An evidence-based proposal for improving Connecticut education funding

for greater adequacy, equity, and accountability.

(policymaker + analyst edition)

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Connecticut ranks fourth in the nation in educational attainment (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024) and fifth in per-pupil spending (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026). Counting revenue from every source, Connecticut schools received about $28,100 per student in 2023-24, compared with a national average near $21,100 (USAFacts, 2026). The state's own per-pupil expenditure reporting, which counts what districts spend and excludes the state's contribution to teacher retirement, results in a lower figure: a median of $22,415 across the 111 town-based K-12 districts in 2024-25. Every per-pupil figure in this analysis uses the state's published measure (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2026c) unless stated otherwise. In this funding context, Connecticut continues to have one of the nation's largest achievement gaps (National Center for Education Statistics, 2025a), related to a high level of economic segregation, which as a result, places it among the most expensive and inequitable state education systems in the country (Farrie & Kim, 2025). The Segregation Tracking Project (2026) confirms Connecticut's status as the sixth most economically segregated state in the nation, with school districts largely reflecting the economic segregation of Connecticut municipalities. That segregation also has a

racial cost that runs through the property tax. One study estimated that in 2018, the average Black student in Connecticut was supported by about $4,300 less in local property tax revenue than the average white student, up from about $3,200 in 2008, and that state formula aid made up roughly two-thirds of that difference (Green et al., 2021).

The Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant has historically distributed education funding to local municipalities and school districts. This figure currently sits at $2.65 billion and includes $190 million in “supplemental” funding for 2026-27 (School and State Finance Project, 2026). While the establishment of Alliance Districts in 2012 (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2026b) and subsequent legislative adjustments (e.g., phasing out overfunded towns and phasing in underfunded districts, weighting of English language learners, etc.) made it somewhat more equitable, it is still widely viewed as inadequate, particularly for districts with the highest student needs. ECS is the largest of the state's education grants, but it is not the only funding source; the state also pays teacher retirement costs, special education excess costs, charter schools and CTECs (School and State Finance Project, 2026). Counting every state dollar, Connecticut covers approximately 36% of the total cost of public education, compared to a national average of about 45% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026; USAFacts, 2026). As a result, Connecticut school districts, regardless of wealth, must depend more heavily on local property taxes to cover annual operating costs. Only New Hampshire - *which does not have a state income tax* - relies more heavily on the property tax.

This over-dependence is not marginal, and it is not typical. In school year 2022-23, local property taxes supplied 54.8% of all revenue for Connecticut's public schools, against 33.2% nationally, while the state supplied 36.1% against a national 45.1% and the federal government 8.3% against 12.9% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2025b). Connecticut is not simply

a state where the government pays less. What state government does not pay is made up almost entirely by a property tax whose basis is the wealth of the municipality - and that single condition is what converts a funding shortfall into an equity crisis. Full state support for teacher pensions - Connecticut is one of only 15 states that fully fund teacher pensions with no local contribution (Aubry, 2024) - is an offsetting factor. That support is counted within the 36.1% total state contribution above, as it is within every other state's figure; however, it is in itself a disequalizing factor (i.e., the state's contribution is a function of the salaries a district pays, so it directs more state money to wealthier districts that already pay higher salaries). *It is also the one state dollar that never passes through a district's operating budget, and the Connecticut State Department of Education excludes it from the per-pupil expenditure series used throughout this paper*.

Connecticut's public schools took in $13.81 billion in 2022-23, with the state contributing $4.99 billion (36.1%) and property taxes contributing $7.56 billion (54.8%). If the state were to reach the benchmark of 50% while local and federal revenue held steady, the Legislature would need to appropriate approximately $3.83 billion more over time;[1] Appendix 2, Table 5 sets out three schedules for reaching it and where the state share stands in each year along the way. But that is only half of the equity/achievement equation.

In the current system, the level of wealth in local communities, reflected in the value of taxable property (assessed valuation), and the capacity (discretionary income) of residents to pay more enables an extreme variation in annual school spending, as illustrated by examples of 2024-25 per-pupil spending in districts serving very different populations: **Westbrook** ($35,908, serving 52.2% high-needs students) against **Meriden** ($16,977, serving 84.8%); **Westport**

[1] This assumes the state appropriates new money while local and federal revenue hold steady, so that the state covers half of a growing total: ($4.99 billion + X) ÷ ($13.81 billion + X) = 50%, so X = $3.83 billion.

($28,601, 16.9%) against **Bridgeport** ($18,440, 92.6%); **Branford** ($29,396, 46.5%) against **New Haven** ($21,346, 83.8%); and **Granby** ($22,065, 30.7%) against **New London** ($23,265, 88.5%). That last pair is illustrative of our argument: The two districts spend within $1,200 of each other. **Granby** scores 82.8 on the District Accountability Index; **New London** scores 58.6. The same money does not do the same work when the students arrive at school with this much difference in need. *Most of the poorest districts in the state have the highest student need. Overreliance on wealth-based property taxes creates a system in which students with the highest need consistently receive the least.*

Under the current ECS distribution plus local property tax revenue, the highest-need districts (serving 67% high-needs students) spend 8.7% less than the lowest-need districts (serving 28% high-needs students) - $2,034 less per pupil. The local share accounts for more than the whole of that gap: local property tax contributions run about $3,000 per student higher in the low-need districts, and the current level of state funding distributed by the ECS formula is inadequate to close it to any meaningful degree. *As a result, in many cases in Connecticut, most students' futures are effectively decided by the municipality in which they live and the school they attend.*

To address this multifaceted issue, the Governor's Blue-Ribbon Commission on K-12 Education Funding and Accountability is "tasked with conducting a comprehensive review of all education funding in Connecticut and then providing the governor and the Connecticut General Assembly with recommendations on how this system can be improved" (Lamont, 2026). From a state policy perspective, this assumes a significant redesign of the education finance system rather than tinkering with the current ECS formula or adjusting the current, inherently

inequitable formula for inflation. Moreover, it requires consideration of both *how much* money is spent and *what* it is spent on.

Educational and economic research has linked higher spending on schools, particularly those serving high-needs students, to measurable improvements in student outcomes that persist well into adulthood. A review of school-spending studies from across the United States finds that increasing spending by $1,000 per pupil, sustained over four years, raises college-going by 2.8 percentage points and test scores by 3.2% of a standard deviation, with larger effects for students from low-income families (Jackson & Mackevicius, 2024).

What education funding is spent on has been found to be equally determinative of a school district's effectiveness in raising student outcomes and narrowing achievement gaps.

How a school district spends its resources is influenced by two factors:

1. *Structural cost differences and constraints created by district size, administrative overhead costs, state special education and labor policy, and regional differences in the cost of living and doing business.*
2. *Variation in the degree of efficiency and effectiveness resulting from local district decision-making, i.e., district priorities and practices that decide how it spends available state and local revenue in those areas where it has discretion.*

Economists C. Kirabo Jackson of Northwestern University, Rucker Johnson of the University of California, Berkeley, and Claudia Persico established the causal link between school spending and long-run student outcomes in their study of court-ordered school finance reforms. Their work and the literature that has followed it support a two-part conclusion: money matters, and what it is spent on matters just as much (Jackson et al., 2016).

National research (Jackson & Mackevicius, 2024) on how districts spend discretionary dollars finds, as we have in Connecticut, significant variation in how similar districts convert per-pupil expenditure (PPE) into student achievement, and that the variation tracks what the additional money is spent on. This analysis consistently suggests that spending directed toward *core instructional inputs* (De Bruin et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023) - teacher quality (including salaries, professional development, and retention strategies), instructional spending and targeted interventions - summer learning, high-dose tutoring, etc. - yields far higher returns than spending on general operations, administration, or transportation. Our analysis of the return-on-investment (ROI) of comparable Connecticut school districts suggests significant variation in student outcomes, as measured by the state's District Accountability Index (DAI), among school districts of comparable size, need, and spending. Moreover, these variations appear related to both structural cost differences and district-determined spending patterns that often reflect past practice and/or the implicit or explicit priorities of district leadership and local boards of education.

The evidence suggests that an overhaul and redesign of Connecticut's school finance system to be effective must meet three fundamental criteria:

1. *Shift more resources to districts with the greatest student need.*
2. *Prioritize allocation of additional resources for the instructional core of school districts.*
3. *Through state policy, address structural issues such as district size and related administrative overhead that divert money from the instructional core.*

To that end, we look to name the Connecticut districts that our analysis suggests are most successful at converting local and state revenue into student outcomes. We hope that examining the characteristics and spending practices of those districts will inform state policy and guide the

distribution and allocation of a much-needed increase in the state share of educational funding to create a state school finance system that is more adequate and equitable in meeting the needs of more students and more efficient in the use of state and local tax dollars.

Methodology

This analysis builds on the methodology used to determine the Achievement Return-on-Investment (A-ROI) of school districts used in the UConn Executive Leadership Program (ELP) course on *Data-driven Decision-making for District Improvement and Equity*. This equation finds how much districts spend - total per-pupil expenditure (PPE) - for each point earned on their District Accountability Index (DAI), the summative rating in Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2026a). Every district-level figure in this proposal is drawn from the novel District Comparison Tools app (Datadaptive LLC, 2026) and reflects version 3.0 of that build as of September 2026; because the tool is updated as the state publishes new data, later figures may differ slightly.

We also find return-on-investment for growth (G-ROI). G-ROI equals PPE divided by the Growth Accountability Index (GAI), where GAI is the mean of ELA and Math growth rates multiplied by 100. The multiplication places GAI on the same 0-to-100 scale as the District Accountability Index: The growth rates as published run from 0 to 100, while the achievement indicators already run from 0 to 100. The mean, rather than the sum, reproduces the state's weighting, which assigns each of the two growth indicators the same number of possible points.

To consider an 'apples-to-apples' comparison of the degree to which districts effectively convert their available funding to student outcomes, all legally defined school districts are compared within categories. Connecticut has 199 reporting districts. Of these, 165 are town-based school districts, together covering all 169 municipalities: 111 serving the full K-12 span, 46 elementary-only (K-6, K-8), and 8 secondary-only (6-12, 9-12).

