

Norwalk ACTS



December 2025 Quarterly Convening

Agenda

Welcome & Agenda Overview	9:00
City of Norwalk & Norwalk Public Schools Chief Financial Officer Presentation	9:10
Panel Discussion	9:35
Break	10:05
The Power of Civics	10:10
Table Reflection Discussion	10:40
Closing	10:55



We are a non-profit, cross-sector cradle to career partnership.

We are made up of over 200 community and civic leaders, educators, organizations, and individuals who are committed to collective impact and our mission.

Mission

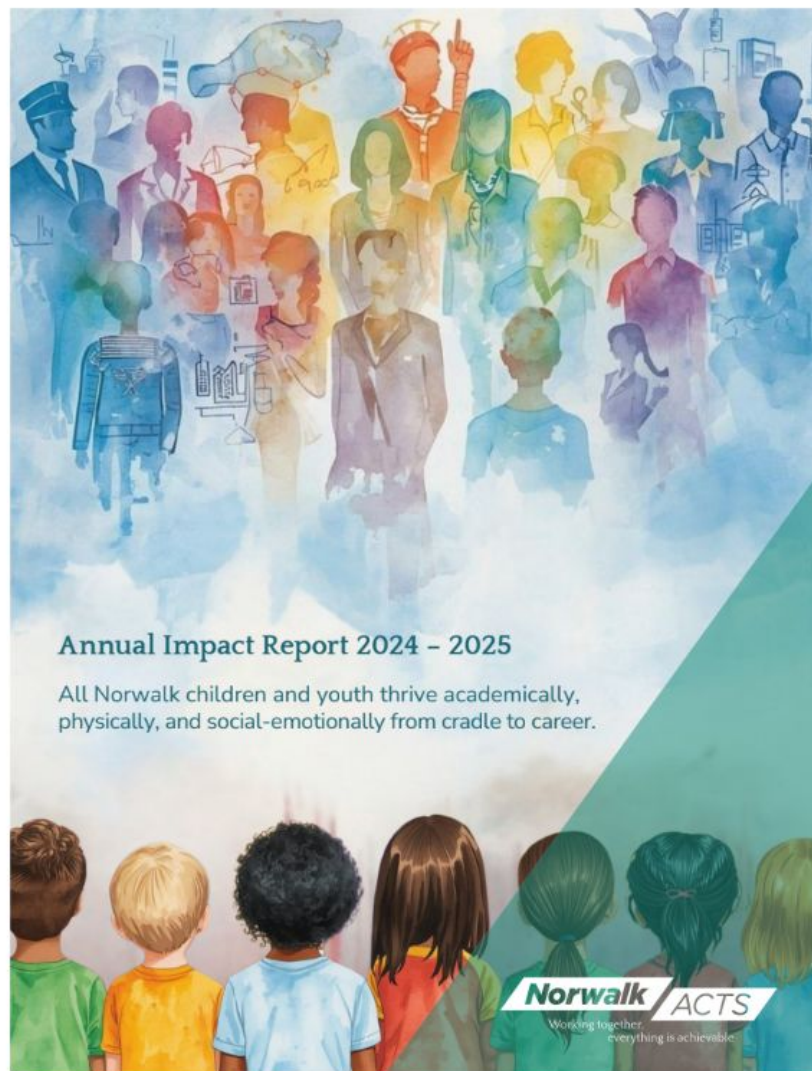
To collectively transform systems by ensuring resources, policies, practices, and power structures actively dismantle racism and drive equitable outcomes for every Norwalk child and young person.

Vision

Norwalk is a connected and equitable community where every child and young person thrives academically, physically, and social-emotionally from cradle to career.



Our Annual Impact Report



November Day of Training

40
attendees

Sessions Offered

De-escalating and Redirecting Students: Organizational Structure and The Life Space Interview

