

Smooth Sailing into Kindergarten at Buttonwood Park Zoo, August 9

A child's transition to kindergarten is an important educational milestone. Making that transition a success requires a team effort from teachers, principals, community partners, and families.

On Friday, August 9, New Bedford Public Schools, in coordination with more than 20 community organizations that make up the New Bedford Birth to 3rd Partnership, will hold a "Smooth Sailing into Kindergarten" Day of Celebration event at Buttonwood Park Zoo. This event is for all children registered to begin Kindergarten this fall. Children can register on that day if they are not already registered. Children and their families will receive free admission to the zoo between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. and are welcome to stay for the day. Special prizes will be awarded by drawing.

Preregistered families in need of transportation may present their postcard for free bus access to the zoo courtesy of the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA). A return trip STRA bus pass will be available at the SRTA table during the event from 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. to any registered family that requests one.

This is the fourth annual Smooth Sailing day of celebration. Last year's event was a huge success with 1,150 attendees, including 264 kindergartners.

New Bedford Public Schools Family Welcome Center works throughout the year on kindergarten registration, part of a larger strategy to meet and partner with families when their children are still preschool-age. The district is also working to expand high-quality preschool offerings and professional

development for preschool teachers, in collaboration with community-based preschools.

New Bedford Public Schools expresses its sincere thanks to Buttonwood Park Zoo for hosting Smooth Sailing into Kindergarten and to SRTA for providing free transportation to and from the zoo. Special thanks to the New Bedford Birth-to-3rd-Grade Partnership and its School Readiness Subcommittee and partners, including: B.M.C. Health Net, Big Brother Big Sister. Coastline Elderly Foster Grandparent Program, Greater New Bedford Community Health Center's WIC Program, Kennedy-Donovan Early Intervention and Healthy Families Program Little People's College, New Bedford Community Connections Coalition and Family Resource Center, New Bedford Early Literacy Consortium, New Bedford Free Public Library, New Bedford High School JROTC, New Bedford Housing Authority, New Bedford Police Department, New Bedford Whaling Museum, NorthStar Learning Centers, P.A.C.E. Child Care Works Inc., PACE Headstart, School on Wheels, Tifereth Israel Congregational Synagogue, and YMCA Southcoast.