Regional School District 20 first reports an accountability index and a spending figure in 2024-25, following the merger of **Litchfield** and **Regional School District 06**. Of today's 111

town-based K-12 districts, 110 existed in every year from 2018-19, so any figure comparing two years is computed on those 110, and single-year figures for 2024-25 are computed on all 111. Where a calculation ranks districts against one another within a year, as the placements in Appendix 1 do, it uses every town-based K-12 district that existed in that year. The remaining 34 have no town boundary: 21 charter districts, the magnet school systems operated by six Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs), the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System, one college-affiliated district, three endowed academies, and two state agency facilities. For comparisons of efficiency, they are compared among themselves rather than against town-based districts - the six RESCs as one class, and the charter, technical, and college-affiliated districts as another. The three endowed academies and two state agency facilities do not publish both a per-pupil expenditure and an accountability index in any school year, so no efficiency measure exists for them, and they appear in no comparison and no funding table. That leaves 29 districts with no town boundary in this analysis, and 194 districts in all. All but two findings reported below draw on the 111 town-based K-12 districts, so each comparison is made within a single class of district (Findings #1 and #2 use statewide data). To provide further precision on economic segregation (i.e., income disparity, size), all K-12 districts have been grouped into Reference Groups by level of High-Needs + Enrollment, which includes the percentage of students from low-income families (using the free- and reduced-price meal proxy), multi-language learners, and students with disabilities (smaller categories such as Elementary and Secondary districts have also been grouped by High-Needs + Enrollment).

Within each group, we compare school districts of comparable need and enrollment on PPE and on DAI. A district is identified as one of the most efficient in its group only if it clears all three of that group's own averages: its DAI is at or above the group average, its PPE is at or

below the group average, and its A-ROI is at or below the group average. The three conditions apply together, and each average is taken across every district in the group rather than across qualifying districts. A district therefore cannot earn the designation by achieving little at low cost, nor by achieving well at any price. It has to be at least as effective as the districts most like it and spend less to get there. A group with fewer than two districts produces no designation. Because each of the three averages is published beside the districts in the tool, a reader can check every condition directly.

Finally, we propose a distribution system for new funding called "benchmark funding" based on categorizing districts in 10 High-Needs deciles. This serves as a distribution system for up to $3.83 billion in new state funding to meet the 50% target. Benchmark funding is the new state money to be distributed; it is distinct from benchmark spending, which by definition is what reaching the standard has cost the districts that reached it, and from benchmark achievement, the state's own District Accountability Index benchmark of 75 that defines the standard. Appendix 1 sets out how districts are placed on need and on wealth and the judgments those placements rest on; Appendix 2 shows the distribution that results for every district.

For more methodology, visit https://datadaptive.ai/district-comparison-tools and open the Methods & Definitions page.

Findings

Finding #1: Connecticut's inequity will not be addressed by making further adjustments to the current ECS formula

The formula is fully funded and extreme inequity remains. The Education Cost Sharing phase-in has met and exceeded the formula's capacity. Statewide, actual ECS aid rose from 85.4% of the formula's calculated amount in FY2019 - a shortfall of $345 million - to 97.9% in

FY2025. In FY2026, it reached 102.5%, and in FY2027 it will reach 104.6%. The enacted appropriations carry it past the formula: not a single town receives less than its calculated amount, and "overfunded" towns are held harmless at amounts above theirs (School and State Finance Project, 2026). Full funding and adequacy are not the same property. ECS distributes what it is intended to distribute in the manner for which it is designed in full and then some, and that does not meet the need or achieve equity. *The disparities documented in the rest of this proposal persist under an already fully funded formula.*

Finding #2: Connecticut funds its schools from local property taxes to a degree almost no other state approaches, and that is the mechanism that turns a funding gap into an equity gap

In school year 2022-23, local property taxes supplied 54.8% of all revenue for Connecticut's public schools. The national figure is 33.2%. Connecticut's state share was 36.1% against a national 45.1%, and its federal share 8.3% against 12.9% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2025b). The consequence is structural rather than incidental. Where the state supplies a minority of school revenue and the federal government supplies less than a tenth, the difference is made up by a levy whose yield depends on the assessed taxable value of the town. Two towns making the same effort against very different grand lists raise very different amounts, and no amount of local willingness to support schools closes that distance. *Every finding in this paper about the relationship between town wealth, tax effort, and school spending is a consequence of this one arrangement.*

An independent national analysis reaches the same conclusion from federal data. Using Census Bureau revenue figures for 2022 to 2024, adjusted for inflation and regional labor costs, EdTrust found that Connecticut's highest-poverty districts, which together enroll about a quarter

of the state's students, receive about $3,800 (13.8%) less in state and local revenue per student than its lowest-poverty districts, while nationally the highest-poverty districts receive slightly more, about $200 (0.9%). The difference comes from local revenue, which state aid offsets only in part. Connecticut's districts serving the most English learners also receive $4,800 (16.9%) less, and those serving the most students of color $5,500 (19.1%) less (EdTrust, 2026; Huddleston et al., 2026). These figures measure revenue rather than spending and group districts by child poverty rather than by high needs, so they are not directly comparable with the $2,034 gap given earlier; they point the same way and are larger.

Finding #3: The District Reference Groups are twenty years old and no longer describe the districts they sort

The District Reference Group (DRG) method of categorizing Connecticut School Districts is an artifact of the past and is invalid and inequitable as a means of influencing the distribution of funds or comparing districts. The Connecticut State Department of Education first released the DRGs in 2006 and has never officially updated them; the only later versions are unofficial re-derivations of the original methodology (School and State Finance Project, n.d.). Twenty years separate the classification from the districts it claims to describe. *We have found that comparing districts in narrow bands of student need, rebuilt from current data, is the more accurate and more equitable basis for both funding and accountability.*

Finding #4: Ten districts convert funding into student outcomes better than their peers, but even the most efficient high-needs district still falls short of benchmark achievement

Connecticut districts that have been most efficient in translating their available funding into measurable student outcomes with the greatest A-ROI include the following K-12 districts, drawn from our proposed 10 Reference Groups (based on High-Needs + Enrollment): **Bethel;**

Coventry; East Granby; Farmington; Granby; Meriden; Shelton; South Windsor; Thomaston; and Vernon. The standout of this group is **Meriden**, which served an 84.8% high-needs population in 2024-25 on a per-pupil expenditure of $16,977 and achieved a District Accountability Index of 69.6 - better than 14 districts spending more than $29,000 per pupil. Two conclusions follow: The first is that leadership, teacher quality, culture, innovation, prioritization of the instructional core, and elevated expectations can, to a significant degree, leverage the relationship between dollars and outcomes. The second, however, is that **Meriden**'s DAI of 69.6 remains below the state's own achievement benchmark of 75, reached while doing everything this analysis can identify as the most effective things to do. *Efficiency is not sufficiency.*

Nothing in this finding supports the conclusion that Connecticut's high-need districts are adequately funded, and identifying the districts that convert money well is not an alternative to funding the districts that do not have enough of it to convert. These districts are named so that the State Department of Education can study what they do, and so that the additional funding proposed below is directed at what is working in the context of Connecticut education. Moreover, our analysis identified four additional districts to the ones above that top their respective Reference Groups by demonstrating the best *growth* return-on-investment (G-ROI): **Cheshire; Griswold; Newington; and Suffield.**

Finding #5: At the same level of student need, districts reach benchmark achievement on budgets that differ widely

Five districts met the state's achievement benchmark of 75 DAI while serving between 50% and 60% high-needs students in 2024-25 (five of the 13 districts in that range): **Seymour** (57.7% high needs, spent $19,784 per pupil), **Plainville** (53.6%, $22,412), **Westbrook** (52.2%,

$35,908), **Clinton** (51.5%, $26,336) and **Stafford** (50.2%, $25,044). What they spent to reach the same standard ranges from $19,784 to $35,908 - a spread of 81% among districts serving comparable populations. *This evidence is the strongest single argument for examining how effectively districts spend, not just how much*.

Finding #6: Among districts with more than 60% student need, benchmark achievement has only been reached twice in five years

Above 60% student need, Connecticut has almost no districts that reach the state's achievement benchmark of 75. Across the five published years, two districts have met it: **Vernon** in 2024-25, at 62.6% high needs, and **Norwalk** in 2018-19, at 65.3%. In 2024-25, 30 districts served populations above 60% high needs, and only one, **Vernon**, met the state's standard. *Connecticut has set a performance standard that its highest-need districts have essentially never met, and it has never conducted a study to estimate what meeting it would cost or how this funding should be spent.*

Finding #7: Vernon is the clearest case in the state of a high-needs district reaching benchmark achievement and sustaining it

Vernon serves 62.6% high-needs students and posted a DAI of 76.3 in 2024-25 - the only district above 60% high-needs to reach benchmark achievement in the most recent year, and the highest-scoring district of all 30 in that group as well as the highest-scoring Alliance District. It has held that top position in three of the five published years. Across the five published years, 2018-19 through 2024-25, the share of its students classified as high needs rose from 59.0% to 62.6% while its DAI climbed from 74.5 to 76.3, a gain of 1.8 points over six years when the median change among the 110 K-12 districts was a loss of 1.9 points and only 29 of them improved at all. It did this at $19,595 per pupil - $1,664 below the $21,259 median for the 28

districts in the highest-need quartile, and more than nine points above their median result of 67.2. ***Vernon*** *is the clearest case in the state of a high-need district successfully converting available funding into student outcomes and is a case study in the factors and spending priorities that contribute to this outcome.*

Finding #8: Districts under 1,500 students spend about $2,700 more per pupil for the same results as larger districts

In none of the three most recent published years has a Connecticut district with fewer than 1,500 students ranked in the top quarter of districts on translating spending into student achievement; in 2024-25 the most efficient of them - **Somers** - missed the quartile by two tenths of a point. Districts below that enrollment score no worse than districts between 1,500 and 7,000 students - 75 to 77 on the District Accountability Index against 77 to 78 - *but they spend roughly $2,700 more per pupil to get there* - $22,826 against $20,164, pooled across the five published years.

