



A Message from Godfrey Azima, Norwalk BOE Member

Norwalk Scholars - The Best Investment the City Can Make

Dear Scholars,

Throughout my time serving on the Board of Education, one thing remains constant – you are the best investment this city can make. You are not only the heart of this district, but you will serve as the next leaders for Norwalk’s community, and I am sure that the future is bright.

So, I would like to take this time to thank you.

Thank you for your hard work. Thank you for the dedication you show to not only yourselves but your fellow classmates, teachers and school staff. And finally, thank you for making Norwalk Public Schools such a fun, engaging and culturally rich district to learn in.

I believe in you, and I believe you deserve even more. Because of that, I am asking you to speak up and ask questions.

We, as the Norwalk Board of Education, spoke at length about what was needed to give you all that we can as we move into the next school year. When we met, a dollar amount was set and we presented that to the city. Unfortunately, they came back and said that our request was too high.

While I understand that the City of Norwalk is trying to be responsible with the budget, our number-one responsibility is to you.

We all knew that the next budget would need a big increase from years past as we continue to address the setbacks that COVID brought to the district. We are now being asked to meet our needs with far less money than we thought we would have. If we are forced to do so, some of your favorite programs like music and sports could be affected. Some of your favorite school staff members, including instructional teachers, counselors and paraprofessionals could also be impacted.

So if the members of the city government won’t listen to us, then they should hear from those who it’s affecting the most: you!

Your fearlessness and persistence is what first motivated me to make the decision to run for a seat on the Board of Education. That motivation started before I was on the board, watching students create dialogue regarding bias and race experiences in high schools and hosting ongoing youth town halls. Even while on the board, I have continued to be inspired by your voice during discussions on early start times, creating a district equity policy and your ability to be resilient and grow through a global pandemic. You always wish to have a say in your future, and I appreciate that.

Now, it is again time to speak up. While we are pushing to give you everything we can, your voices are the most powerful and important!

Ask questions. Be curious. Be a vocal part of your future. There will be meetings where the city will listen to the public on the topic of the school budget and whether it should be increased.

On Feb. 23 at 6:30 p.m. and March 22 at 6:30 p.m., you can make your voices heard because they matter!

I believe in you, and I believe that, with your voice, we can come together with the city to bring you all exactly what you need to succeed.

Godfrey Azima