

Lee Blake
29 Bonney Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

December 28, 2025

Dear Ms. Barbosa,

I am submitting my resume for consideration for the vacant school board position left by the passing of Bruce Oliveira.

I am a retired educator who began my career as an educator years ago at New Bedford High School. Over a period of 30 years, I have been a teacher and educational program administrator reaching out to adults and youth in New Bedford and New York. My teaching credentials include adult literacy programs, senior high school classes, and nontraditional careers for adult men and women seeking to break into the construction trades. I have worked in urban education policy areas in K-12 as well as on undergraduate issues with state and local government.

Most recently I have worked with teachers across the country in a series of National Endowment for the Humanities Teacher's Institutes for professional development focusing on New Bedford and its role in the Underground Railroad during the Abolition Movement. Working with Dr. Tim Walker at the University of MA-Dartmouth, the Whaling Museum, and the New Bedford Historical Society, we have created learning opportunities for teachers and the general public on New Bedford's importance as a beacon of freedom and democracy at a difficult time in our nation's history.

I believe a review of my resume and professional experience will illustrate my qualifications for the school committee at this time as Massachusetts begins the work of developing new graduation standards, handles attendance issues largely due to the fears of our immigrant population, and works to upgrade our school buildings for the next generation of learners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lee Blake". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Lee Blake

LEE BLAKE, Ph.D.

**29 Bonney Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
(508) 994-0571**

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

New Bedford Historical Society, Inc.

9/15 – present

Executive Director

Manages local historical organization that celebrates the Black presence in New Bedford and MA. Steward of the Nathan and Mary Johnson House, the first free home of Frederick Douglass. Plans, develops, and implements educational programs for K-12 students and teachers on local history and the Underground Railroad. Consults on curriculum and exhibits in the region.

University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth

9/01 – 8/18, retired

Director, Campus Compact

Center for University School Partnerships

Developed and maintained effective relationships with area K-12 school districts and businesses serving the South Coast. Promoted university, business, and community involvement in public education through advocacy and program development.

New Bedford Economic Development Council, Inc.

9/99 – 9/01

New Bedford, Massachusetts

Development Officer

Developed effective relationships with local non-profit organizations, business and government entities. Responsible for private, corporate, and governmental grant development to augment Council resources and address economic development problems of local community. Provided technical assistance to community organizations seeking grant funding.

York College

9/94 – 12/99

City University of New York

Office of the President

Director of Communications and Publications

Developed and managed a publications program targeted to alumni, friends of the College and community members. Served as editor of internal and external publications, including annual report and bi-monthly newsletter. Supported outreach efforts of the College.

New York City Mayor's Office of Education Services

1/90 to 2/94

City of New York

Executive Director

Developed and articulated education policy in elementary, secondary, higher education and adult literacy for the City of New York under former Mayor David N. Dinkins. Coordinated education initiatives and interagency projects for the Office of the Mayor. Served as liaison to Board of Education, City University, New York State Board of Higher Education, other government offices, school districts, colleges, and

education advocacy organizations. Represented the Mayor at forums, task forces, and community meetings. Analyzed policy and budget implications of federal, state and city programs. Planned, directed, and implemented pilot programs to reform public education. Provided proposal review and technical assistance to non-profits seeking grant funding. Directed the allocation of \$13 million each year to community-based Adult Literacy providers and provided evaluation and program oversight.

ADDITIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2006 Visions of Slavery and Freedom in the Writings of Frederick Douglass, Herman Melville, Lydia Maria Child and Harriet Jacobson
NEH Faculty Humanities Workshop for 8-12 grade teachers
Presenter and program administrator
- 2006 The Stories behind Their Words: Poets and Authors in American History
John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and National Historic Site
Presentation on New Bedford and the Underground Railroad
- 2009 Exploring Paul Cuffe: The Man and His Legacy
Conference chair and program administrator
- 2011- NEH Landmarks Workshop for Teachers
2022 Sailing to Freedom: New Bedford and the Underground Railroad
Summer Institute Presenter, co-director, and program administrator
Workshops held for 2011, 2013, 2015, 2022

EDUCATION

University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth
Bachelor of Arts - African American and Women's Studies June 1978
Queens College, City University of New York Urban Policy courses
Honorary Doctorate University of MA Dartmouth 2023

AFFILIATIONS

New Bedford Historical Society, President
New Bedford Free Public Library, Trustee
Waterfront Historic League (WHALE), Board member
New Bedford AHA – Art, History, Architecture - Executive committee
Lighting the Way – New Bedford Women's History Project – Executive Committee

AWARDS

NAACP Community Humanitarian Award - 2024
MA Humanities Governor's Award in the Humanities 2019
MA Cultural Council Commonwealth Awards Finalist 2019
National Park Service Robert Stanton Award National Underground Railroad
Network to Freedom 2018 – Award recipient
Westport Historians of the Year 2017
K. Julie McCarthy Community Spirit Award, Preservation MA 2016
New Bedford Woman of the Year 2011
Drum Major for Social Justice – UMass Dartmouth 2011