That premium is about 13% of what the larger district group spends per pupil for the same result. It appears in every published year separately, and it has widened from 9.0% in 2018-19 to 13.8% in 2024-25. The premium is not uniform. Among the wealthiest districts, size makes almost no difference to efficiency. It concentrates among districts serving moderate to high student needs, where a small district cannot spread the cost of serving that need across enough pupils. The largest districts, above 7,000 students, show no comparable premium. Within the highest-need third of districts, where 10 of the 13 sit, they spent a median of $20,000 per pupil in 2024-25 against $21,171 for districts of 1,500 to 7,000, at almost the same cost per point on the District Accountability Index ($313 against $310). *Their lower scores reflect the concentration of*

need they serve, not their size. This shows that very small size carries a real and growing cost; it does not, by itself, establish what consolidation would save.

Finding #9: Since 2018-19, funding has been flat in real terms while the share of high-needs students rose and achievement measured by DAI, at the median, fell slightly

Despite recent legislative efforts, Connecticut funding has been close to flat in real terms while student need has risen and measured achievement has fallen. At the median, districts absorbed a 4.8-point rise in their share of high-needs students on resources that barely grew - and gave back 1.9 DAI points in doing so. *It is evidence that flat funding against rising high needs produces slow decline, and that the operating environment has grown more challenging since COVID, faster than district resources have grown to meet it.*

When considered against inflation, the median per pupil expenditure in Connecticut, including both state and local revenue, has been close to flat across the five published years, 2018-19 through 2024-25 - up 28.5% against 25.5% inflation, measured as the change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (U.S. city average, all items) between the twelve months of the 2018-19 school year and the twelve months of 2024-25 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.). That is real growth of 2.4% over six years, or *less than half a percent a year*.

Over the same period, across the 110 K-12 districts, the median change was a 4.8-point rise in the share of high-needs students and a 1.9-point fall in DAI; 29 of those districts improved their DAI. Sixteen of those did so even as their share of high-needs students rose and their real per-pupil spending fell below what it had been six years earlier. *The evidence suggests that these 16 districts did more with less*: **Cheshire; East Haven; East Windsor; Farmington; Killingly;**

Madison; Manchester; Meriden; New Canaan; North Branford; North Haven; Suffield; Torrington; Trumbull; Vernon; and Wilton.

Finding #10: The towns with the least property wealth make the greatest tax effort for their schools

Connecticut's poorest towns tax themselves hardest for schools - and still have the least to spend on them. Measured against the property they own, the poorest quarter of the 111 town-based K-12 districts devote roughly twice the share of their property wealth to education as the wealthiest quarter: a median education equalized mill rate of 20.61 against 10.74, on a statewide median of 15.83. Considering all 169 Connecticut towns instead, the same calculation gives 20.19 against 8.78 on a median of 15.27; the gap is wider on that frame, and this analysis reports the district frame it uses everywhere else. The education equalized mill rate is a town's education spending divided by its equalized net grand list in thousands, so it reports the share of taxable property wealth a town commits to its schools. Appendix 1 describes both measures of town wealth, both measures of effort, and the years each covers. The relationship runs the length of the distribution rather than sitting in a few outliers. The extremes are stark: **Hartford** ranks first of 111 on education effort at an equalized mill rate of 48.02, against a grand list of $57,140 per resident, while **Greenwich** ranks last at 4.96 against $800,674 per resident. **Windham** ranks second on education effort at an equalized mill rate of 28.81, against a grand list of $81,670 per resident, while **Old Saybrook** measures at 6.85 against $434,542 per resident. *Effort is not what separates these towns; capacity is.*

The same towns also devote less of their municipal budget to education, and not because they value it less. Across the three highest-need deciles of this analysis the median district's towns commit 56.6% of municipal spending to education, against 70.5% across the three lowest-

need deciles and 66.2% statewide. The lowest is **New Haven**, at 35.0%, followed by **Hamden** at 39.6%, **Waterbury** at 45.8%, and **Bridgeport** at 47.3%. These towns carry police, fire, pensions, and debt that a wealthy suburb does not, and schools compete with those obligations for a levy that is already stretched. In these municipalities, less than half of their budgets go to schools; municipal functions and debt take the rest. *A town taxing itself at twice the rate and committing a smaller share of the result to schools is the mechanism behind the spending gap documented above, as evidenced by analyzing municipal budgets across Connecticut.*

Similarly, it can be projected from this analysis that the highest-needs, urban districts in Connecticut (i.e., those at or above the 70% level of student need) are experiencing a state of "educational overburden" - an extension of the established concept of municipal overburden in cities (Stein, 1978) - in which the level of need currently outpaces and overwhelms the resources available to reach benchmark achievement at any scale. *It is unclear how much additional benchmark funding is necessary, but it is clear that the current funding level relative to need is woefully inadequate*.

The burden does not take the form one might expect. Connecticut's highest-need districts do not necessarily sacrifice the instructional core in order to operate; they devote the same share of their budgets to instruction as the lowest-need districts do - 61.8% against 61.0% in 2024-25, and never less in any published year. Those two are quartile medians and sit a little above the 60.7% statewide median cited in Recommendation #2; all three are medians of district shares rather than shares of a statewide total. The highest-need districts simply have less to devote, spending $1,202 less per pupil on instruction out of a total that is $1,999 lower. That total is computed on the districts carrying a published spending breakdown, which is why it reads slightly narrower than the $2,034 quartile gap given earlier. What separates them are two factors:

first, transportation, which takes 3.0 percentage points more of their budget than it does in the lowest-need districts, against 2.0 points in 2018-19; second, the support layer around teaching, on which they spend $713 per pupil against $930 (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2026d). Instruction and support together account for $1,419 of the $1,999 difference; the remaining $580 lies in other spending categories - but not in transportation - which takes a larger share of the highest-need districts' budgets. *This is the unrecognized cost of economic segregation that the state must compensate for if it continues to support current housing policy and local control in 165 districts across 169 municipalities*.

For more findings, visit https://datadaptive.ai/district-comparison-tools and open the Findings page and Conclusions page.

Recommendations

The redesign proposed here is built to meet the three criteria set out at the beginning of this proposal:

1. *Shift more resources to districts with the greatest student need (Recommendation #1).*
2. *Prioritize allocation of additional resources for the instructional core (Recommendation #2).*
3. *Through state policy, capture economies of scale by addressing structural issues such as district size and related administrative overhead (Recommendation #3).*

While Recommendations #4 and #5 do not address the three criteria directly, the first three depend on them, and they build the state's capacity to see what its taxpayers' money buys.

Recommendation #1: Distribute new funding to districts by student need, according to district deciles of need, adjusted for town wealth

The evidence we have presented suggests the current Education Cost Sharing formula is inadequate to meet the level of need and narrow achievement gaps among school districts in Connecticut. Current ECS funding, including Alliance District funding and recent supplemental funding, may serve appropriately as a base or foundation level to support stability. However, *any new funding up to $3.83 billion needed to reach the goal of state provision of 50% of total Connecticut education costs should be distributed differentially based on need.*

The model presented here provides an alternative basis for distribution to the ECS formula, with the lowest-need districts (Deciles 9 and 10) receiving no added funding and Deciles 1 through 8 receiving benchmark funding at a single rate per high-needs student, $14,844, so the amount per pupil differs by decile. Each decile's total is its high-needs count multiplied by that rate, and within a decile that total is split in proportion to enrollment, so every district in the same adjusted decile receives the same amount per pupil. Because the numbers of high-needs students differ, that single rate produces the largest total in Decile 1 and the largest per-pupil premium there as well. The deciles set eligibility and structure, not the dollar amounts, and no district's students are worth more than another's. Appendix 2, Table 1 shows the distribution by adjusted decile, and Table 2 shows it for each of the 111 K-12 districts. This distribution rule stipulates what a district will receive in new money. *It does not say what reaching benchmark achievement would cost, and for Deciles 1, 2 and 3 that second figure still cannot be calculated, because almost no district in them has reached the standard in any published year.* The largest shares are directed there on evidence of unmet need rather than on a priced target, and pricing that target is among the future work for the State Department of Education to commission.

It is worth stating what the new money is and is not buying. The state's accountability data can price a spending target only where enough districts have reached the standard. Ranked on need alone, before the wealth adjustment, that is seven of the ten deciles. In the three highest-need deciles no target exists: in 2024-25 not one district in the first or second reached the standard of 75, and one district did in the third. Those 33 districts enroll 49.2% of the students in the 111 town-based K-12 districts. Among the 78 districts that do have a target, 38 spend below it, and lifting every one of them to its own decile's benchmark spending would cost $271 million, or 7.1% of the $3.83 billion. Where adequacy can be priced in Connecticut, it is close to already funded. Almost all of the new money goes to the districts the method cannot price, which is where it belongs, and the proposal should say so rather than imply it.

The frame for distribution is every district that serves Connecticut's students, not only the town-based K-12 districts. The analysis in this proposal rests on those 111 districts because they are the only population with a consistent wealth measure across four years. However, forty-six towns run an elementary district rather than a K-12 district, eight secondary regionals serve their older students, and the 29 districts with no town boundary described in the methodology - 21 charter districts, six RESCs, the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System, and one college-affiliated district - enroll students no town district counts. Together they educate 63,773 students, 36,886 of them high needs, a 57.8% high-needs share against 55.7% among the 111. A formula that distributes by high-needs students must include these 36,886 students. Placing these districts on the same deciles and applying the same eligibility gate directs $510.2 million of the $3.83 billion to the 71 districts that fall in Deciles 1 through 8, and leaves $3.32 billion for the 111. Appendix 2 lists every one of them, the elementary and secondary districts in Table 3 and the districts with no town boundary in Table 4.

Two consequences of including them should be stated rather than discovered in Appendix 2. These districts are placed on need alone, because the state's Education Cost Sharing wealth file covers K-12 districts only and the 29 have no town boundary, no grand list and no education mill rate; for the 54 elementary and secondary districts that concession is almost costless, since scoring them on need alone funds 42 of them and scoring them on the municipal grand list funds 43, a difference of 20 high-needs students. And because they sit in no decile peer group of like districts, each receives its own high-needs count multiplied by the single rate rather than a decile premium multiplied by its enrollment, so benchmark funding per pupil varies among them where it is uniform within a decile of the 111.

