

# **New Bedford Public Schools, Housing Authority, BayCoast Bank partner for Technology- Based Reading Program at Pacheco School**

An exciting partnership between the New Bedford Public Schools and New Bedford Housing Authority has given students more opportunities and options when it comes to reading and improving literacy skills through technology after a generous grant of \$5,000 from BayCoast Bank to the NBHA.

Through a pilot program at Carlos Pacheco Elementary Schools, NBPS students have received tablets with a platform that is designed to increase skills for reading in elementary students.

The MyOn platform is a digital library that can be used to promote and assess reading for elementary school students, and can be accessed from any device with internet connectivity. Thousands of age-appropriate e-books for children in the digital library can be accessed without wi-fi internet connection, allowing readers constant access to the chosen material. Students can also check in regularly with staff for a synching process where data is uploaded for educators' review.

NBPS Teachers and NBHA liaisons have worked collaboratively to set learning goals and monitor student progress, with the data rich applications providing regular feedback on student progress.

The program is focused not only on reading and providing technology training and skills, but also on increasing

mathematical skills, practicing math facts and applications, engaging in problem-solving activities, and connecting in-school knowledge to at-home activities around literacy and learning.



NBHA and NBPS have partnered together for the past three years and recently, a diverse group of community stakeholders in New Bedford have joined together to work on a plan that will include the city in the national Campaign for Grade Level Reading (GLR). Based on the premise that addressing the achievement gap, specifically the concern around children's reading on grade level by age 8, is critical for children's success, this nationwide campaign is comprised of communities nationwide working to create an infrastructure to support pre-K to Grade 3 reading success.

“The Housing Authority is pleased that our partnership with BayCoast Bank has allowed for the purchase of the MyOn tablets,” said NBHA Executive Director Steven Beauregard. “When we saw the trial version of the program, we knew immediately this was a game changer in terms of students having a greater willingness to read, while teachers monitor the students’ reading and comprehension results. We are such a believer in this program that the NBHA has purchased our own tablets for our after-school programs. We can’t thank BayCoast Bank enough for financing this important project.”

“Encouraging reading has always been important for young elementary school students, but the MyOn platform has allowed our educators the opportunity to track students’ progress in real-time and to note students who perform well or who may need more support,” said Superintendent Pia Durkin. “This critical investment in our students will foster an appreciation of reading, and focus students on learning important math and technology skills.”