



INEQUITY

In 2019, as part of Public Act 117 (the State budget act), specifically section 285, municipalities were given the ability to increase their contributions to a non-lapsing account for educational purposes, thereby creating inequity for regional school districts in Connecticut.

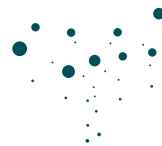
Unfortunately, regional school districts were not included in this change (Public Act 117, section 285) as their ability to contribute to a reserve fund for capital and nonrecurring expenditures is covered under a different statute (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-51).

RECOMMENDATION

- Change Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-51(d)(1) (2) to allow regional school districts the same abilities as their peers who provide educational services in single municipalities.



The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) advances its priorities for the 2020 legislative session in accordance with our mission to lead the continuous improvement of public education for all students by advocating public policy for children and by developing and supporting executive school leaders.



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PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA



2020



SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING

CAPSS opposes the Connecticut School Finance Project model and any special education cost model that

- will result in the increased cost of special education in any district;
- does not fully fund the excess cost grant;
- does not remove the current threshold of four and one-half times the district PPE;
- tries to address any one issue in isolation, i.e., predictability; and
- does not address the increased cost of special education.

RECOMMENDATION

- Conduct a broad analysis of the multi-faceted funding components associated with special education, one that goes beyond the single issue of predictability in the Co-op Model as recommended by the Special Education Cost Model Task Force.



SCHOOL/STUDENT SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

The safety and well-being of students remain the top concern of all educators. While bullying and other behavioral issues can present challenges that require access to a dynamic and comprehensive set of responses and interventions, the goal must be to reduce or eliminate these challenges through a positive school climate.

The reduction of funding and statewide resources for mental health and social-emotional health and learning has had a negative impact on the ability of school districts to build or expand upon programs that support the development and sustainability of positive school climates.

Positive school climates are a result of proactive, intentional actions and programs that build safe and secure cultures that nurture the well-being of students. Building a positive school climate occurs every day, with every adult and child.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Prioritize strategies and programs that proactively build positive school cultures and reduce bullying and challenging student behaviors.
- Support and fund the development and expansion of existing classroom, school, district, and regional programs that support students.
- Commit adequate and sustained funding for school /student safety and well-being supports statewide.
- While the state has secured \$10 million for school security funding, CAPSS recommends the same level of funding be afforded to support mental health programs.



MANDATE RELIEF

In the recent past, state legislators recognized the need for more prudence when imposing mandates on school districts, particularly in the area of professional learning mandates. More recently, mandates have proliferated, contributing to increased rigidity in school districts at a time when program innovation requires increased flexibility and nimbleness.

RECOMMENDATION

- Create a vetting process, cost, staffing, and time analysis as well as standard criteria for imposing mandates.