This is the point at which the proposal will be tested hardest, so the premise is worth stating plainly. The appropriation is justified by the distance between what a town can raise at reasonable effort and what adequacy costs. Charters, interdistrict magnets and the technical high school system have no town boundary and no local levy, so that distance cannot be computed for them at all. They are included because the unit of distribution is the high-needs student rather than the town, and every one of them places in Deciles 1 through 4 on need, with 15 of the 21 charter districts in Decile 1. A reader who believes the money should follow the taxing authority rather than the child will reach a different conclusion, and that disagreement is about the premise rather than about the arithmetic.

One quantity bearing on that target can be calculated, and it sets a floor beneath the shares. *Finding #10 establishes that the highest-need districts already tax themselves harder for schools than the wealthiest do.* The dollars required to bring the highest-need deciles down to the statewide median education equalized mill rate of 15.83, at their current level of school spending, are a fully specified calculation that needs no outcome data at all. They come to $521

million for adjusted Decile 1 and $672 million for adjusted Deciles 1, 2 and 3 together, which is 13.6% and 17.5% of the $3.83 billion. We propose those figures as a floor - before there is an adjustment for need: a distribution that delivers less than this to the highest-need deciles would leave the towns that already tax hardest for schools still taxing above the state's median. The funding floor is concentrated: **Hartford** alone accounts for a third of the figure for Deciles 1 through 3, because it combines the state's highest education tax effort with a grand list of only $57,140 per resident. The proposed distribution clears that floor: Deciles 1 through 3 receive $2.05 billion against $672 million, and Decile 1 alone receives $1.41 billion against $521 million. Two further features of that floor should be stated rather than discovered. It is not universal: five districts in those deciles already tax at or below the statewide median and add nothing to the floor, which is the correct behavior for a floor and a reminder that it is a test rather than an allocation. And it is temporary by design, because the model re-prices as soon as any district in Deciles 1 through 3 reaches the state's standard and an observed cost of success exists to price. In short, *distributing by need assumes that every town is already contributing what it can from its own tax base.*

For most Connecticut towns that assumption holds, and it is the assumption that lets need alone set the distribution structure. Our model calculates wealth capacity by blending the grand list and household income by 50/50 shares[2]. However, several towns break it, in opposite directions. A small number of communities hold property wealth so far above the rest of the state that they can sustain a high level of school spending at a modest property tax rate, and their placement in a need decile understates what they can raise. A second small group cannot raise

[2] The state's current ECS formula weights the same two measures 70/30, grand list over income (Moran, 2017). Our model weights them equally so that a town with a large grand list but modest household income is not treated as wealthier than its residents can sustain.

what the size of its grand list suggests, because a large share of the property inside its borders is exempt from local taxation - state and federal facilities, hospitals, and colleges - leaving a taxable base much smaller than the town's footprint implies. Neither case is common enough to justify rebuilding the distribution around wealth. Instead, *we propose that where a district's wealth placement and its need placement sit two or more deciles apart, its placement moves two deciles toward its wealth: down for a town whose property wealth exceeds what its need placement implies, and up for a town whose taxable base is smaller than its grand list suggests*.

Because the two lowest-need deciles receive no benchmark funding, an adjustment that carries a district into Decile 9 or 10 means it also will receive no new money. This applies to only four districts - **Brookfield**, **Fairfield**, **Greenwich** and **Regional School District 12** - each of which sits in wealth decile 9 or 10. Thirteen districts move up - **Bolton**, **Canton**, **East Hampton**, **Granby**, **Ledyard**, **North Branford**, **Regional School District 16**, **Thomaston**, **Coventry**, **Ellington**, **Tolland**, **North Stonington**, and **Somers** - and one of them enters the top three deciles of need: **Thomaston**. Five districts moved from Decile 2 to Decile 4 because their 50/50 blend of grand list and income to measure wealth sits two or more deciles above their need placements - **Bloomfield**, **Danbury**, **East Windsor**, **Norwalk**, and **Stamford**. *No district, including those in Deciles 9 and 10, loses the funding it now receives*.

A further consequence follows from using both rules at once. The wealth adjustment moves a district's placement; a decile's total is set by the high-needs children in it. Where a large, high-need district is moved down for wealth, that total returns much of what the move took, and the per-pupil result stops descending cleanly. Under the illustrative schedule the app carries, in which each funded decile receives its share of all high-needs students in Deciles 1 through 8, it reverses once: adjusted Decile 3 receives $9,249 per pupil and adjusted Decile 4 receives $9,479.

The cause is five districts moved from Decile 2 to Decile 4 because their wealth placements sit two or more deciles above their need placements - Stamford, Norwalk, Danbury, Bloomfield and East Windsor, together 42,546 pupils at between 64% and 75% high needs. On unadjusted need deciles the same schedule descends without a reversal, from $12,669 per pupil to $4,817, and a schedule of fixed decile shares does not reverse at all. The reversal is the price of combining a placement rule with a per-child premium, and it is defensible: the adjustment says those towns can raise more locally, and the premium says their children are still there. It is named here so that a reader meeting it in Appendix 2, Table 1 does not take it for an error.

Distributing by need assumes that serving need also narrows the other gaps that track it. In Connecticut, one of those gaps is large: districts serving the most students of color receive 19.1% less state and local revenue per student than districts serving the fewest (EdTrust, 2026). National research finds that state finance reforms built on income did not always narrow funding gaps by race, particularly in states as segregated as Connecticut (Rauscher & Fiel, 2026). Whether benchmark funding narrows that gap as well as the gap by need should be measured, not assumed.

Recommendation #2: Require 80% of new benchmark funding to reach the instructional core and name the uses it should buy

To ensure prioritization of the instructional core, the legislature should impose guardrails on new, benchmark funding that require 80% of it to be spent on the instructional core - instruction together with student support services and instructional support services, as the State Department of Education defines those functions - informed by the practices of the Connecticut school districts identified above as most successful at translating available spending (PPE) into student achievement (DAI). Using the State Department of Education’s categorization of

accounts, Connecticut districts currently spend a median of 72.5% of total per-pupil expenditure across all three functions, and 60.7% on instruction (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2026d). An 80% requirement on new funding therefore sets a rate above current practice rather than codifying it.

This guardrail should not be read as a route to an 80% system that deprives districts of flexibility. New money is at most $3.83 billion against a current $13.81 billion. If existing spending keeps its present composition and every new dollar meets the guardrail, the statewide share devoted to the instructional core rises from 72.5% to about 74.1% (a guardrail set at 100% would carry it only to about 78.5%). *The force of the rule is that it directs roughly $3.07 billion of new spending to classrooms for teachers and instructional supports with evidence behind them* - compensation and retention sufficient to staff classrooms in the districts that cannot currently staff them, instructional coaching and content-specific professional development, and the Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions with the strongest records, among them high-dose tutoring and summer learning (De Bruin et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023).

A spending category is not a strategy, and the guardrail should not be read as one. Money reaches students through teachers, and the difference between one teacher and another is the largest difference schools themselves control: replacing a teacher in the bottom 5% of measured effectiveness with an average one raises the combined lifetime earnings of a single classroom of students by roughly $250,000 (Chetty et al., 2014). The evidence on coaching carries a warning worth stating alongside it: coaching improves classroom practice substantially and student achievement more modestly, and the gains shrink considerably as programs grow from small trials to system-wide implementation (Kraft et al., 2018). Connecticut should expect the same, and the State Department of Education should fund coaching at a scale it can staff across the

state with instructional coaches who are themselves strong practitioners, starting with the highest-need/lowest-performing districts (i.e., a State Coaches-in-Residence program).

Recommendation #3: Capture economies of scale - commission an estimate of the savings, then replace the voluntary regionalization process with a statewide framework for shared services and shared governance

The cost premium of small enrollments is established; the savings from merger are not. The General Assembly should therefore begin by commissioning an estimate of the administrative overhead savings achievable by consolidating districts serving under 1,500 students. On that estimate, and not on the premium alone, the State should then set a statutory enrollment threshold and a timeline, sunset the current voluntary regionalization process, and replace it with a structured framework. The voluntary process does not work, and its failure is structural rather than incidental: it requires two towns to agree, and it fails whenever either town concludes the other gains more. A structured framework should have the State identify the districts that ought to be studied for merger, conduct or commission those studies rather than leaving them to the towns, and set a date by which each study is complete.

The State has an easy place to begin: Eight secondary regional school districts receive students from 24 elementary districts in their member towns, so 32 boards of education serve students who, in a K-12 town, would be served by eight. When each regional and its elementary districts are treated as one system and compared with the K-12 districts closest to its combined enrollment and share of high-needs students, general administration (the board of education and the superintendent's office) costs more per pupil than the median of those districts in seven of the eight systems, in each of the five years for which the State publishes spending by function (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2026d). For example, in 2024-25 it cost $1,743 per

pupil in **Regional School District 4** against a median of $699 among comparable K-12 districts, and $1,439 in **Regional School District 11** against $704. The difference is not explained by wealth: **Regional School District 8** and **Regional School District 19** serve towns with less property wealth per resident than their comparison districts and still pay more (Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, 2026). These eight systems are the natural first subjects of the studies this recommendation calls for, because their duplication is structural and observable and because their towns already share a secondary district. *As with the small-district premium, this comparison describes split and unified systems as they are; it does not estimate what combining them would save, which is the estimate the General Assembly should commission first*.

