

May 15, 2019

Representative Antonio F.D. Cabral  
Massachusetts State House  
24 Beacon Street  
Room 466  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative Cabral,

We write to offer our full support of the bill (HD4174) that will allow the establishment of a neighborhood school for a new Alma del Mar campus in New Bedford.

Filed by Representatives Christopher Markey and Paul Schmid, the passage of this bill is the final legislative hurdle in the ground-breaking partnership agreement between the City of New Bedford and Alma del Mar—a partnership agreement that has the overwhelming support of Mayor Jon Mitchell, the City Council, the New Bedford School Committee, and the Alma del Mar board of directors.

We are writing on behalf of The Regeneration Project of the New Bedford Economic Development Council—a collaborative platform that represents community, institutional, and business leaders who are committed to shaping, advocating for, and tangibly advancing strategies for sustainable and shared growth for the City of New Bedford and the region. This agreement not only brings together the New Bedford Public School district with a prominent charter school in a first-of-its-kind partnership, it is also a solution that is critical to the stability of all other public schools and the City's finances.

The success of the more than 13,000 school children being educated in our city is vital to New Bedford's future economic success. However, if city government must find a way to fund \$8 million for a 595-seat expansion of Alma, rather than the \$4 million 450-seat neighborhood school, the consequences will be dire. If this bill before the House and Senate does not pass, Superintendent Thomas Anderson has indicated significant staff reductions will result. Mayor Mitchell has also predicted that he will be forced to cut services and increase taxes. Such cuts to school and municipal services do nothing to help students, teachers, local business, or our citizens.

Now is the time to support the voices of New Bedford's elected leaders and their partners and pass HD4174 in the House and the Senate. This agreement was crafted with great care by all of the parties involved, and it took the courage to compromise. We understand that this choice was not an easy one for the School Committee or City Council, but a perfect third option does not exist, and they did the right thing by voting to approve the agreement. While outside groups may protest or file a lawsuit to stop this legislation, we ask who does that benefit—certainly not the children of New Bedford.

We ask all of our representatives at the State House to support this agreement on behalf of all citizens of New Bedford. As we have said before, we all want the same success for all New Bedford students, and this is an important step on the way to comprehensive reforms. To make that success possible, we must all be in this together.

Sincerely,

**Anthony Sapienza**

President  
New Bedford Economic Dev. Council

**Nicholas Christ**

President and CEO  
BayCoast Bank

**Keith Hovan**

President and CEO  
SouthCoast Health System

**Elizabeth Isherwood**

Chairman  
Greater New Bedford Industrial Foundation

**Joseph Nauman**

Executive Vice President, Corporate and Legal (retired)  
Acushnet Company

**Cheryl Bartlett, RN**

CEO  
Greater New Bedford Community Health Center

**Christopher Rezendes**

Founder and President  
INEX Advisors

**David Martin**

President  
Heat Transfer Products

**Quentin Ricciardi**

CEO  
Acorn Management

**Bob Unger**

Chairman  
Leadership SouthCoast

**Adam Cove**

CEO  
Edson International

**Rick Kidder**

President & CEO  
SouthCoast Chamber of Commerce

**Patrick Murray**

President and CEO  
Bristol County Savings Bank

**Dr. Laura Douglas**

President  
Bristol Community College

**Helena DaSilva Hughes**

Executive Director  
Immigrants' Assistance Center

**John Vasconcellos**

President  
Community Foundation of SE MA

**Anne Broholm**

CEO  
AHEAD, LLC

**Sarah Athanas**

Co-Founder  
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**Paul Chasse**

CEO  
Realtor Association of Southeastern Mass.

**Jeff Glassman**

President  
Darnit! Inc.

**Rosemary Gill**

Executive Director  
Zeiterion Performing Arts Center

**Doug Glassman**

Owner  
SERVPRO of New Bedford

CC:

Jon F. Mitchell, Mayor

Linda Morad, President New Bedford City Council

Thomas Anderson, Superintendent NBPS

Will Gardner, Executive Director Alma del Mar