Ryan Harold, St. Luke's School

Social Emotional Learning 101

Tiana Brown, Norwalk Housing Authority

Somatic Mindfulness Workshop

Erika Long and Melissa Harold, Community Mindfulness Project

Disrupting Bias

Cadence Pentheny, Triangle Community Center





City of Norwalk, Connecticut

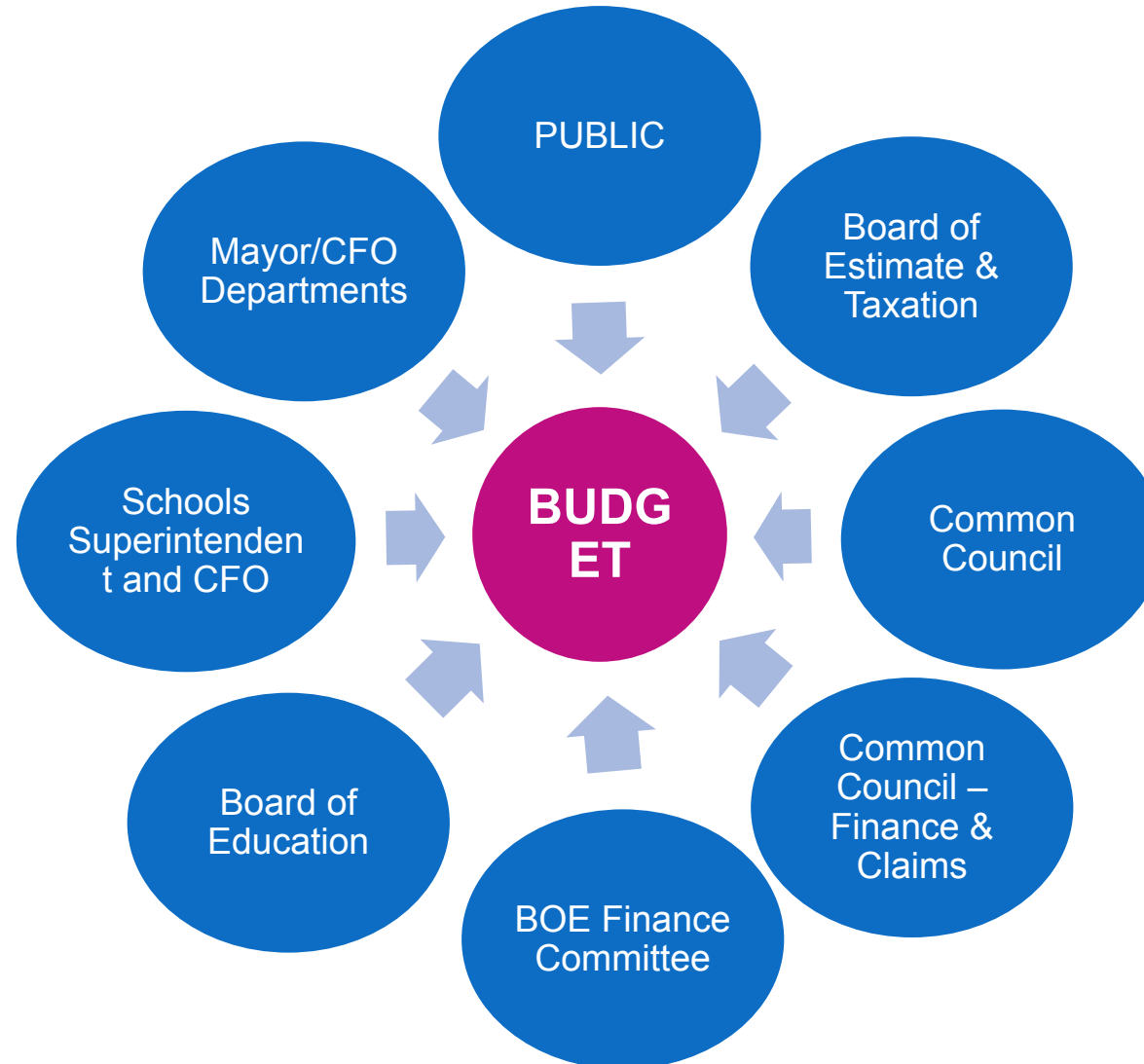
City of Norwalk Budget Process Overview

Prepared for Norwalk ACTS

Presented by Jared Schmitt – CFO, City of Norwalk

December 9, 2025

Budget Contributors



Operating and Capital Budgets

September

Budget Kickoff
Public Hearing

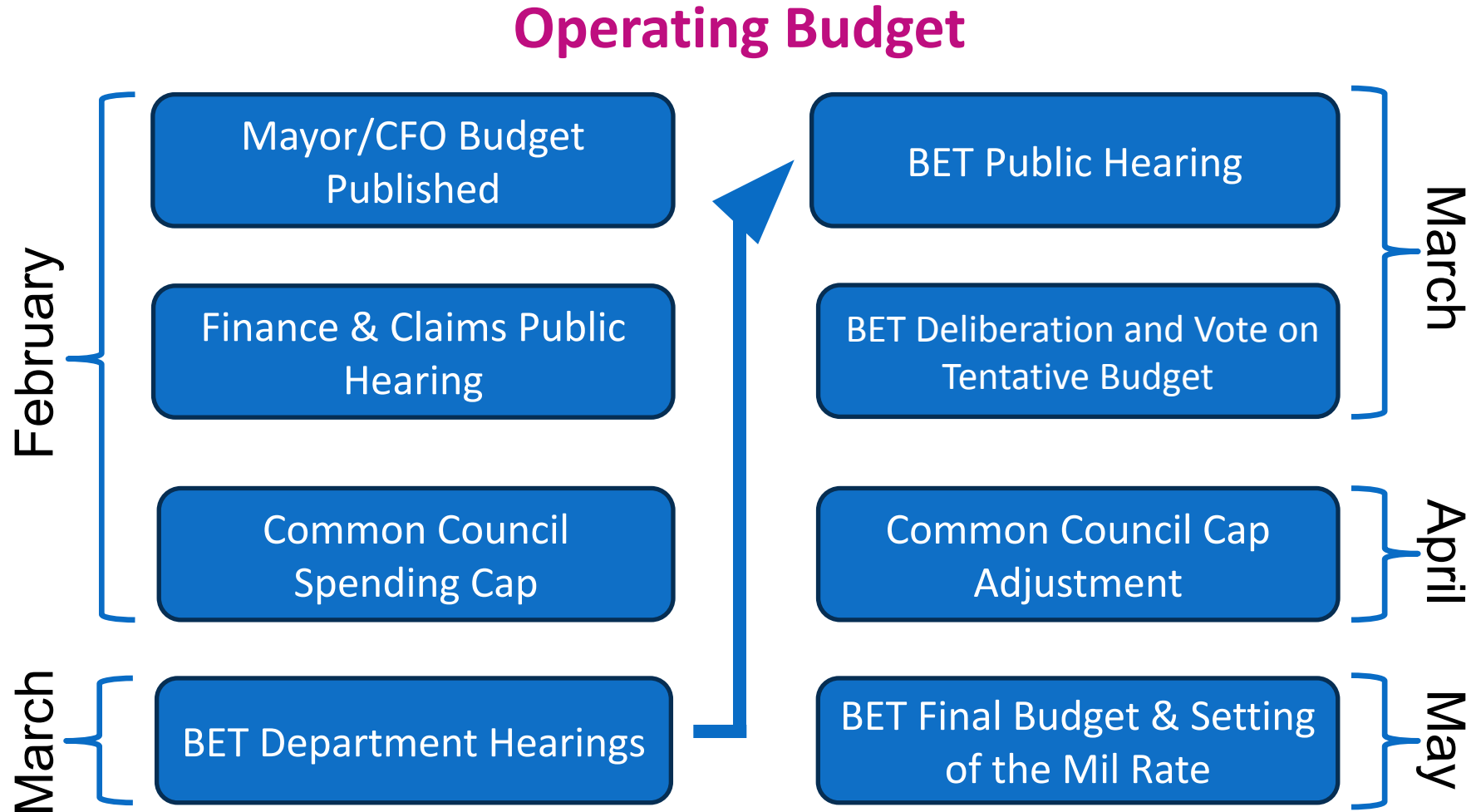
**November
to
December**

Pro Forma Budgets
to Departments

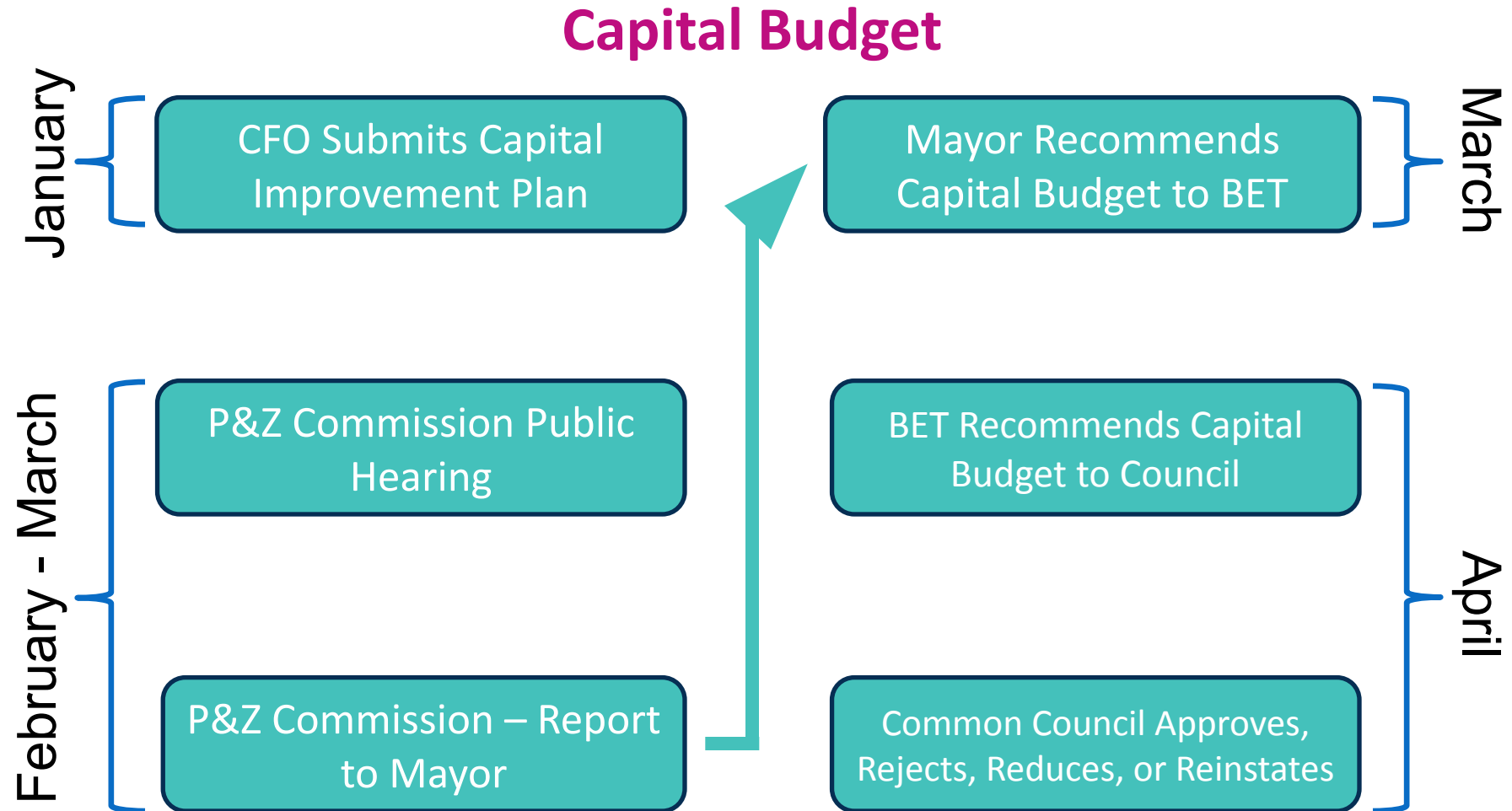
Budget Proposals
to Finance Dept.

January

Joint Public Hearing



FYE 2027 Budget Calendar



Key Norwalk Budget Highlights FYE 2025 (preliminary unaudited results)

- ❑ **Maintained Aaa/AAA/ Bond Ratings with Moody's and Standard & Poor's Rating Services**
- ❑ **FY 25 budget finished on target, which included \$8 million drawdown of the City's Fund balance.**
- ❑ **Timing of revenue from City property sale and timing of revenue from tax sale**
- ❑ **Favorable spending variance - \$5.7 million**
- ❑ **Additional \$3.5 million for the Board of Education. (\$1.5 million carry forward to FY 26)**

Efficiency Highlights

Online permitting – Two rounds of demonstrations completed by potential vendors. Narrowed down the pool of candidates and will select a company within two weeks.

Purchasing - Updated Purchasing Guidelines, which was approved by the Common Council in 2024. Modernized approval thresholds to create a more efficient procurement process, while maintaining critical controls.

Tax Collection –

- The Assessor is working with a firm to identify improperly registered vehicles. We are just beginning to see additional revenue come in from that new program.
- More aggressively pursuing improperly permitted and blighted properties
- Continuing to do tax sales every other year

Network – Working with the State to complete a loop of our fiber optic network, which will ensure stability and reliability of our network, in case of accidents, storms, etc...

Cybersecurity – Implemented a comprehensive cybersecurity awareness program that includes monthly training videos, phishing simulations, and targeted follow-up training for all email users.

Fire Marshall – Consolidated three part-time employees into a single full-time position.