The State should also separate what districts can share from what they cannot, because economies of scale can be reached by two routes - shared services and shared governance - and the two reach different costs. Districts can jointly purchase transportation, building maintenance, security, human resources, information technology, and financial management. Per-student cost qualifications should govern that sharing. That means a district should not spend over a certain financial threshold per student for a particular service. When it does, it should be required to partner or contract with a neighboring district or RESC for that service. However, *the cost differential concentrates in general administration, which Connecticut defines as the board of education and the superintendent's office, and general administration cannot be bought jointly: sharing it means sharing governance, which is what consolidation, or a formal shared-governance agreement that stops short of merger, does*. General administration cost $824 per pupil in districts under 1,500 students and $583 in districts between 1,500 and 3,000, against $431 in districts above 3,000 in 2024-25. Shared services therefore reach the smaller part of the available economies of scale; shared governance reaches the larger part.

Recommendation #4: Commission an independent study of the districts that are currently most successful in converting funding into student outcomes

The districts in the state determined by this analysis to be most efficient at translating available funding into student outcomes - 10 on overall achievement and four on reading and math growth - should be studied to determine their leadership and governance characteristics and how they spend their money (i.e., which aspects of the instructional core these districts prioritize successfully, how that prioritization contributes to their relative cost-effectiveness, etc.). *The General Assembly should commission that study and place it with an independent party*, such as a research university, a national school finance authority, or the School and State Finance Project, *with the State Department of Education responsible for supplying the data rather than for producing the findings for which it has limited capacity*.

A study of how districts spend can be no better than the accounts it reads, and while Connecticut districts currently have a basic common chart of accounts to code their spending, the instructional core is not broken down into any level of detail that would be useful for aligning spending to specific interventions. *Connecticut should develop a comprehensive, equity-based platform with pre-populated data and centralized contracts for coordinating funding across the state's districts.* A good example is MICIP, the Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process (Michigan Department of Education, 2026) - aligned to district- and school-level strategic planning for continuous improvement of the instructional core. The point of such a platform is not added reporting. It could move Connecticut closer to a statewide curriculum in the measured areas - ELA, math, and science. It could also assist district leadership see what a comparable district spends on a particular instructional intervention, its impact on student outcomes, and how it may be implemented locally.

Recommendation #5: Publish Achievement and Growth Return-on-Investment measures alongside the state's existing accountability data

The State Department of Education should develop and publish achievement (A-ROI) and growth return-on-investment (G-ROI) measures that tie each district's total spending to its progress toward meeting state benchmark achievement and growth targets. A-ROI and G-ROI should be published annually alongside DAI and PPE data to create public transparency around the efficiency and effectiveness of local district spending. *While an achievement measure largely reflects students' prior performance, a growth measure reports the impact of a district's quality of instruction on student performance in a given year. It also provides districts a gauge to measure the effectiveness of its instructional core and its efforts to drive continuous improvement of teaching and learning.*

For more recommendations, visit https://datadaptive.ai/district-comparison-tools and open the *A Proposal* page, and the *Open Questions* page for what the analysis leaves unresolved.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Measures and judgments

Connecticut publishes each district's accountability index to six decimal places in its accountability data file and displays it to one decimal place in its public district reports. This proposal follows both. Every comparison is computed on the published value, and every figure shown is displayed to one decimal place so that it matches what a reader will find on the state's own report for that district. A district counts as having improved where its 2024-25 index is at least as high as its 2018-19 index; no district in this frame carries an identical index in both years, so no count here turns on a tie. One consequence should be stated plainly. A district can record a change that is real in the published data and invisible at the displayed precision, and it can record one that displays as larger than it was. **Stafford**'s index rose 0.04 points, from 75.863882 to 75.902395, and reads as 75.9 in both years. **Meriden**'s rose 0.12 points and reads as 69.4 against 69.6, a displayed change of 0.2. Both displayed figures are correctly rounded, and both underlying changes are real; they are answers to slightly different questions, and where the two are shown together this proposal says so.

Towns and districts. Capacity and effort are properties of towns because the property tax is levied by a town and the school budget is appropriated by a town. Of the 111 town-based K-12 districts, 102 are a single town. Nine are regional districts covering two to four member towns, and for those, every town-level figure in Appendix 2 is the unweighted mean of the member towns (named on the District Comparison Tools site). Unweighted rather than enrollment-weighted, because effort is what each town decides to do with its own tax base; weighting by enrollment would let the largest member town speak for the whole district.

Town wealth. Connecticut's own funding formula gauges what a town can afford two ways, and this appendix uses both: equalized net grand list per capita - the taxable value of property after exemptions, restated at full market value so that towns assessing at different ratios can be compared - and median household income. A district's wealth decile is the placement the two measures produce together, and that combined placement is what the adjustment runs on. The choice matters more than it appears. Asked which districts sit two or more deciles from where their wealth would place them, equalized net grand list per capita alone answers 48 districts, median household income alone answers 22, and the two together answer 31. All three are counted on the four-year average of placements described below. The state's formula weights the two measures differently, counting property wealth at 70% and income at 30% (Moran, 2017); this proposal weights them equally, so that a town with a large grand list but modest household incomes is not treated as wealthier than its residents can sustain. Under the state's weighting, 38 districts would be flagged rather than 31, and the online tool shows both. The counts are the smaller part of it: only 15 districts are flagged by both measures, while 55 are flagged by at least one, so the two terms are not a loose and a tight version of one question. They point at different districts and using one alone would invent a definition of town wealth the state does not use. Need decile 1 is the highest need and wealth decile 1 is the lowest wealth, so a district whose wealth matches its need reads the same number in both columns.

Placements. A placement cut on a single year is not steady enough to carry consequences: cut on 2024-25 alone, 26 districts are flagged; cut on 2022-23 alone, 33; only 20 appear in both. Placements therefore average the four most recent published school years - 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25. The rule is stated in advance rather than chosen after the fact: use the published years whose placements still describe the district and drop a year that diverges

materially from the recent pattern. Measured against each district's own average over the three most recent years, the mean absolute deviation is 0.0374 for 2018-19 and 0.0295 for 2021-22, and 31 districts sit five or more percentile points away in 2018-19 against 21 in 2021-22. On that test 2018-19 is dropped and 2021-22 is kept. A district's percentile is computed within each year by the same convention used elsewhere in this analysis, the four are averaged, and the average is ranked again before the decile is cut.

Two districts do not appear in every year. **Litchfield** and **Regional School District 06** consolidated into **Regional School District 20** in 2024-25, so each year's percentile is computed across every town-based K-12 district that existed in that year, which is 112 through 2023-24 counting the two predecessors, and 111 in 2024-25. **Regional School District 20**'s own placement therefore rests on 2024-25 alone, whereas every other district's placement rests on four years.

Gap, threshold and adjustment are three judgments, and only the first is arithmetic. The gap is the wealth decile minus the need decile: positive means a district is wealthier than its need placement implies, negative means poorer. With 111 districts sorted into ten bins, a difference of one decile is what noise looks like, and most districts differ by one. A threshold of two deciles flags 31 districts; a three-decile threshold would flag 10 and a four-decile threshold would flag four. Two is a judgment and is stated as one: it is the smallest gap that is larger than the noise, and it holds the exception to 31 of 111 districts.

The adjustment is set equal to the threshold, at two deciles, and that equality does the work. Because a move can never be larger than the gap that triggered it, the adjustment always closes part of the distance to a district's own wealth placement and never carries it past. Of the districts adjusted, 10 have a gap larger than two and are therefore only partly corrected.

An adjustment set below the threshold - a single decile, as an earlier version of this proposal used - under-corrects every flagged district by at least one decile and leaves the largest gaps almost untouched. An adjustment set above the threshold would allow a district to finish further from its wealth placement than it began. Equality is the only setting that corrects in the right direction without overcorrecting in any case. Both directions are used. 18 districts move toward wealth and a smaller share of the new money; 13 move toward need and a larger share. A count of the flagged districts that reports only the first is reporting half the rule.

Effort. Wealth says what a town could raise; effort says what it does raise. The education equalized mill rate is a town's education spending divided by its equalized net grand list in thousands - the share of its property wealth it devotes to schools. The education share is education spending as a proportion of total municipal spending. Both are fiscal year 2023, the most recent year Connecticut publishes municipal finance for, and both are drawn from the town's general-fund reporting. That figure is not the same quantity as the per-pupil expenditure used elsewhere in this analysis, and no figure in Appendix 2 divides one by the other.

What is stable and what is not. 16 districts are flagged on every single year and on the four-year average alike: **Brookfield**, **Canton**, **Danbury**, **Ellington**, **Fairfield**, **Greenwich**, **North Branford**, **North Stonington**, **Norwalk**, **Shelton**, **Somers**, **Stamford**, **Thomaston**, **Tolland**, **Waterford** and **Windsor**. If the wealth measure is allowed to vary as well, 10 are flagged under every version: **Brookfield**, **Canton**, **Fairfield**, **Greenwich**, **North Stonington**, **Norwalk**, **Shelton**, **Somers**, **Stamford** and **Thomaston**. A solid core, and a larger set that depends on choices a reasonable person could make differently, is what this appendix contains, and it is described that way rather than presented as a single settled list.

Appendix 2 - Proposed distribution of benchmark funding

Appendix 2 carries five tables. Table 1 distributes benchmark funding by adjusted decile across all 194 funded and unfunded districts. Table 2 lists the 111 town-based K-12 districts. Table 3 lists the 54 town-based elementary-only and secondary-only districts, and Table 4 the 29 districts with no town boundary, both scored against the K-12 deciles framework. Table 5 sets out three phase-in schedules to a 50% state share of total education funding.

Table 1: Distribution of benchmark funding by adjusted decile. Table 1 sets out the whole distribution in one place. The first ten rows are the 111 town-based K-12 districts by adjusted decile; the rows beneath them are the districts outside that frame, grouped by type. Every funded row is funded at the same rate, $14,844 per high-needs student, so a row's share of the $3.83 billion is its share of the 258,161 high-needs students in Deciles 1 through 8. Within a K-12 decile, the decile's total is then shared in proportion to enrollment, so every district in that decile receives the same amount per pupil; each district outside the 111 receives $14,844 for each of its own high-needs students. Decile 1 receives the largest amount because it enrolls the most high-needs students, not because its students are weighted more heavily. The per-pupil premium column shows what that produces for a group's students: it falls from $12,669 in Decile 1 to $4,749 in Decile 8 and stops entirely at Decile 9.

