

# **PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Date: December 20, 2011

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Norwalk Public Schools

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Superintendent of Schools Susan F. Marks has delivered to the Board of Education for its consideration and action an operating budget for the Norwalk Public Schools (NPS) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. For the second year in a row, this operating budget is challenging to all segments of the Norwalk Public School system. There are no new programs proposed in this operating budget. The major budget cost drivers for this budget are employee benefit costs, employee salaries, special education, teachers needed for class size and utilities. Due to the dramatic rise in costs of employee benefits, special education and utilities, this 2012-13 operating budget needs to make up this critical gap in the current budget. This 2012-2013 operating budget is presently at a 7.83 percent increase over this year's budget. It must be noted that this 2012-13 operating budget is just a starting point as there will need to be a collaborative effort between all parties to determine a 2012-13 operating budget that will allow the school district to move forward to ensure that all students continue to receive an excellent education.

Over the next few months, the superintendent will be working with staff to review any savings that can be garnered from school consolidations, maximizing enrollment by reviewing projections, out of district, assignment of students, middle and high school schedules, special education programs, utilization of grants, and staffing reorganization. In addition, the school district will consider rebidding health benefits and renegotiating contracts with service providers.

In order to save as much money as we can in the 2011-12SY, the superintendent has instituted expenditure restrictions and a hiring freeze for the rest of the school year. It is hoped that the district will identify savings that can be rolled over to the FY2013 operating budget.

This recommendation begins the budget process. There are many uncertainties surrounding the financial situation in Norwalk and the state of Connecticut. Through the budget process, it is hoped that we can work together to obtain an operating budget that helps us maintain our efforts on behalf of our students.

The next steps in the operating budget process are as follows:

- January 3, 2012 BOE regularly scheduled meeting and continued discussion of the Superintendent's Requested 2012-13 Local Operating Budget – 7:45 pm in Room 300 at City Hall
- January 4, 2012 BOE Finance committee meeting to discuss the Superintendent's Requested 2012-13 Local Operating Budget – 7:30 pm in the Concert Hall at City Hall
- January 10, 2012 Special BOE meeting to vote on 2012-13 Local Operating Budget – 7:30 pm in the Concert Hall at City Hall
- January 13, 2012 BOE Local Operating 2012-13 Budget presented to the City
- January 19, 2012 Review of BOE Local Operating 2012-13 Budget by the City

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