Shared Services (City & BOE Collaboration) –

- City attorneys provide significant support to BOE for liability cases.
- BOE and City collaborate on IT services depending on situation.
- City Building & Facilities Manager and staff provide services to BOE for school construction projects.
- BOE joined City in utilizing ClearGov E-budget book, which will provide board members and public with easy-to-read budget documents, graphics, and charts.
- City and BOE operating off the same phone system and same ERP system.
- Frequent communication between City and BOE to share knowledge of best practice and experience in areas of IT and vendor selection.
- City and BOE entered into MOU to collaborate on use of fields.
- Completed implementation of a new Time & Attendance software program – UKG.

City Streets – Adopted Complete Streets Program to ensure new and upgraded streets are designed to new standards that accommodate ALL travelers.

Online Field Cards – Currently upgrading to a new product through Vision Appraisal that enables current property information and drawings.

Challenges:

- Ongoing inflation, especially municipal-intense commodities**
- Year three of 4-year phase-in of Property Revaluation**
- Employee healthcare increases**
- Responsible use of additional \$10 million in municipal aid**
- Likely reduction in Investment Income as Federal Reserve has begun cutting rates**

Goals:

- Minimize impact of phase-in on homeowners' property tax**
- Minimize drawdown of Fund Balance**
- Maintain AAA bond rating**

Thank You!

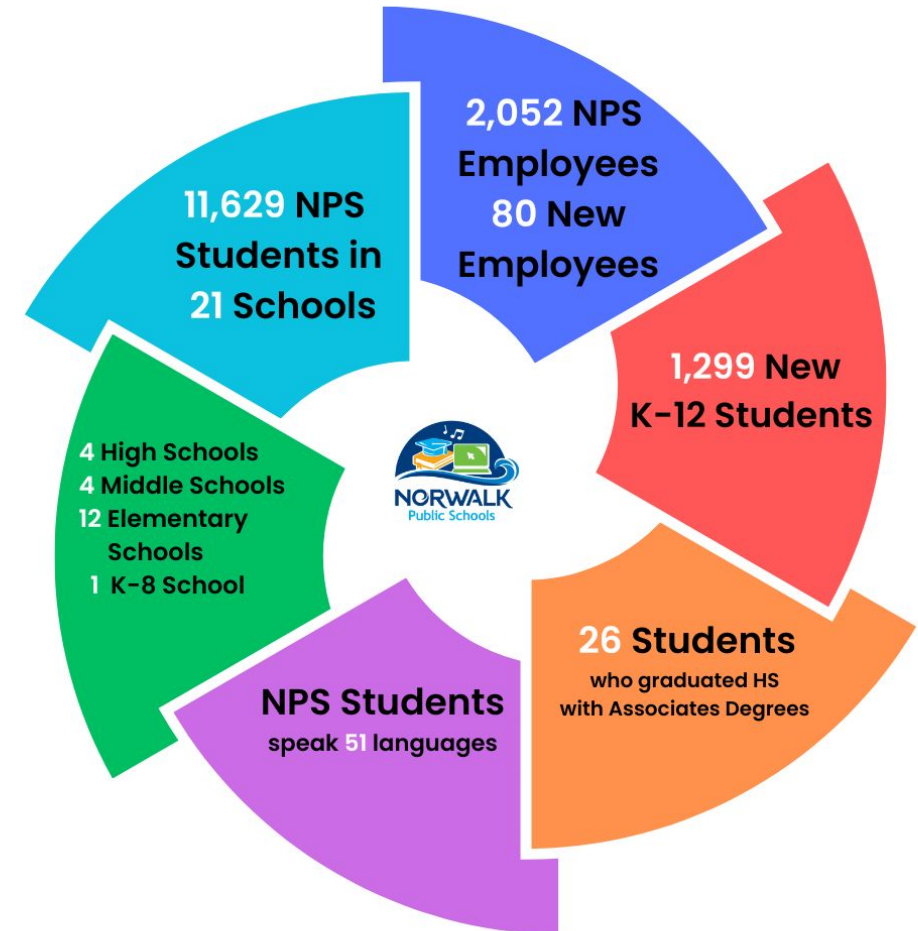


Norwalk ACTS Quarterly Convening BOE Budget Process Overview

Lunda Asmani, CPFO
BOE Chief Financial Officer | Norwalk Public Schools
December 9, 2025



Norwalk Public Schools At-A-Glance



of June 1, 2025

Recent Highlights and FY2024-25 Achievements

Portrait of a Graduate



Launched the NPS Portrait of a Graduate initiative, focusing on the core competency of critical thinking.

Future Ready Programs



Future Ready Programs (FRP), including Twilight and Virtual Academy, serve over 100 students, offering equitable access to personalized education through direct instruction and distance learning. The graduating Class of 2024 included 38 students from the Future ready program.

Dr. Damon Lewis



Ponus Ridge STEAM Academy Principal Dr. Damon Lewis was named Middle Level National Principal of the Year by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and Middle School Principal of the Year by the Connecticut Association of Schools.

LaShante James



Brien McMahon High School Assistant Principal LaShante James was named Assistant High School Principal of the Year by the Connecticut Association of Schools.