Distribution of benchmark funding by adjusted decile.

Adjusted decile	Districts	Enrollment	High-needs students	Share of the $3.83 billion	Benchmark funding (calculated on high-needs students)	Benchmark funding - additional PPE
1	11	111,684	95,321	36.9%	$1,414,910,628	$12,669
2	6	26,367	18,071	7.0%	$268,239,422	$10,173
3	12	39,354	24,521	9.5%	$363,980,902	$9,249
4	14	61,143	39,046	15.1%	$579,584,776	$9,479
5	11	27,419	11,475	4.4%	$170,330,771	$6,212
6	14	36,883	15,075	5.8%	$223,767,876	$6,067
7	12	32,177	12,507	4.8%	$185,649,408	$5,770
8	9	24,291	7,771	3.0%	$115,349,928	$4,749
9	9	24,368	7,180	none	none	none
10	13	57,096	14,646	none	none	none

Adjusted decile	Districts	Enrollment	High-needs students	Share of the $3.83 billion	Benchmark funding (calculated on high-needs students)	Benchmark funding - additional PPE
All 111 districts	**111**	**440,782**	**245,613**	**86.7%**	**$3,321,813,711**	**$9,245**
Elementary districts, Deciles 1-8	37	14,426	7,676	3.0%	$113,939,782	$7,898
Secondary regionals, Deciles 1-8	5	3,075	1,273	0.5%	$18,895,954	$6,145
Elementary and secondary, Deciles 9-10	12	9,348	2,512	none	none	none
Charter districts	21	10,811	8,412	3.3%	$124,864,701	$11,550
Regional service centers	6	13,594	9,601	3.7%	$142,513,790	$10,484
Technical high school system	1	11,296	6,603	2.6%	$98,012,556	$8,677
College-affiliated district	1	1,223	809	0.3%	$12,008,505	$9,819
All 83 districts outside the 111	**83**	**63,773**	**36,886**	**13.3%**	**$510,235,289**	**$9,375**
All 194 districts	**194**	**504,555**	**282,499**	**100.0%**	**$3,832,049,000**	**$9,262**

Note. Benchmark funding is apportioned in proportion to high-needs students in adjusted Deciles 1 through 8, at $14,844 per high-needs student across every funded district. The pool is 258,161 high-needs students: 223,787 in the 89 funded districts of the 111 and 34,374 in the 71 funded districts outside them. Deciles 9 and 10 receive none, whether town-based or not. Per-pupil premiums on total rows divide by funded students only, 359,318 in the 111, 54,425 outside and 413,743 in all.

Table 2: All 111 town-based K-12 districts by adjusted decile. Table 2 lists the 111 town-based K-12 districts in the order the adjusted deciles place them. The Moved column records the effect of the wealth adjustment, which moves a district two deciles toward its wealth placement - its 50/50 blend of grand list and income - where the two sit two or more deciles apart. Of the 31 districts affected, 18 move down, toward wealth, and 13 move up, toward need; four leave the funded range (**Brookfield**, **Fairfield**, **Greenwich** and **Regional 12**) and four enter it (**Granby**, **North Stonington**, **Tolland** and **Somers**). Total per-pupil expenditure is shown so that benchmark funding can be read against what a district already spends, though the two are not additive: benchmark funding is new state money and per-pupil expenditure is what districts spend today. Benchmark funding per pupil is uniform within a decile, so it repeats down the column.

All 111 town-based K-12 districts by adjusted decile.

District	High-needs students 2024-25	Adjusted decile	Moved	Enrollment 2024-25	Total PPE 2024-25	Share of the $3.83 billion	Benchmark funding (calculated on high-needs students)	Benchmark funding - additional PPE
Ansonia	71.0%	1		2,404	$20,187	0.79%	$30,455,975	$12,669
Bridgeport	92.6%	1		20,022	$18,440	6.62%	$253,656,214	$12,669
East Hartford	75.7%	1		6,504	$18,067	2.15%	$82,398,363	$12,669

District	High-needs students 2024-25	Adjusted decile	Moved	Enrollment 2024-25	Total PPE 2024-25	Share of the $3.83 billion	Benchmark funding (calculated on high-needs students)	Benchmark funding - additional PPE
Hartford	85.1%	1		16,434	$21,366	5.43%	$208,200,291	$12,669
Meriden	84.8%	1		8,707	$16,977	2.88%	$110,307,894	$12,669
New Britain	85.0%	1		10,038	$18,064	3.32%	$127,170,167	$12,669
New Haven	83.8%	1		18,817	$21,346	6.22%	$238,390,220	$12,669
New London	88.5%	1		2,918	$23,265	0.96%	$36,967,777	$12,669
Torrington	75.7%	1		3,911	$21,772	1.29%	$49,547,970	$12,669
Waterbury	87.1%	1		18,776	$18,654	6.21%	$237,870,796	$12,669
Windham	81.7%	1		3,153	$23,635	1.04%	$39,944,963	$12,669
Bristol	64.1%	2		7,713	$21,445	2.05%	$78,466,669	$10,173
Derby	69.2%	2		1,311	$25,392	0.35%	$13,337,197	$10,173
Manchester	70.7%	2		6,122	$21,171	1.63%	$62,280,948	$10,173
Naugatuck	68.5%	2		4,095	$19,251	1.09%	$41,659,667	$10,173
Putnam	66.0%	2		1,176	$20,671	0.31%	$11,963,802	$10,173
West Haven	72.4%	2		5,950	$18,666	1.58%	$60,531,140	$10,173
East Haven	70.0%	3		2,857	$19,476	0.69%	$26,424,085	$9,249
Enfield	59.5%	3		4,694	$19,405	1.13%	$43,414,300	$9,249
Griswold	60.8%	3		1,823	$19,341	0.44%	$16,860,730	$9,249
Groton	73.6%	3		4,009	$21,725	0.97%	$37,078,809	$9,249
Hamden	58.0%	3		5,464	$24,882	1.32%	$50,535,947	$9,249
Killingly	59.6%	3		2,392	$21,336	0.58%	$22,123,350	$9,249
Middletown	60.5%	3		4,394	$25,483	1.06%	$40,639,632	$9,249
Plainfield	64.0%	3		1,886	$20,864	0.46%	$17,443,411	$9,249
Plymouth	61.0%	3		1,244	$21,484	0.30%	$11,505,622	$9,249
Stratford	61.6%	3		6,578	$22,091	1.59%	$60,839,213	$9,249
Thomaston	47.4%	3	Up 2	777	$22,567	0.19%	$7,186,389	$9,249
Vernon	62.6%	3		3,236	$19,595	0.78%	$29,929,415	$9,249
Bloomfield	63.6%	4	Down 2	1,897	$24,952	0.47%	$17,981,982	$9,479
Danbury	75.3%	4	Down 2	11,956	$17,847	2.96%	$113,332,934	$9,479
East Windsor	65.5%	4	Down 2	1,035	$27,076	0.26%	$9,810,939	$9,479
Ledyard	41.4%	4	Up 2	2,347	$19,458	0.58%	$22,247,608	$9,479
Montville	54.9%	4		2,001	$21,827	0.49%	$18,967,815	$9,479
Newington	48.0%	4		3,855	$23,083	0.95%	$36,542,193	$9,479
Norwalk	67.2%	4	Down 2	11,473	$23,147	2.84%	$108,754,496	$9,479
Plainville	53.6%	4		2,223	$22,412	0.55%	$21,072,191	$9,479
Seymour	57.7%	4		2,103	$19,784	0.52%	$19,934,691	$9,479
Stafford	50.2%	4		1,266	$25,044	0.31%	$12,000,627	$9,479
Stamford	67.3%	4	Down 2	16,185	$24,176	4.00%	$153,420,336	$9,479
Thompson	56.3%	4		826	$27,518	0.20%	$7,829,793	$9,479
Watertown	50.8%	4		2,528	$22,439	0.63%	$23,963,337	$9,479
Windsor Locks	58.5%	4		1,448	$24,793	0.36%	$13,725,835	$9,479
Branford	46.5%	5		2,567	$29,396	0.42%	$15,946,573	$6,212
Coventry	36.6%	5	Up 2	1,612	$19,493	0.26%	$10,013,976	$6,212
East Hampton	35.4%	5	Up 2	1,676	$23,714	0.27%	$10,411,553	$6,212
Ellington	35.7%	5	Up 2	2,526	$20,298	0.41%	$15,691,875	$6,212
New Milford	46.9%	5		3,532	$21,973	0.57%	$21,941,292	$6,212

