

## Pia Durkin, PhD

November 16, 2017

Dear Mayor Jonathan Mitchell, Dr. Lawrence Finnerty, Mr. Joshua Amaral, Mr. Christopher Cotter, Mr. Jack Livramento, Mr. Jack Nobrega, and Mr. Bruce Oliveira:

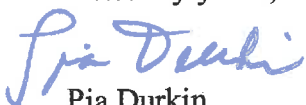
With this letter, I am respectfully resigning as Superintendent of New Bedford Public Schools as of June 30, 2018. During the last several weeks, ongoing discussions by some current and incoming school committee members have reflected major philosophical differences with those of my own. I have championed the district's progress and believe that our work has been validated by the state, this community, and the students and families we serve. The opportunities that all New Bedford students need in order to succeed in school and beyond must be available and accessible, particularly for those students affected by poverty. I have made this a cornerstone of our work and I earnestly hope that this remains a priority for our community.

I am incredibly proud of the work we have accomplished along with the talented and caring educators and staff who I am privileged to work with during my tenure. We have reached many milestones that now proudly show the entire Commonwealth that New Bedford is a very different educational system than it was five years ago. Those milestones include:

- Restoration of full-day Fridays so elementary students no longer leave mid-day, as they did for 41 years, and now participate in the electives of art, music, PE, and technology
- Movement of more schools to the highest achievement percentile rank and the removal of three schools out of the lowest percentile rank
- Hiring of 60 ESL teachers to meet the needs of previously unserved English Learner students who now represent nearly 30% of our school population
- Full NEASC accreditation awarded to New Bedford High School
- Significant increases in the HS Graduation Rate to 70%
- Increase in Advanced Placement qualifying scores from 22% to 36% this past year
- Release of the district from DESE Monitoring demonstrating trust in the district to continue to stay on track without outside intervention

I have lived in this community for the past four years and have grown to love all its aspects and particularly the 13,000 New Bedford children and their families who have embraced me into their world. Between now and my leave date in June, I will continue to work with my amazing team of principals and administrators who remain relentless to do what is best for the children they serve. I am more than willing to assist you in the change to new leadership so that there is a smooth transition. You can be sure that I will continue to lift our schools to the heights they deserve and to the level of excellence this great community should and will demand for its youngest residents.

Sincerely yours,



Pia Durkin  
Superintendent