High School Bands



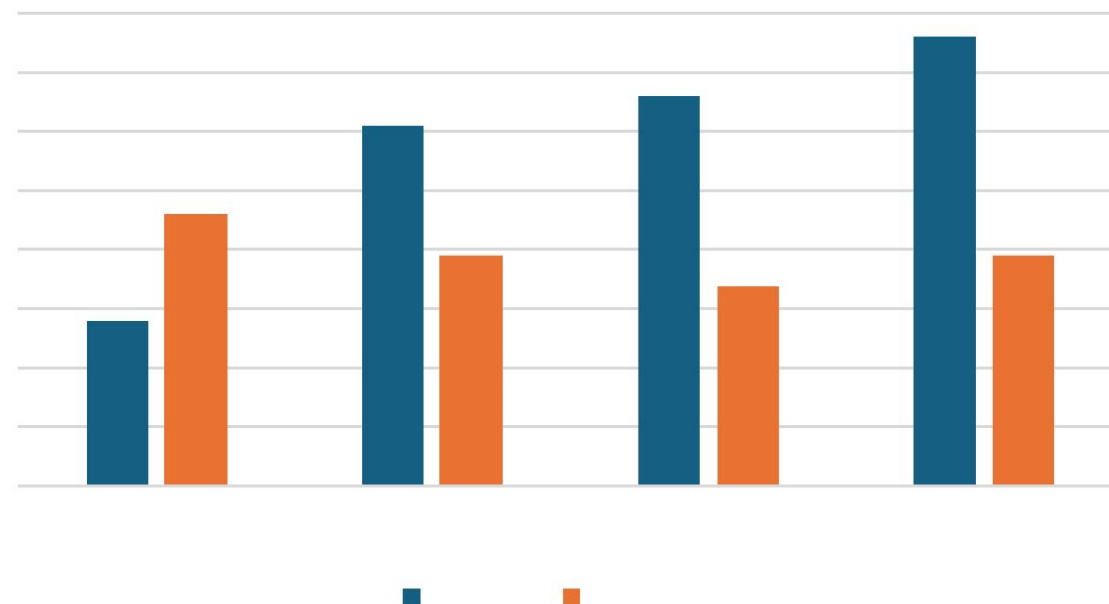
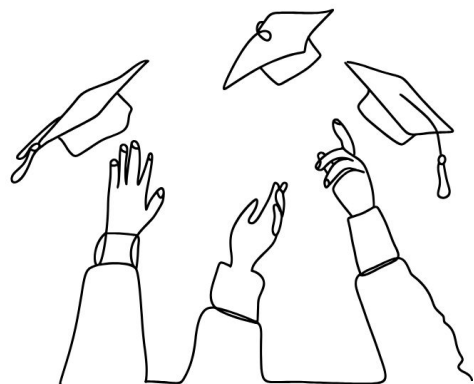
The Brien McMahon Marching Band and Guard and Norwalk High Percussion were promoted to higher competition classes for the 2025-26 season.

Portrait of Success: Norwalk Public Schools

NORWALK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2024 FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE

92.6%

TOPPING THE STATE AVERAGE BY NEARLY 4 POINTS



FY25-26 BOE General Fund Budget Summary

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

City General Fund Contribution

Total General Fund Revenue

2024-25	2024-25	2025-26	2025-26	2025-26	FY25-FY26 VARIANCE	
REVISED	ACTUAL	APPROVED	\$4.5 MILLION APPROPRIATION	AMENDED	AMOUNT	%
233,528,844	233,401,968	242,694,758	4,500,000	247,194,758	13,665,914	5.9%
233,528,844	233,401,968	242,694,758	4,500,000	247,194,758	13,665,914	5.9%