District	High-needs students 2024-25	Adjusted decile	Moved	Enrollment 2024-25	Total PPE 2024-25	Share of the $3.83 billion	Benchmark funding (calculated on high-needs students)	Benchmark funding - additional PPE
North Branford	35.3%	5	Up 2	1,546	$22,191	0.25%	$9,603,974	$6,212
Portland	41.8%	5		1,250	$21,870	0.20%	$7,765,180	$6,212
Regional 16	37.7%	5	Up 2	1,898	$21,735	0.31%	$11,790,649	$6,212
Wallingford	46.7%	5		5,241	$24,427	0.85%	$32,557,846	$6,212
Wethersfield	39.5%	5		3,471	$21,197	0.56%	$21,562,351	$6,212
Wolcott	44.7%	5		2,100	$19,433	0.34%	$13,045,502	$6,212
Berlin	36.3%	6		2,634	$23,479	0.42%	$15,980,386	$6,067
Bolton	29.5%	6	Up 2	688	$23,319	0.11%	$4,174,072	$6,067
Canton	33.3%	6	Up 2	1,439	$25,140	0.23%	$8,730,363	$6,067
Clinton	51.5%	6	Down 2	1,426	$26,336	0.23%	$8,651,492	$6,067
Colchester	37.4%	6		2,101	$22,601	0.33%	$12,746,694	$6,067
Cromwell	39.1%	6		1,841	$22,362	0.29%	$11,169,283	$6,067
East Lyme	40.4%	6		2,500	$24,278	0.40%	$15,167,413	$6,067
Lebanon	38.3%	6		968	$25,245	0.15%	$5,872,822	$6,067
Regional 14	33.7%	6		1,561	$25,412	0.25%	$9,470,533	$6,067
Rocky Hill	39.3%	6		2,539	$21,151	0.40%	$15,404,025	$6,067
Southington	38.0%	6		6,200	$19,961	0.98%	$37,615,184	$6,067
West Hartford	40.5%	6		9,128	$22,971	1.45%	$55,379,258	$6,067
Westbrook	52.2%	6	Down 2	592	$35,908	0.09%	$3,591,643	$6,067
Windsor	59.2%	6	Down 2	3,266	$24,003	0.52%	$19,814,708	$6,067
Bethel	45.5%	7	Down 2	3,227	$19,093	0.49%	$18,618,598	$5,770
East Haddam	35.7%	7		954	$25,924	0.14%	$5,504,228	$5,770
Granby	30.7%	7	Up 2	1,709	$22,065	0.26%	$9,860,299	$5,770
Milford	42.7%	7	Down 2	5,218	$26,131	0.79%	$30,105,933	$5,770
North Haven	34.8%	7		3,214	$20,718	0.48%	$18,543,593	$5,770
North Stonington	28.4%	7	Up 2	726	$21,126	0.11%	$4,188,752	$5,770
Regional 13	33.2%	7		1,339	$30,387	0.20%	$7,725,536	$5,770
Shelton	48.1%	7	Down 2	4,518	$20,097	0.68%	$26,067,192	$5,770
South Windsor	33.6%	7		5,125	$18,815	0.77%	$29,569,358	$5,770
Stonington	36.5%	7		1,722	$26,407	0.26%	$9,935,304	$5,770
Tolland	30.8%	7	Up 2	2,144	$20,860	0.32%	$12,370,088	$5,770
Waterford	43.8%	7	Down 2	2,281	$26,308	0.34%	$13,160,528	$5,770
East Granby	30.3%	8		880	$23,482	0.11%	$4,178,829	$4,749
Farmington	31.6%	8		4,195	$21,032	0.52%	$19,920,668	$4,749
New Fairfield	33.6%	8		2,123	$23,973	0.26%	$10,081,425	$4,749
Old Saybrook	36.3%	8	Down 2	1,030	$28,583	0.13%	$4,891,129	$4,749
Regional 20	38.7%	8	Down 2	1,619	$26,590	0.20%	$7,688,096	$4,749
Simsbury	30.7%	8		4,127	$22,059	0.51%	$19,597,759	$4,749
Somers	20.8%	8	Up 2	1,347	$21,773	0.17%	$6,396,458	$4,749
Suffield	29.6%	8		2,027	$20,973	0.25%	$9,625,553	$4,749
Trumbull	33.4%	8		6,943	$20,027	0.86%	$32,970,012	$4,749
Brookfield	34.1%	9	Down 2	2,542	$22,197	none	none	none
Cheshire	29.8%	9		4,317	$21,091	none	none	none
Monroe	28.1%	9		3,458	$21,145	none	none	none
Newtown	27.4%	9		3,924	$23,196	none	none	none
Oxford	30.9%	9		1,622	$22,415	none	none	none
Regional 10	29.2%	9		2,140	$21,006	none	none	none

District	High-needs students 2024-25	Adjusted decile	Moved	Enrollment 2024-25	Total PPE 2024-25	Share of the $3.83 billion	Benchmark funding (calculated on high-needs students)	Benchmark funding - additional PPE
Regional 15	29.0%	9		3,368	$25,887	none	none	none
Regional 17	29.7%	9		1,716	$28,369	none	none	none
Regional 18	28.6%	9		1,281	$26,038	none	none	none
Avon	24.8%	10		3,092	$22,569	none	none	none
Darien	22.9%	10		4,673	$26,817	none	none	none
Fairfield	33.3%	10	Down 2	9,139	$25,369	none	none	none
Glastonbury	26.8%	10		5,696	$22,603	none	none	none
Greenwich	33.0%	10	Down 2	8,465	$29,025	none	none	none
Guilford	27.5%	10		3,080	$23,841	none	none	none
Madison	20.5%	10		2,445	$26,293	none	none	none
New Canaan	13.9%	10		4,060	$27,869	none	none	none
Regional 12	29.6%	10	Down 2	798	$32,551	none	none	none
Ridgefield	26.0%	10		4,484	$26,267	none	none	none
Weston	17.3%	10		2,101	$29,348	none	none	none
Westport	16.9%	10		5,281	$28,601	none	none	none
Wilton	23.2%	10		3,782	$25,819	none	none	none
All 111 districts	**55.7%**			**440,782**		**86.7%**	**$3,321,813,711**	**$9,245**

Note. Member towns of the nine regional districts, each district's need decile and wealth decile before adjustment, and the gap between them are on the District Comparison Tools site under Rank Districts and District Geography. A district's high-needs student count is its high-needs share multiplied by its enrollment. Benchmark funding is the adjusted decile's per-pupil premium multiplied by enrollment, so every district in a decile shows the same benchmark funding per pupil; districts in adjusted Deciles 9 and 10 receive none.

Table 3: The 54 town-based elementary and secondary districts, scored against the K-12 deciles framework. Table 3 covers the 54 town-based districts that are not K-12: 46 elementary districts and eight secondary regionals. Their towns levy the same property tax and set the same kind of education mill rate as the 111, and they sit outside the main analysis only because the unit of that analysis is the K-12 district. They are scored against the 111 rather than ranked among themselves, so an elementary district's need decile is its position in the state and not its position among 46 elementary districts. Forty-two of the 54 place in Deciles 1 through 8 and are funded; the twelve that do not are shown with their placements so that the boundary is visible.

The 54 town-based elementary and secondary districts, scored against the K-12 deciles framework.

District	Grade span	High-needs students 2024-25	Need decile scored vs the K-12 deciles framework	Total PPE 2024-25	Enrollment 2024-25	Share of the $3.83 billion	Benchmark funding (calculated on high-needs students, distributed by enrollment)	Benchmark funding - additional PPE
Andover	Elementary	36.4%	7	$19,009	239	0.03%	$1,291,397	$5,403
Ashford	Elementary	47.0%	5	$26,551	351	0.06%	$2,449,201	$6,978
Barkhamsted	Elementary	43.2%	5	$21,860	227	0.04%	$1,454,677	$6,408
Bethany	Elementary	33.3%	8	$19,937	430	0.06%	$2,122,641	$4,936
Bozrah	Elementary	45.6%	4	$25,699	180	0.03%	$1,217,178	$6,762
Brooklyn	Elementary	50.2%	4	$20,250	852	0.17%	$6,353,078	$7,457
Canaan	Elementary	44.3%	5	$39,520	70	0.01%	$460,153	$6,574
Canterbury	Elementary	43.6%	5	$19,867	512	0.09%	$3,310,132	$6,465
Chaplin	Elementary	46.0%	4	$26,109	150	0.03%	$1,024,211	$6,828
Chester	Elementary	35.4%	7	$28,172	198	0.03%	$1,039,055	$5,248
Colebrook	Elementary	44.3%	4	$33,373	61	0.01%	$400,778	$6,570
Columbia	Elementary	31.3%	8	$22,557	444	0.05%	$2,063,266	$4,647
Cornwall	Elementary	44.2%	5	$40,205	86	0.01%	$564,058	$6,559
Deep River	Elementary	43.4%	5	$28,818	189	0.03%	$1,217,178	$6,440
Eastford	Elementary	39.3%	6	$22,476	173	0.03%	$1,009,368	$5,834
Easton	Elementary	26.3%	10	$23,151	894	none	none	none
Essex	Elementary	40.6%	6	$28,206	308	0.05%	$1,855,455	$6,024
Franklin	Elementary	33.5%	9	$23,258	188	none	none	none
Hampton	Elementary	63.5%	3	$27,773	74	0.02%	$697,651	$9,428
Hartland	Elementary	31.7%	8	$30,256	123	0.02%	$578,902	$4,707
Hebron	Elementary	28.2%	9	$21,439	681	none	none	none
Kent	Elementary	38.9%	6	$35,130	180	0.03%	$1,039,055	$5,773
Lisbon	Elementary	50.2%	4	$20,397	422	0.08%	$3,146,852	$7,457
Mansfield	Elementary	42.2%	5	$27,651	966	0.16%	$6,056,205	$6,269
Marlborough	Elementary	27.3%	9	$19,368	458	none	none	none
New Hartford	Elementary	35.6%	7	$24,538	433	0.06%	$2,285,921	$5,279
Norfolk	Elementary	39.3%	5	$46,016	61	0.01%	$356,247	$5,840
North Canaan	Elementary	53.9%	4	$25,810	245	0.05%	$1,959,361	$7,997
Norwich	Elementary	85.4%	1	$23,658	3,291	1.09%	$41,740,316	$12,683
Orange	Elementary	27.4%	10	$20,523	1,254	none	none	none
Pomfret	Elementary	35.4%	7	$23,489	333	0.05%	$1,751,550	$5,260
Preston	Elementary	40.0%	6	$25,820	432	0.07%	$2,567,950	$5,944
Redding	Elementary	24.7%	10	$30,448	855	none	none	none
Salem	Elementary	33.4%	7	$21,747	392	0.05%	$1,944,517	$4,961
Salisbury	Elementary	32.6%	8	$30,989	288	0.04%	$1,395,302	$4,845
Scotland	Elementary	54.2%	4	$26,826	96	0.02%	$771,869	$8,040
Sharon	Elementary	46.4%	4	$48,747	97	0.02%	$667,964	$6,886
Sherman	Elementary	14.7%	10	$29,686	231	none	none	none
Sprague	Elementary	63.4%	2	$21,209	265	0.07%	$2,493,732	$9,410
Sterling	Elementary	54.8%	4	$21,100	310	0.07%	$2,523,419	$8,140
Union	Elementary		9	$26,736		none	none	none
Voluntown	Elementary	46.1%	5	$25,110	217	0.04%	$1,484,364	$6,840
Willington	Elementary	45.7%	4	$28,966	376	0.07%	$2,553,106	$6,790
Winchester	Elementary	67.3%	2	$23,264	599	0.16%	$5,981,987	$9,987
Woodbridge	Elementary	26.5%	9	$20,768	862	none	none	none
Woodstock	Elementary	36.6%	7	$20,916	756	0.11%	$4,111,688	$5,439
All 46 elementary districts	**Elementary**	**46.0%**			**19,849**	**2.97%**	**$113,939,782**	**$7,898**
Regional 01	Secondary	40.4%	5	$33,860	356	0.06%	$2,137,484	$6,004
Regional 04	Secondary	38.4%	6	$34,045	646	0.10%	$3,681,223	$5,698
Regional 05	Secondary	27.6%	9	$23,694	2,138	none	none	none
Regional 07	Secondary	40.2%	5	$29,305	818	0.13%	$4,883,558	$5,970
Regional 08	Secondary	28.3%	9	$28,330	1,075	none	none	none

