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**Band and Strings Programs, Additional School Staff Positions Reinstated
in Modified FY2025-26 Operating Budget Reconciliation**

Norwalk, Conn. (June 13, 2025) – Norwalk Public Schools (NPS) will present a reconciled FY2025-26 Operating Budget to the Norwalk Board of Education (BOE) that restores elementary band and strings positions. These programs, highly valued by our families, reflect the district’s commitment to a well-rounded education.

“I want to thank our students, families, and community members for their passionate advocacy throughout this budget process,” said Dr. Alexandra Estrella, Superintendent of Norwalk Public Schools.

The reinstatement of the elementary band and strings positions is made possible by an additional \$6 million in funding secured from the City of Norwalk and the State of Connecticut. The district will also allocate a portion of these funds to support the district’s employee health insurance account, while the remaining funds will be disbursed back to the schools, allowing school leaders to reinstate student-facing staff based on each school’s individual needs.

Conversations with school principals have already taken place, and they will now begin reviewing their individual school budgets to determine which staff positions should be reinstated. As part of this process, principals will also consult with their parent leadership groups to ensure that decisions reflect the priorities and needs of their school communities.

In addition to the city and state funding, NPS has identified \$2 million in further budget reductions through the elimination of additional Central Office positions, scaling back professional development, cutting utility-related expenditures and other non-student-facing programs.

All staffing adjustments will follow contractual requirements outlined in the reduction-in-force process, as defined in the district’s collective bargaining agreements with its unions, which ensure fairness, transparency, and consideration of seniority and qualifications. As a result of



the contractual seniority guidelines, some staff may be reassigned within their current schools or moved to different school sites across the district.

Discussions with the impacted union leadership will take place after school principals identify the positions to be reinstated, based on the funds allocated to their schools, that are essential to their school's needs. Collaboration with union leadership will ensure alignment with our collective bargaining agreements during the reduction in force process.

"This additional funding allows us not only to preserve band and string programs, which are vital to a well-rounded student experience, but also to support staff benefits and give school leaders flexibility to meet the unique needs of their buildings," said Superintendent Dr. Alexandra Estrella. "These decisions reflect our ongoing commitment to educational excellence, equity, and responsible stewardship of public resources."

Norwalk Public Schools remains committed to transparency and collaboration with the community. The district will continue working closely with city leaders to support equitable, high-quality education for all students.