

Alma del Mar Board of Trustees approves agreement with City of New Bedford

Alma del Mar's Board of Trustees voted Monday evening to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of New Bedford to open a new, neighborhood-enrolled charter public school that will grow over four years to serve 450 children in grades K-8.

In January, Alma received approval from the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to open a new charter public school in New Bedford. Officials from Alma, the City of New Bedford and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have negotiated this unique MOU to eventually operate the new school at the former Kempton Elementary School.

"This agreement represents an incredible opportunity for New Bedford families and students. We are excited to forge ahead in collaboration with Superintendent Thomas Anderson to support great schools for all children in our city," said Alma Board Chair Jan Baptist.

The deal is still pending various city and state approvals. If all approvals are received, Alma plans to open at the former Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception school building this August and will initially serve 200 students in grades K, 1, 2, and 6. This new school will grow over four years to serve 450 children in grades K-8 who are enrolled from the new zone drawn by NBPS around the former Horatio A. Kempton School.

The school will serve as Alma's temporary home while the now-closed Kempton School undergoes renovations to ensure it is a safe and welcoming space for students. If city approvals are granted, the City of New Bedford would convey the Kempton to

Alma del Mar later this spring.

“I am thrilled by this unique collaboration between the City in which I spent my professional career and a school that I believe in wholeheartedly,” said Martha Kay, a member of Alma’s Board of Trustees. “It is exciting to see these two working together for the good of our community and, just as importantly, the benefit of our children.”

Alma trustees are volunteers who serve three-year terms. As members of the Alma del Mar Board of Trustees, each trustee advocates on behalf of the 450 New Bedford children that we have committed to serve and put on a college trajectory.

Alma’s Board of Trustee members are: Jan Baptist (Chair), Martha Kay, Gail Fortes, Maria Rosario, Chris Arnold, Lucile Hicks, Christopher Bator, Bronwen Cunningham, David Eckert and John Polk.