District	Grade span	High-needs students 2024-25	Need decile scored vs the K-12 deciles framework	Total PPE 2024-25	Enrollment 2024-25	Share of the $3.83 billion	Benchmark funding (calculated on high-needs students, distributed by enrollment)	Benchmark funding - additional PPE
Regional 09	Secondary	23.3%	10	$33,549	712	none	none	none
Regional 11	Secondary	63.4%	3	$33,152	194	0.05%	$1,825,768	$9,411
Regional 19	Secondary	40.4%	6	$24,196	1,061	0.17%	$6,367,922	$6,002
All 8 secondary regionals	**Secondary**	**33.3%**			**7,000**	**0.49%**	**$18,895,954**	**$6,145**
All 54 districts		**42.7%**			**26,849**	**3.47%**	**$132,835,736**	**$7,590**

Note. Member towns of these districts are on the District Comparison Tools site under Elementary and Secondary Districts, which also carries their tax effort, grand list per capita and education share of municipal spending. A district's high-needs student count is its high-needs share multiplied by its enrollment. These 54 are scored against the 111 town-based K-12 districts and are never added to them. No wealth placement is shown: the state education cost sharing wealth file does not cover them, and the only grand list available is a single municipal fiscal year where every K-12 placement averages four. Benchmark funding is the district's own high-needs count multiplied by $14,844; the 12 districts in Deciles 9 and 10 receive none. Per-pupil figures on total rows divide by funded students only.

Table 4: The 29 reporting districts with no town boundary, scored against the K-12 deciles framework. Table 4 covers the 29 districts with no town boundary that publish both a per-pupil expenditure and an accountability index; the three endowed academies and two state agency facilities do not and are excluded. The 29 enroll 36,924 students, 25,425 of them high needs - a 68.9% high-needs share against 55.7% among the 111 - and not one of them places below Decile 4 on need. Fifteen of the 21 charter districts place in Decile 1. Because these districts have no grand list and no education mill rate, the wealth adjustment cannot be applied to them at all, and their placement rests on need alone. Their per-pupil figures vary within the table because each draws on its own high-needs count rather than on a decile premium.

The 29 reporting districts with no town boundary, scored against the K-12 deciles framework.

District	Type	High-needs students 2024-25	Need decile scored vs the K-12 deciles framework	Total PPE 2024-25	Enrollment 2024-25	Share of the $3.83 billion	Benchmark funding (calculated on high-needs students, distributed by enrollment)	Benchmark funding - additional PPE
Achievement First Bridgeport Academy	Charter	81.4%	1	$15,289	1,090	0.34%	$13,166,309	$12,079
Achievement First Hartford Academy	Charter	81.5%	1	$18,195	907	0.29%	$10,969,450	$12,094
Amistad Academy	Charter	82.4%	1	$15,236	1,105	0.35%	$13,522,556	$12,238
Booker T. Washington Academy	Charter	93.1%	1	$17,553	404	0.15%	$5,581,209	$13,815

District	Type	High-needs students 2024-25	Need decile scored vs the K-12 deciles framework	Total PPE 2024-25	Enrollment 2024-25	Share of the $3.83 billion	Benchmark funding (calculated on high-needs students, distributed by enrollment)	Benchmark funding - additional PPE
Brass City Charter School	Charter	74.8%	2	$16,205	401	0.12%	$4,453,092	$11,105
Capital Preparatory Harbor School	Charter	72.8%	1	$14,147	775	0.22%	$8,371,813	$10,802
Common Ground High School	Charter	75.1%	1	$20,127	221	0.06%	$2,464,044	$11,150
Elm City College Preparatory School	Charter	83.0%	1	$17,239	760	0.24%	$9,366,337	$12,324
Elm City Montessori School	Charter	49.7%	4	$18,508	312	0.06%	$2,300,764	$7,374
Explorations	Charter	72.7%	1	$22,438	77	0.02%	$831,244	$10,795
Great Oaks Charter School	Charter	87.5%	1	$19,046	662	0.22%	$8,594,468	$12,983
Highville Charter School	Charter	72.9%	1	$13,457	499	0.14%	$5,403,085	$10,828
Integrated Day Charter School	Charter	57.4%	3	$16,190	364	0.08%	$3,102,321	$8,523
Interdistrict School for Arts and Comm	Charter	75.6%	1	$18,268	328	0.10%	$3,681,223	$11,223
Jumoke Academy	Charter	97.0%	1	$20,204	571	0.21%	$8,223,377	$14,402
New Beginnings Inc Family Academy	Charter	91.4%	1	$16,926	431	0.15%	$5,848,394	$13,569
Odyssey Community School	Charter	51.7%	4	$14,822	410	0.08%	$3,146,852	$7,675
Park City Prep Charter School	Charter	77.6%	1	$15,541	434	0.13%	$5,002,307	$11,526
Side By Side Charter School	Charter	64.8%	3	$15,744	236	0.06%	$2,271,077	$9,623
Stamford Charter School for Excellence	Charter	60.4%	3	$11,837	543	0.13%	$4,868,714	$8,966
The Bridge Academy	Charter	88.6%	1	$16,955	281	0.10%	$3,696,066	$13,153
All 21 charter districts	**Charter**	**77.8%**			**10,811**	**3.26%**	**$124,864,701**	**$11,550**
Area Cooperative Educational Services	RESC	73.4%	2	$57,640	1,726	0.49%	$18,806,892	$10,896
Capitol Region Education Council	RESC	70.9%	2	$31,514	9,091	2.50%	$95,726,636	$10,530
Cooperative Educational Services	RESC	66.4%	2	$42,902	757	0.19%	$7,466,351	$9,863
Eastern Connecticut Regional Educational Service Center (EASTCONN)	RESC	61.9%	2	$65,316	367	0.09%	$3,369,506	$9,181
EdAdvance	RESC	90.1%	1	$66,937	263	0.09%	$3,517,943	$13,376
Learn	RESC	66.0%	3	$27,758	1,390	0.36%	$13,626,462	$9,803
All 6 regional service centers	**RESC**	**70.6%**			**13,594**	**3.72%**	**$142,513,790**	**$10,484**
Connecticut Technical Education and Career System	**Technical**	**58.5%**	**3**	**$30,953**	**11,296**	**2.56%**	**$98,012,556**	**$8,677**
Goodwin University Educational Services (GUES)	**College-affiliated**	**66.1%**	**2**	**$22,900**	**1,223**	**0.31%**	**$12,008,505**	**$9,819**
All 29 districts		**68.9%**			**36,924**	**9.85%**	**$377,399,552**	**$10,221**

Note. A high-needs student count is the high-needs share multiplied by enrollment. These 29 districts have no town boundary, no grand list, and no education mill rate, so no wealth placement exists for them, and none is shown; need placement scores their high-needs share against the same 111 town-based K-12 districts. Benchmark funding is the district's own high-needs count multiplied by $14,844. Three endowed academies and two state agency facilities are excluded: neither publishes both a per-pupil expenditure and an accountability index in any school year, which is the test the tool already applies.

Table 5: Phasing benchmark funding to a 50% state share. Table 5 sets out three phase-in schedules. Each reaches a 50% state share, and they differ only in pace. The choice among them is a budget question rather than a distribution question: the rule that allocates the money is identical in all three, and a district's share of whatever has been appropriated by a given year does not depend on which schedule is chosen. What does depend on the schedule is how long the system runs below the target. A ten-year phase-in leaves the state at 43.9% in year five, the point at which the five-year schedule has finished.

Phasing benchmark funding to a 50% state share.

Year	5-year: cumulative	5-year: state share	7-year: cumulative	7-year: state share	10-year: cumulative	10-year: state share
1	$766,409,800	39.48%	$547,435,571	38.56%	$383,204,900	37.85%
2	$1,532,819,600	42.51%	$1,094,871,143	40.82%	$766,409,800	39.48%
3	$2,299,229,400	45.24%	$1,642,306,714	42.91%	$1,149,614,700	41.03%
4	$3,065,639,200	47.73%	$2,189,742,286	44.87%	$1,532,819,600	42.51%
5	$3,832,049,000	50.00%	$2,737,177,857	46.69%	$1,916,024,500	43.91%
6	complete	50.00%	$3,284,613,429	48.40%	$2,299,229,400	45.24%
7	complete	50.00%	$3,832,049,000	50.00%	$2,682,434,300	46.51%
8	complete	50.00%	complete	50.00%	$3,065,639,200	47.73%
9	complete	50.00%	complete	50.00%	$3,448,844,100	48.89%
10	complete	50.00%	complete	50.00%	$3,832,049,000	50.00%

Note. Each schedule adds an equal increment each year and assumes local and federal revenue hold at their 2022-23 levels: $766,409,800 a year over five years, $547,435,571 over seven, $383,204,900 over ten. State share is the state's revenue plus the cumulative increment, divided by total revenue plus the same increment. The schedules are illustrative of pace only; the distribution rule is unchanged in every one of them. ***A phase-in must be recalculated every year. Enrollment, high-needs counts, grand lists, and mill rates all move, so each year's placements and each district's share must be recomputed from that year's published data rather than fixed at the schedule's start. A schedule set once and left alone would distribute the last year's money on the first year's facts.***

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