Salaries

Benefits

Professional & Technical Services

Property Services

Other Student Services

Supplies & Materials

Equipment

Other Objects

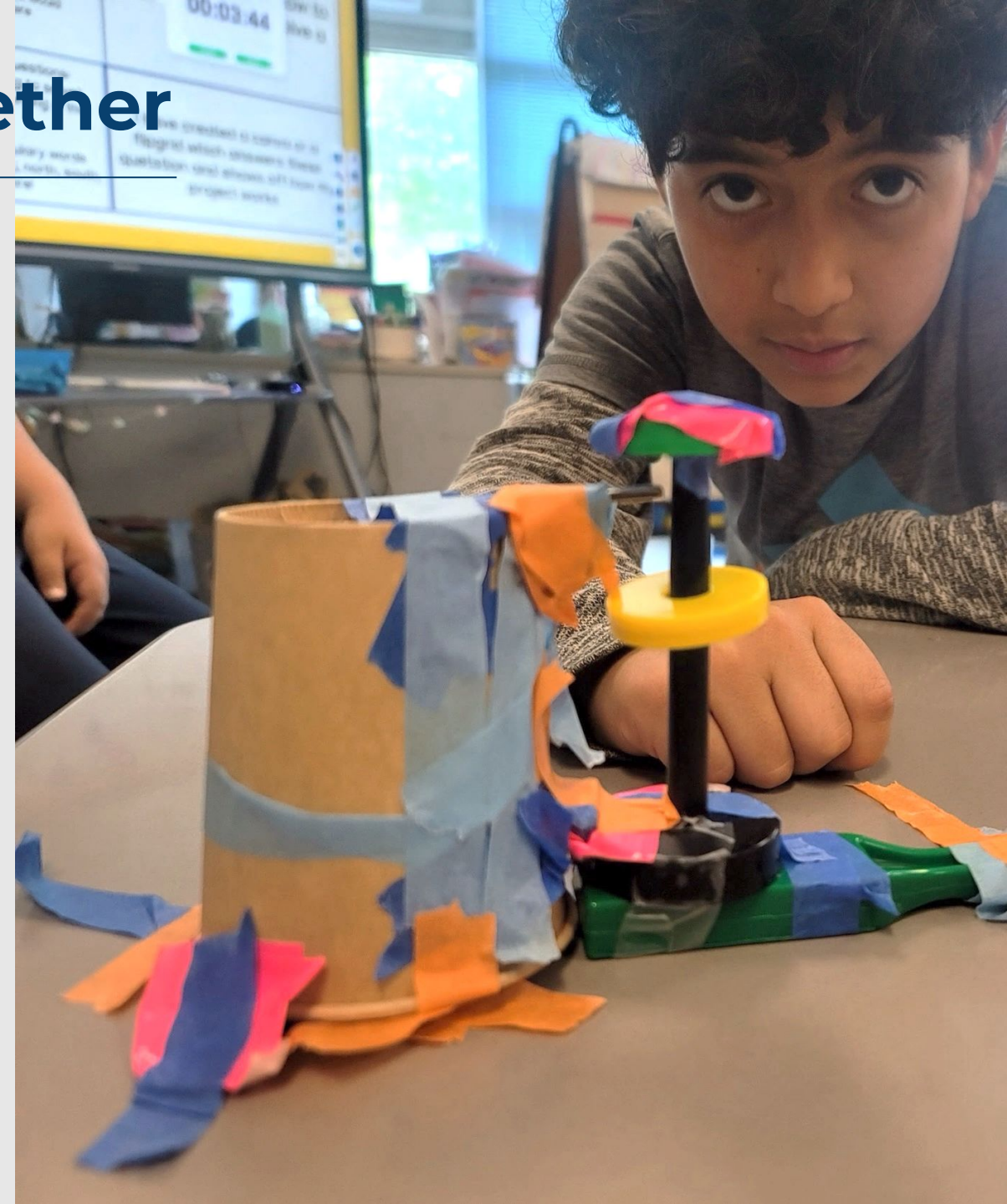
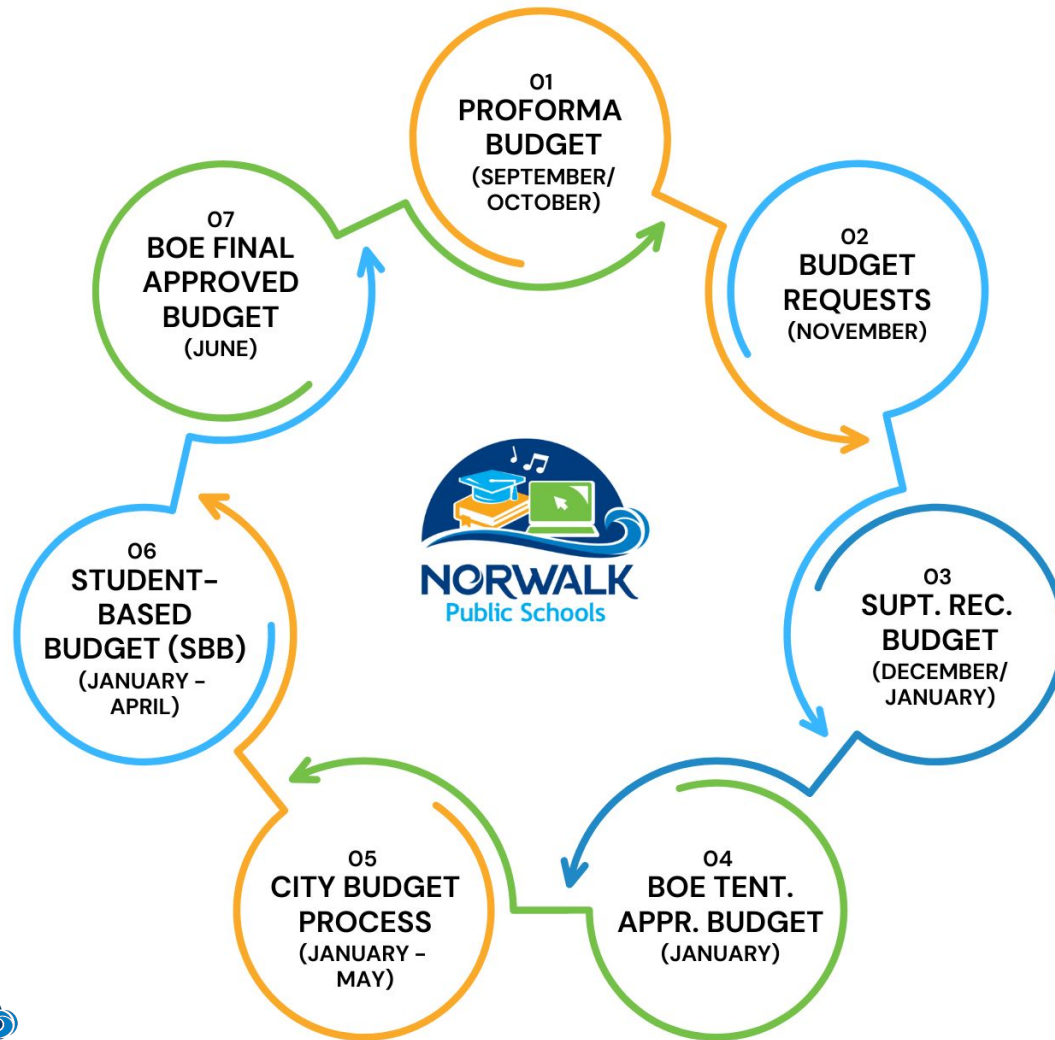
Transfers

Total General Fund Expenditures

146,940,869	146,902,413	144,837,492	3,589,622	148,427,113	1,486,245	1.0%
31,717,408	31,665,544	37,925,044	890,378	38,815,422	7,098,014	22.4%
9,440,013	9,438,278	8,724,807	20,000	8,744,807	(695,207)	-7.4%
9,851,120	9,843,551	11,234,552	-	11,234,552	1,383,432	14.0%
26,025,347	26,020,306	27,175,378	-	27,175,378	1,150,032	4.4%
7,941,631	7,924,001	10,175,386	-	10,175,386	2,233,755	28.1%
1,488,387	1,484,541	1,764,458	-	1,764,458	276,071	18.5%
124,069	123,334	185,040	-	185,040	60,971	49.1%
-	-	672,601	-	672,601	672,601	
233,528,844	233,401,968	242,694,758	4,500,000	247,194,758	13,665,914	5.9%

The FY25-26 budget reflects a \$13.7M (5.9%) year-over-year increase, driven by salaries and benefits

How The Budget Comes Together





BUDGET ENGAGEMENTS TO DATE

FOCUSING ON THE FISCAL YEAR

2026-27 OPERATING
AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

#	Date	Meeting
01	9/10/25	Board of Education Finance Committee Meeting
02	9/16/25	Board of Education Business Meeting
03	9/24/25	Special Joint Finance Committee Public Hearing
04	10/21/25	Board of Education Business Meeting
05	11/12/25	Board of Education Finance Committee Meeting
06	11/12/25	Board of Education Workshop
07	11/18/25	Board of Education Business Meeting
08	11/19/25	Board of Education Community Town Hall on FY2026-27 Operating Budget

