

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF EDUCATION
FINANCE COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 10, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Rosa Murray, Chair; Mike Barbis, Jack Chiaramonte, Sherelle Harris, Heidi Keyes.

STAFF: Dr. Manuel Rivera, Superintendent; Richard Rudl, Chief Business & Financial Officer; BOE Member Shirley Mosby

Call to Order

Ms. Murray called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and stated that members in attendance were as listed above and there was a quorum present.

Review Superintendent's Recommended FY 2015-16 Operating Budget

Dr. Rivera went through the presentation of the 2015-16 proposed budget of \$170.9 million, which represents a 2.74 percent increase over the current school budget of \$166.4 million.

Dr. Rivera stated that this is a sound budget that builds on the goals set forth in the school district's strategic plan, not only good for schools and good for continuing our major initiatives it's also good for taxpayers.

Dr. Rivera outlined that the largest portions of the budget are salaries and benefits, which combined represents 85 percent of the budget. Other factors driving the budget are special education, transportation, utilities, facilities maintenance and high school athletics. Areas of revenue the school district expects to receive are grant funding of \$22 million and ECS funding from the state totaling seven percent of the operating budget.

Highlights of the budget include:

- increases in funding of high school athletics and marching bands.
- increased funding to support the school district's growing English language learner population.
- Funds have been provisioned for several new curricula in social studies, world languages and a \$95,000 investment in K-5 writing.
- The funds set aside monies for the hiring of bilingual receptionists at Norwalk High School and Brien McMahon High School. The two positions are contingent upon the results of an Administrative Support Study.

Mr. Rudl reviewed the in-district Special Education program as follows:

The in-district special education program involves the hiring of 22 Applied Behavioral Analysis Specialists, three Board Certified Behavioral Analysts, one additional psychologist and one additional special education teacher.

The school district currently spends \$2.3 million in outsourcing Applied Behavioral Analysis Specialists and Board Certified Behavioral Analysts. The hiring of the 25 specialists for the in-house special education program would save the district about \$300,000. Dr. Rivera said the in-district special education program would mitigate the need to send certain special education students out-of-district.

Dr. Rivera outlined the following impacts to the bottom line:

- in 2015-16 would be \$170,987,857 or an increase of \$4,556,992 over the current year
- This is less than the \$5,016,507 salary hike mandated by prior negotiations.
- This was made possible by a decrease in benefit costs from \$34,097,521 to \$33,411,819, and a savings of \$1,224,344 in professional and technical services.

More savings would be realized through major changes in the special education department:

- more programs to serve the needs of special ed. students out of district placement
- The combined costs of developing the in-house program and savings realized by not sending students to other schools results in a \$350,000 savings
- The proposed plan is outlined on the final page of the attached presentation.

The budget is based on certain revenue assumptions:

- Proposed budget assumes a 2.74 percent increase from City of Norwalk.
- State ECS funding remains at approximately 7 percent of total operating budget.
- Carryover of all unencumbered Alliance funds.
- Surplus Medicaid revenue is included.
- Grant funding is slightly less than 2014-15 (decreases to \$22 million).
- Maintains strong support for literacy, Common Core, other current initiatives
- Invests in curriculum, technology expansion, facility improvements
- Enhances Special Education services
- Addresses needs for English Language Learners
- Continues commitment to professional development, standards, accountability, recruitment
- Advances design and development for new programs that will move NPS forward

There was a discussion regarding Briggs. Dr. Rivera stated that their current site is problematic. The facility has many problems, the best thing to do would be to rebrand it and move it to a location closer to its student body. He explained that although there have been many improvements the enrollment at Norwalk's alternative high school is still not what it needs to be that the state met him at Briggs two or three weeks ago for a discussion about what to do. He added that he is still not pleased with the connection between the two high schools and Briggs; we can tighten that up in terms of how we communicate with students, we really want students to be choosing that as an alternative.

There is still unfortunately the perception of Briggs, kind of a negative one that it has had for years in the past that needs to change. The only way that changes over time is you have more and more students, that are successful and engaged and they're learning. We could change the name and have a different facility.

Ms. Murray stated that Briggs is going to be Briggs because no matter what we change the name to, somebody is always going to remember it's Briggs. She said the students have a home in Briggs and it wouldn't be right to put the high school inside another school building.

Dr. Rivera pointed out the transportation issues where many students take two or three buses to get to Briggs, and that has impact on attendance, it's problematic. We want to make sure that is addressed as well, and we are looking at a couple of options for Briggs, in terms of potential relocation.

Mr. Rudl explained the timeline for the budget process and noted that after the presentation of the budget at next week's full Board meeting, it is scheduled to be voted upon on Jan. 6, 2015.

