

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,

Lee Blake

Lee Blake

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**LEE BLAKE, Ph.D.**

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**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