

# New Bedford's Mayor Mitchell announces long-term lease for PACE at Greene School

*Head Start program secures dedicated home, increased grant ability.*

Mayor Jon Mitchell announced that the City of New Bedford has established a long-term lease agreement with PACE, which will now have a dedicated home for its Head Start child development program in the former T.A. Greene School at 32 Madison St.

While PACE Head Start has been occupying 32 Madison St. since 1992, the family-centered program had been using short-term leases that offered a degree of flexibility but hindered long-term operating arrangements, capital fundraising campaigns and grant applications. The current short-term agreement was set to expire June 30.

The establishment of a long-term lease is a landmark occasion for the private nonprofit formally known as People Acting in Community Endeavors, which will now have the ability to apply for grants specifically geared toward early childhood education facilities that need capital improvements. At the conclusion of the lease's 25-year term, PACE will have the opportunity to take full ownership of the building.

"Securing a long-term home for PACE Head Start in its Greene School location is a milestone in our effort to support quality childcare options for New Bedford families," Mayor Jon Mitchell said. "It will facilitate building upgrades necessary for a successful early learning environment."

Pam Kuechler, Executive Director of PACE, said: "Our agency is excited to celebrate this momentous occasion in our 40th year of operation. We are grateful to secure our long-term future

in a part of the city we're proud to call home. With this commitment, we can attract the capital resources necessary to maintain and enhance our high-quality learning spaces, and preserve this valuable historic school site into the future."

Head Start Program Director Jill Fox stated: "We are happy to be in such a great neighborhood, close to bus lines, the library and great playgrounds." Fox said the program will complete a major bathroom renovation at the site this month, and plans to conduct masonry repairs, roof improvements, and window replacements in the future.

PACE Head Start and Early Head Start provide family-centered child development programming for more than 260 income-eligible families with children up to age 5 in the Greater New Bedford area. The program is free for families who qualify. Part-day and full-day center-based services are available Monday through Friday. Learn more online.

PACE, established 40 years ago in 1982, is a multi-faceted social services nonprofit serving Greater New Bedford whose mission is to deliver innovative and effective programs and services to the community in their pursuit of brighter futures. In addition to Head Start, PACE provides other early childhood, adult education, family support, housing, health, and basic needs programs throughout the area.

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