

Norwalk Education Foundation Newsletter

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Norwalk Education Foundation Urges Norwalk Public Schools to Participate in Race to the Top

The Norwalk Education Foundation announced today its position on the federal government initiative identified as Race to the Top. The \$4.35 billion competitive grant will be awarded over a 4-year period to encourage and reward states implementing comprehensive education reforms.

At the **January 5, 2010 Board of Education meeting**, it was reported that the Norwalk Board of Education will not sign on as a participating district for Race to the Top. The decision has created concerns at NEF and the community - **with parents** - asking why the Superintendent and the Board of Education are refusing to participate in this initiative.

NEF recommends that the Superintendent and Board of Education sign on to participate in Connecticut's Race to the Top grant application by the State's extended signing deadline of Wednesday morning, January 13th.

The reforms consist of four key areas: 1. Adopting standards and assessments to prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace; 2. Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction; 3. Recruiting, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals; and 4. Turning around lowest achieving schools.

For Norwalk schools, the initiative involves transitioning to national common standards and assessments for kindergarten through 12th grade, participating in the Connecticut 8-Year Plan to redesign high schools to meet 21st century skills required by a global economy, expanding state longitudinal data systems to improve instruction, and implementing a new comprehensive system for supporting, supervising and evaluating teachers and principals.

Why is Norwalk Public Schools closing the door on a federal initiative that has the potential to provide extensive resources that will further existing initiatives and also allow for considerable financial support?

NEF recognizes and applauds parents who seek information and clarification on this topic. We are certain that the Interim Superintendent and the Board of Education

will address the community and parents' concerns in a timely manner.

Xerox, Aitoro, Irene Dixon Honored by NEF at Upcoming Norwalk Chamber of Commerce Event

Wednesday, January 20, 2010, 7:45 - 9:15 a.m.

The Brewhouse Restaurant (co-sponsor), 13 Marshall Street, South Norwalk

Each year, NEF recognizes companies and individuals who are committed to quality public education in Norwalk. This year, the awards will be presented at the 8th Annual Business Partners for Education Awards Breakfast, hosted by NEF and the Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce.



Joseph Cahalan, Xerox Corporation

The Xerox Corporation will be the recipient of NEF's 2009 Corporate Partner Award. Receiving the award for Xerox will be Joseph M. Cahalan, vice president, communications and social responsibility for Xerox Corporation in Norwalk and president, The Xerox Foundation. Also honored at the breakfast will be Aitoro Appliances, which will receive NEF's Small Business Partner in Education Award, and Irene Dixon of the Hilton Garden Inn who will receive the Individual Partner in Education Award. Dr. William Papallo, Interim Superintendent of the Norwalk Public Schools, will be guest speaker.

JPMorgan Chase Lends Support to Teacher to Teacher

NEF ended the year on an upbeat note with a \$15,000 grant from the JPMorgan Chase Foundation for our Teacher to Teacher program. The program makes use of the knowledge of the teachers themselves to train other teachers, allowing them to share best practices through creative, hands-on, collaborative professional development workshops in areas from data management and core curriculum, to innovative classroom programs.



Hilda Salerno (left), Chase Bank VP and NEF Board Member, and Patricia Rodriguez-Autore (right), Chase Bank VP and SONO Branch Manager (right), present Lauren Rosato (center), NEF President with a grant for NEF's Teacher to Teacher program.

"By bringing strategic innovations to classroom teachers to help improve student outcomes in the Norwalk Public Schools, NEF is right at the cutting edge of education reform," says Dennis McDermott, Chase Community Relations Northeast Team. "Chase's focus is to ensure that all children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, have access to high quality educational opportunities and NEF's work is almost perfectly aligned with that mission."

Attention all Norwalk Elementary School Teachers *Learning through Drawing Workshop at The Aldrich Museum*

Discover how drawing can be used as a perceptual and conceptual tool to help students in thinking and communicating ideas. Participate in hands-on activities that illustrate ways in which drawing can help children learn habits, skills and capabilities that can transfer to many different areas of learning experience, such as: analyzing, collecting information, hypothesizing, imagining, recalling, storytelling and visualizing, among others. Also, learn how your schools can participate in The Aldrich Museum's Draw On! Program.

Wednesday, February 3, 4:45-7:30pm, Dinner included
The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum
250 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877

RSVP: aubreys@norwalkps.org (email rsvp only)

We have room for 40 teachers - first come, first served. Don't miss this great opportunity!



Give the Gift of Knowledge

A donation to NEF is an investment in Norwalk's future - helping to bring quality education to 10,500 public school students. More than 88% of donations to NEF go directly to improving teachers' skills, providing targeted learning programs and promoting classroom innovation.

[Visit our website](#)

Tune in to the Norwalk Board of Education Meetings

The Norwalk Board of Education meetings can be seen on Public Access Channel 78, Monday-Friday at 8:00am & 4:00pm, or online. Thank you to our high school film student volunteers!

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