Questions and comments from the Board members were fielded by Dr. Rivera and Mr. Rudl throughout the presentation. It was agreed to have this presentation and outline presented at the next full Board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox, Telesco Secretarial Services

Attachments

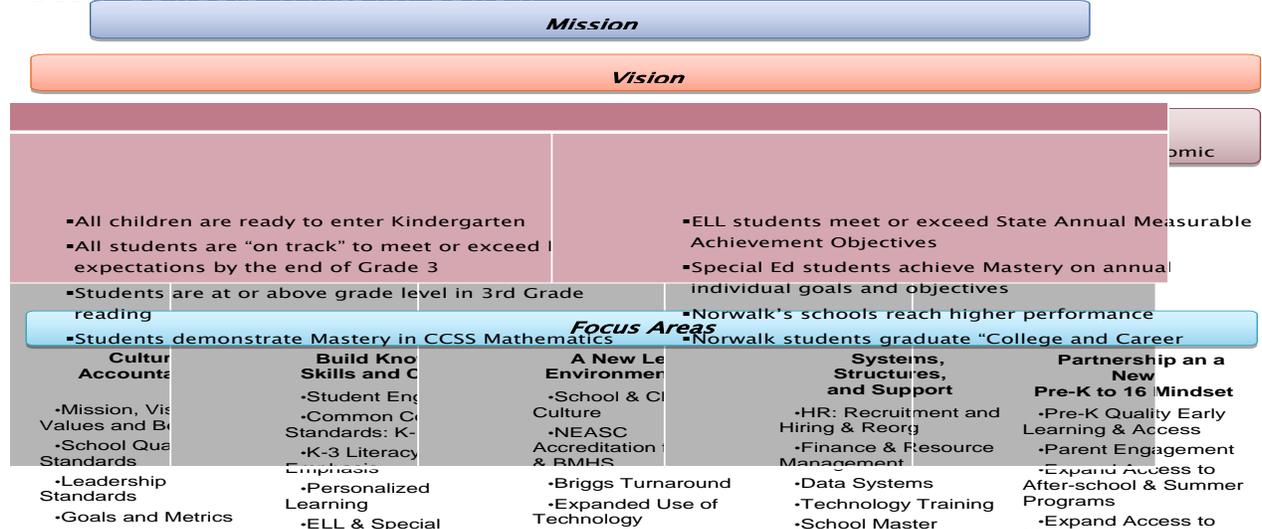
Chart of NPS Mission, Vision and Goals; Power Point Presentation:



Finance Committee
FY 15-16 12102014 F

Norwalk Public Schools

The World Starts Here



Rev.
10.23.14

The World Starts Here

Mission

Vision

Overall Goal
 To close the Achievement Gap by 2020 and ensure that all students, regardless of race, ethnicity,

Goals

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪All children are ready to enter Kindergarten ▪All students are “on track” to meet or exceed learning expectations by the end of Grade 3 ▪Students are at or above grade level in 3rd Grade reading ▪Students demonstrate Mastery in CCSS Mathematics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ELL students meet or exceed State Achievement Objectives ▪Special Ed students achieve Mastery of individual goals and objectives ▪Norwalk’s schools reach higher performance ▪Norwalk students graduate “College and Career Ready” |
|--|--|

<p>Culture of Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Mission, Vision, Values and Beliefs •School Quality Standards •Leadership Standards •Goals and Metrics 	<p>Build Knowledge, Skills and Capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Student Engagement •Common Core State Standards: K-12 •K-3 Literacy Emphasis •Personalized Learning •ELL & Special 	<p>A New Learning Environment for All</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •School & Classroom Culture •NEASC Accreditation for NHS & BMHS •Briggs Turnaround •Expanded Use of Technology 	<p>Systems, Structures, and Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •HR: Recruitment and Hiring & Reorg •Finance & Resource Management •Data Systems •Technology Training •School Master 	<p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pre-K-3 •Partnerships •Expanding After-School Programs •Expanding
--	--	--	---	--

The World Starts Here

Mission

Vision

Overall Goal
 To close the Achievement Gap by 2020 and ensure that all students, regardless of race, ethnicity,

Goals

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪All children are ready to enter Kindergarten ▪All students are “on track” to meet or exceed learning expectations by the end of Grade 3 ▪Students are at or above grade level in 3rd Grade reading ▪Students demonstrate Mastery in CCSS Mathematics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ELL students meet or exceed State Achievement Objectives ▪Special Ed students achieve Mastery of individual goals and objectives ▪Norwalk’s schools reach higher performance ▪Norwalk students graduate “College and Career Ready” |
|--|--|

<p>Culture of Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Mission, Vision, Values and Beliefs •School Quality Standards •Leadership Standards •Goals and Metrics 	<p>Build Knowledge, Skills and Capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Student Engagement •Common Core State Standards: K-12 •K-3 Literacy Emphasis •Personalized Learning •ELL & Special 	<p>A New Learning Environment for All</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •School & Classroom Culture •NEASC Accreditation for NHS & BMHS •Briggs Turnaround •Expanded Use of Technology 	<p>Systems, Structures, and Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •HR: Recruitment and Hiring & Reorg •Finance & Resource Management •Data Systems •Technology Training •School Master 	<p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pre-K-3 •Partnerships •Expanding After-School Programs •Expanding
--	--	--	---	--