

# FundEd: Connecticut Report

## A Detailed Look at Connecticut's Funding Policies



## Connecticut



### Funding Basics

#### Formula Type

Connecticut has a primarily student-based funding formula. It assigns a cost to the education of a student with no special needs or services, called a base amount. It then accounts for the additional cost of educating specific categories of students both by applying multipliers to that amount to generate supplemental funding for those students and through program-specific allocations.

The categories of students generating supplementing funding in Connecticut are English-language learners and low-income students. Services for students enrolled in career and technical education programs and for high-cost disabled students are funded through program-specific allocations.

#### Base Amount

Connecticut has a fixed base funding amount per student. For FY2019, the per-student base amount was \$11,525.

This means that an average student with no special needs or disadvantages would be funded at that level. This funding is also intended to cover a large portion of the costs of serving students with disabilities, who do not automatically generate funding over and above the base amount.

### Local Revenue

#### Expected Local Share

Connecticut's funding formula expects school districts to contribute revenue to the funding of public schools. The amount each district is expected to raise is based on a combination of its property values and its residents' income, as well as other indicators of economic health.

Once the state calculates the total amount of funding necessary to educate students within a district, it determines what percentage of this amount the state will provide in the form of state education aid. It bases this calculation on information about the district's property values (weighted at 70% within the formula) and its median household income (weighted at 30%). For the state's nineteen most economically burdened districts (based on a state ranking that awards points based on factors such as income, unemployment, families receiving temporary assistance, property values, and property tax rate), the state increases its support by a prescribed amount.

Additionally, the formula requires the state to fund a minimum of 1% of each district's necessary funding, regardless of its local wealth. This minimum level rises to 10% for certain low-performing school districts.

## Property Tax Floors and Ceilings

Connecticut does not set a floor or a ceiling for local property tax rates, or a level above which voter approval is required. School districts in Connecticut may not directly impose taxes; property taxes for education are imposed by municipalities.

Municipalities may levy and collect a property tax on motor vehicles of up to \$45.00 for every \$1,000 of assessed local property wealth. Some of the revenue from this tax may be used to fund public schools. Connecticut does not set a ceiling for other types of property taxes.

## Other Local Taxes for Education

School districts in Connecticut may receive local revenue from property taxes and from motor vehicle taxes.

School districts in Connecticut may not directly impose taxes and rely on municipalities to raise revenue. Municipalities may levy property taxes and motor vehicle taxes to fund a variety of local services, including public education.

## District Characteristics

### Grade Level

Connecticut does not differentiate funding based on students' grade levels.

### English-Language Learner

Connecticut's funding formula provides increased funding for English-language learners (ELLs). It does so by applying a multiplier of 1.15 to the base per-pupil amount for these students.

For funding purposes, ELLs are all students reported as ELLs to the Connecticut Department of Education by the local or regional board of education.

### Poverty

Connecticut's funding formula provides increased funding for students from low-income households and for districts with high concentrations of low-income students. It does so by applying a multiplier of 1.3 to the base per-pupil amount for these students. For districts where at least 75% of students are from low-income backgrounds, low-income students above this threshold generate supplemental funding equal to an additional 0.05 times the base per-pupil amount.

Students are eligible for supplemental funding if they qualify for free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program or for free milk under the Special Milk Program.

### Special Education

Connecticut does not provide specific, increased funding for special education in most cases, and state funds are set aside only for extremely high-cost or atypical special-needs students.

While services for students with disabilities are generally funded out of the base amount under the formula, the state maintains provides an Excess Cost Grant to limit districts' liability for the cost of providing services to students with extraordinary needs. The Excess Cost Grant provides reimbursement when the cost of educating a student with disabilities exceeds 4.5 times the district's prior-year net current expenditure per pupil.

For students educated in placements made by a state agency, such as the Department of Children and Families, the Excess Cost Grant provides reimbursement when the cost of educating a student with disabilities exceeds the prior-year net current expenditure per pupil.

## Gifted

Connecticut does not provide increased funding for gifted and talented students.

## Career and Technical Education

Connecticut provides increased funding for career and technical education (CTE) programs. It does so through direct support for the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System, the expenses of technical high schools, and vocational agriculture programs.

In FY2019, the state appropriated approximately \$133.9 million for the Regional Vocational-Technical School System, \$23.8 million for technical high school expenses, and \$10.2 million for vocational agriculture programs.

## Sparsity and/or Small Size

Connecticut does not provide increased funding for sparse districts or for small schools or districts.

For a complete list of primary sources, please see the appropriate state page at [funded.edbuild.org](http://funded.edbuild.org)

