

Update From Mayor on New Bedford Schools

Earlier this week I invited New Bedford School Superintendent Dr. Mary Lou Francis to begin a conversation about her role in the New Bedford Public School Department.



Dr. Francis has since expressed an interest in engaging in that conversation, and I am hopeful that a constructive dialogue will follow.

I want to take this opportunity to recognize the Superintendent's personal commitment and work ethic. Dr. Francis assumed her current position under difficult circumstances, and, without question, has worked tirelessly. I believe she cares very deeply about our schools.

New Bedford schools are at a critical point in their history. Given the precariousness of the Department's position relative to state overseers, citizens of New Bedford should know that I will not proceed down any path which might jeopardize the ability of New Bedford to satisfy state deadlines and other requirements, and avoid a state takeover.

That is why I contacted state officials earlier today and asked them to extend all deadlines associated with the approval of the district turnaround plan to accommodate a continued dialogue with the Superintendent.

I am awaiting their official response, but am hopeful that the

state will accommodate our need in this circumstance. Students, parents, teachers, and Dr. Francis herself, are owed a respectful and positive resolution in this matter.