

New Bedford School Officials Announce Expanded Accelerated Learning Program for Middle School Students

New Bedford Public Schools officials and Mayor Jon Mitchell on Wednesday announced to Grade 5 parents and students at Sgt. William H. Carney Academy that the district is expanding Accelerated Learning to the middle schools, beginning with Keith Middle School in September 2016. Carney Academy is the district's magnet school for Advanced Learning at the elementary level.

The new Accelerated Learning program at Keith, which will launch at Normandin and Roosevelt in September 2017, will include goals to foster high academic achievement and challenging curriculum for students.

Accelerated Learning has several goals:

- To allow students to master middle school curriculum more deeply and more broadly, providing pathways to advanced learning opportunities such as 8th Grade Dual Enrollment at New Bedford High School, and Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) level coursework at NBHS.
- To create pathways that allow students to move through middle school curriculum at an accelerated pace while accessing content at deeper levels, engaging in extension and enrichment activities. The differentiated curriculum focuses on: depth of content; critical, creative and problem-solving skills and processes; research skills; creation and presentation of products that summarize and share learning with others; and extensive and rigorous student learning applications.

- To provide learning opportunities that blend studies in critical thinking with a wide variety of creative experiences, emphasizing research and integration.
- To partner with Bristol Community College, New Bedford High School, and community organizations to foster a meaningful, rigorous curriculum and maximize academic potential for students.

“This exciting and important program at our middle school level will give New Bedford students more opportunities, so that at the end of their middle school experience, they will best be prepared to produce multimedia projects, use research-based knowledge in all subjects, and be critical thinkers and readers,” said Superintendent Pia Durkin.

Keith Principal Paula Bailey, who joined Superintendent Durkin, Mayor Mitchell, and Carney Principal Karen Treadup for the announcement, said the program is directly tied to Keith Middle School’s ultimate mission.

“Every day, when students walk through the doors of Keith Middle School and middle schools in New Bedford, they are another step closer to college,” Dr. Bailey told Carney 5th graders, many of whom will be Keith 6th graders in September.

Fifth grade students in elementary schools that promote Grade 5 students to Keith have received applications for Accelerated Learning. The selective process is based on grades, teacher recommendations, scores and school attendance. Accelerated Learning slots will depend upon the number of applications received and the number of students who meet the selective admissions criteria for the program.