For details of each meeting, visit **Board Docs** located within the **BOE Website**
BOE Website: bit.ly/NPSboeWebsite



UPCOMING BUDGET ENGAGEMENTS

FOCUSING ON THE FISCAL YEAR

2026-27 OPERATING
AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

#	Date	Meeting
09	12/9/25	Board of Education Workshop on Superintendent Recommended Operating & Capital Budget
10	12/16/25	Board of Education Approves Superintendent Recommended Operating & Capital Budget
11	1/8/26	Board of Education & Common Council Joint Finance Committee Meeting
12	1/13/26	Presentation of Superintendent Recommended Operating & Capital Budget to New Board of Education members
13	2/11/26	FY26 Update to Board of Education Finance Committee
14	2/12/26	Common Council Finance Committee Holds Public Hearing on Operating Budget; Operating Cap Recommended to Council
15	2/24/26	Common Council Adopts Preliminary Expenditure Cap
16	3/26/26	Board of Estimate & Taxation Public Hearing on Operating Budget

FY27: What's Shaping the Budget

\$4.5 Million Funding

Last year's appropriation will be built into this year's budget to keep positions that were reinstated.

Special Education

An increase in student identification and provider rates is raising overall service needs.

Insurance Costs

The district is now responsible for liability, auto, and property insurance previously paid by the city.

School Meals

Ongoing funding ensures all students continue to have access to free school meals.

Staff Pay and Benefits

Budget accounts for negotiated salary increases and rising health insurance costs.

South Norwalk School Staffing

Supports additional staff and resources as the school adds a 4th grade this year.

Pre-K Expansion

Expanding two full-day Pre-K programs at Wolfpit and South Norwalk School through the SMART START Grant to meet growing student needs.

Retirement Contributions

Reflects new employer contribution rates for employee 401(a) plans.

Service Contracts

Higher costs across key district vendors and services.

QR CODES



Copy of the Presentation



Budget Website

bit.ly/NPSBudgetWebsite





Lunda Asmani, Norwalk Public Schools

Jared Schmitt, City of Norwalk

Jim Frayer, Norwalk City Council

Sheri McCready-Brown, Board of Education

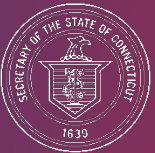
Ed Abrams, Board of Estimate & Taxation Chair

Moderated by: Jesse Buccolo, Deputy Director



The Power of Civics

Deputy Secretary of the State
Jennifer Barahona
Jennifer.Barahona@ct.gov



Office of the Connecticut Secretary of the State



Let's test your civic knowledge!

1. Name the 3 branches of government

- Executive, Legislative, Judicial

2. The U.S. House of Representatives has how many members?

- 435 Congresspeople

3. The Connecticut General Assembly (the state legislature) has how many state representatives and senators?

- 151 State Representatives
- 36 State Senators

4. True or False. Being an 'Independent' means you don't belong to a major political party.



- False



Let's test your civic knowledge!



The Power of Civics

PowerofCivics.ct.gov

The Power of Civics

Learn it. Use it. Share it.

HOME

HOME

MY COURSES

Welcome to The Power of Civics!

By logging in today, you've already taken an important step in empowering yourself. Understanding how government works - and how to work with it - is one of the most valuable tools you can have as a Connecticut resident. Whether you're here because you're facing a challenge and need help navigating the system, or you're simply curious and want to be prepared before you ever need assistance, this platform is for you. No matter if you have just ten minutes or more time to explore, whether you're new to civic education or already active in your community - there's something here for you. The Power of Civics is designed for everyone, regardless of background or experience. Let's get started - your civic journey begins now, and the tools you need are right at your fingertips.

If you plan on taking a break from your online training, please close all windows to ensure that your progress is saved. When you return to the online training, you will be able to resume where you left off.

Ready to start? Click the **My Courses** button above to access your training.



Stephanie Thomas
Secretary of the State



Office of the Connecticut Secretary of the State

- Platform **launched** in October 2025
- Confident civic participation = better outcomes
- A tool that makes **civic participation** easier



Overview of the Training

Introduction to Government Activity

Let's review what you've learned in your introduction to government.

Please read each question and type in the correct response or select the correct

Fill in the blank:

If you're learning a new topic like civics, you should grab a _____ so that ask each other questions, talk through ideas, and figure it out together.

Type your answer here

SUBMIT



Section 5: Elected Officials



Section 6: Legislative Process

Let's review some election information. Click and drag each phrase card on the left to match with its correct definition on the right.

6:00 a.m.

Ways you can register to vote

Ways you can vote

State and federal offices

Unaffiliated

Ways you can connect with the Connecticut SOS

In person at your town's Registrar of Voters office or a voter registration agency; or online at myvote.ct.gov/register.

Why is understanding the different levels of government and their roles important for citizens?

1 It primarily helps in understanding historical election results.

2 It helps citizens identify the correct officials to contact about specific issues they care about.

MyVote.ct.gov

SUBMIT

CONTINUE



Welcome and Introduction to Government

Section 1: Welcome and Introduction to Government

[RESUME COURSE](#)



Office of the Connecticut Secretary of the State

- **Understanding** your rights and duties as a citizen
- **Background** on how our government functions
- **Levels of Government**
 - Federal, State, and Local

Engage with Community

Section 2: Engage with Community

[RESUME COURSE](#)



Office of the Connecticut Secretary of the State

- **Attending** town meetings
- **Volunteering** to connect with the community
- **Participating** in a political party
- **Understanding** the threat of misinformation
- Civically Engaged Organizations (**CEO**) Program

Candidates and Campaigns

Section 3: Candidates and Campaigns

[RESUME COURSE](#)



Office of the Connecticut Secretary of the State

- **Familiarize** yourself with the ballot
- **How to research candidates and engage with campaigns:**
 - Attend Candidate Events
 - Volunteer with a Campaign
 - Donate to a Campaign
 - Meet with Candidates

