work in educating and empowering and engaging all our families in their students’ growth and journey through school. This is what it is all about; we must tie everything back to the best interest of our students, always keeping our focus on you, our families and our children.”

Principal Morgan noted that her school’s hosting of a Family Engagement Center “will not just benefit our Hayden McFadden families, but will also serve as a community resource for all New Bedford Public School families living in the north end of our city. Our vision for Hayden McFadden Elementary School is much like the district vision for New Bedford Public Schools: Cultivating, nurturing, and strengthening the partnerships between home and school so our students can achieve the highest levels of success; academically, socially, and behaviorally.”

Thanking the resource organizations present, Principal Morgan recognized the many NBPS staff that worked to establish the Centers, including Jarriel Vergne, Erin Duarte, Eliany Grace, Hayden McFadden Parent Support Specialist, and Jasmine Vega, Hayden McFadden wrap around manager. “We are one team working together: home, school and community: for the betterment of our children and there is nothing we will not do for our students to reach their highest potential,” she said.

Participating community resource organizations included: Boston Medical Center Health Net; Child and Family Services CSA Program; Greater New Bedford Women’s Center; New Bedford Public Schools; Northstar Learning Centers; P.A.C.E (People Acting in Community Endeavors)l Parent Information Network (P.I.N.); Shannon Outreach Program, New Bedford Police Department; and W.I.C (Women, Infants and Children).

Following the ribbon-cutting by the Hayden McFadden Student Ambassadors, a reception and light luncheon was provided by the Trinity Day Academy Culinary Program.



### **About NBPS Family Engagement Centers:**

New Bedford Public Schools Family Engagement Centers' mission is to empower and strengthen authentic home, school and community relationship to ensure student success. School staff will collaborate through our centers to work with families to try to meet their needs, in efforts to increase the student's academic achievements.

### **Family Engagement Center Core Beliefs:**

1. All families have dreams for their children and want the best for them.
2. All families have the capacity to support their children's learning.
3. Families and school staff are equal partners.
4. The responsibility for cultivating and sustaining partnerships among school, home and community rest primarily with the educators.

### **Family Engagement Center locations and contacts:**

- Hayden McFadden ES – FECHaydenMcFadden@newbedfordschools.org
- Irwin M. Jacobs ES – FECJacobs@newbedfordschools.org
- Keith MS – FECKeith@newbedfordschools.org
- Normandin MS – FECNormandin@newbedfordschools.org
- Renaissance ES – FECRenaissance@newbedfordschools.org
- Roosevelt MS – FECRoosevelt@newbedfordschools.org
- New Bedford High School – FECNBHS@newbedfordschools.org