



A Message from Dr. Alexandra Estrella, Superintendent of Norwalk Public Schools

Update on City Council's Establishment of the Preliminary Budget Cap

The Norwalk Board of Education is pleased to share that the Norwalk City Council has approved a preliminary budget cap for the FY2026–27 Operating Budget that exceeds the Mayor's original recommendation, allowing for the additional funding to Norwalk Public Schools.

The City Council voted to approve a preliminary city budget of \$486.22 million. The additional funding allows for the allocation of \$2.2 million to the Board of Education which would mitigate anticipated budget related reductions to school-based budgets and would then bring the Norwalk Public Schools increase to 4.9%. The district will prioritize directing this additional funding to our school based budgets to ensure resources remain closest to the classroom and have the greatest impact on teaching and learning.

As we do each year, we will make routine adjustments to school-based budgets in response to enrollment changes across the district. This annual process ensures resources are aligned with current student enrollment patterns and each school's programming needs.

Additionally, even with the increased cap, the Board of Education remains \$3.8 million short of its requested budget. As a result, the district will need to explore reductions in non-school-based areas to close the remaining gap.

The Board's initial request is also designed to allow the district to continue providing free meals for all students. Providing free breakfast and lunch to every student reduces financial and time-related stress for families while ensuring all scholars have access to healthy, balanced meals each day. Full funding of the Board's request is necessary to sustain both critical staffing and the important initiative of free meals for all students without reductions elsewhere.

The Board of Education extends its sincere appreciation to the City Council and parents for their advocacy during the February 24 meeting to raise the cap and direct these additional funds to our schools. This action demonstrates a strong commitment to Norwalk's scholars, their families, and the dedicated educators and staff who serve them each day.

The Board encourages families, staff, and community members to remain actively engaged in the budget process. The Board of Estimate and Taxation retains the authority to modify the final budget cap, and continued public advocacy is essential to ensure that funding is not reduced later in the process. The Board remains committed to seeking full funding of its 6.5% budget request in order to maintain the high level of service and programming that Norwalk students and staff expect and deserve.

The Norwalk Board of Education will continue working closely with city leadership throughout the budget process to advocate for the resources necessary to provide the best possible education for every scholar in Norwalk Public Schools.

For more information about the budget process and how to participate, please visit the NPS Budget Website at bit.ly/NPSBudgetWebsite.