Elections

Section 4: Elections

START COURSE



Office of the Connecticut Secretary of the State

- **How to prepare to vote:**

- Register to vote:
MyVote.ct.gov/lookup
- Determine political party
- Key election dates + type of election
- Sample ballots
- Your polling location

**Stay Engaged with
Connecticut SOTS at
MyVote.CT.Gov**

Elected Officials

Section 5: Elected Officials

START COURSE



Office of the Connecticut Secretary of the State

- **Understand** the different levels + positions in Government
- **Identify + Meet** your elected officials
- **Communicate + Share** your expertise or concerns with your elected officials

Legislative Process

Section 6: Legislative Process

START COURSE



Office of the Connecticut Secretary of the State

- Stay **informed** on issues:
 - Your town/city's website
 - cga.ct.gov
 - congress.gov
- **Understand** the budget process
- **Learn** how to submit testimony + read a bill
- **Understand** the decision making process

Why Civic Participation Matters?

The Power of Civics

PowerofCivics.ct.gov



Office of the Connecticut Secretary of the State

Civic Participation Strengthens Democracy:

- Informed voters **reflect** the community
- Participation **builds** trust within government processes

Current Election-related news:

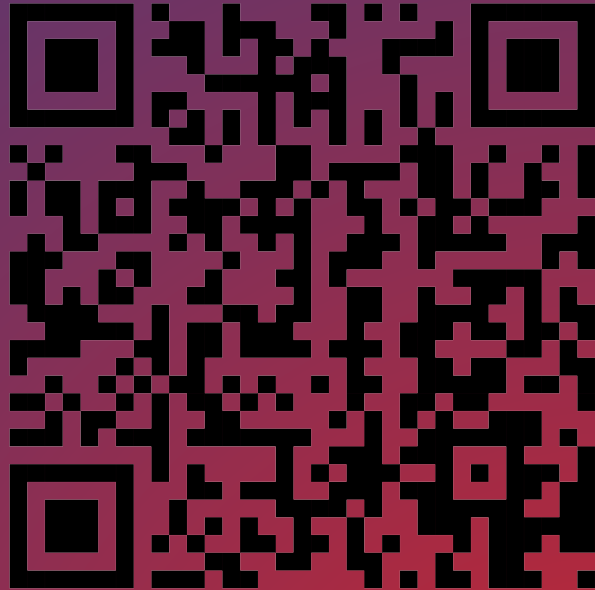
- Executive orders = Changing election procedures
- Discussions about voter identification and proof-of-citizenship requirements

What our office can do:

- We provide **official, real-time information** on registration rules, documentation requirements, voting options, and upcoming changes leading into the 2026 election

Civically Engaged Organizations

Visit this website to sign up to be a Civically Engaged Organization:

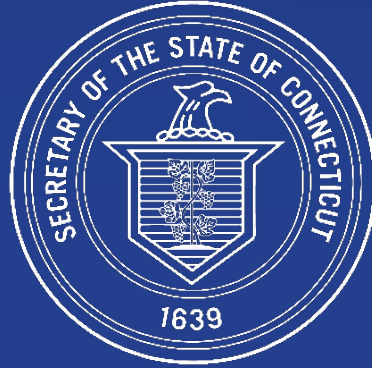


Norwalk CEOs:

- Norwalk ACTS
- Ametheia DraG
- ElderHouse, Inc.
- Fairfield County's Community Foundation
- HELP, Inc
- HMTX Industries
- Lennie Rose Estate Appraisals, Inc.
- Livity, LLC
- Odyssey Family Executive Center
- Open Doors
- Restoratively Speaking, LLC
- Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities
- St. Paul's On The Green
- The Carver
- The Odyssey Family Executive Center of South Norwalk
- Walton altEnergy



Office of the Connecticut Secretary of the State



Thank You!

Follow us @CTSOTS on

Facebook, LinkedIn, TikTok & Instagram

Questions from Audience

Scan the QR Code to ask the panel questions



Table Reflection Discussion

What is something new you learned today?


Any Surprises?


Upcoming Events


Mayor-Elect Barbara Smyth
Invites You To the First


COMMUNITY LISTENING FORUMS


All community members are welcome to attend and share your feedback on how we can keep Norwalk moving forward.


 **Community Room at City Hall**


 **Date: December 10, 2025**

 **Time: 6-7:30 PM**

 **SONO Library**

 **Date: December 18, 2025**

 **Time: 6-7:30 PM**



Are you concerned about the social & emotional health of Norwalk youth?

Join us to develop a **Community Priority Plan for Youth Mental Wellbeing** that will serve as a roadmap for the coming years. Be the change you want to see!




- What:** 4-part roundtable series to develop priorities around youth behavioral health in Norwalk
- Who:** Norwalk teens, parents, teachers, providers, community & faith leaders, elected officials, policy makers, and funders
- When & Where:** **Nov. 12, Dec. 10, Jan. 14 and Feb. 11, from 4-6pm (dinner provided) at the EnVision Center, 30 Day Street, Building C, Norwalk.** Each meeting will build on the prior session, so please come to all 4!
- How:** Please RSVP for each date at TheNorwalkPartnership.org/Events






Now on YouTube, Apple Podcasts, Spotify!

Norwalk ACTS **Norwalk Talks**




Engaging the community and families to fight childhood hunger with Paola Arango, Family & Community Engagement Coordinator of Filling in the Blanks




Norwalk ACTS **Norwalk Talks**

Launching December 8th



Ensuring community members with lived experience have the skills and resources to have a S.E.A.T. at the table of a non-profit board with Kim Bianca Burgess



Norwalk ACTS **Norwalk Talks**

Launching Soon!



Providing all NPS Students with Workforce Curriculum & Opportunities with Carol Wiltshire-Toth, Education Administrator School Counseling & Workforce Development of Norwalk Public Schools



Learn more about the Community Listening Forums in a special episode out now with Mayor-elect Barbara Smyth

How Did We Do?

Please provide feedback



Norwalk ACTS



December Quarterly Convening