District Objectives and System Data



Charlotte McClory, Grade 5, Northeast



Sophia Almodiel, Grade 11, Westhill

Board of Education Budget Request
2026-27 School Year (FY27)

Dr. Tamu Lucero, Superintendent
Ryan Fealey, Chief Financial Officer

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2026-27 BOE Budget Request

Item	Amount $	Increase $	Increase %
Board of Education Budget	***$372,075,133***	***$25,048,267***	***7.22%***
Updated State Partnership Plan Premium Increase	($1,500,000)	$23,548,267	-0.43%
Adjustment to utility costs per CES (electricity)	$55,000	$23,603,267	0.02%
Adjustment to OPEB, Pension, other city cross-charges^	($106,631)	$23,496,636	-0.03%
Net Request	**$370,523,502**	**$23,496,636**	**6.77%**

^Legal, Risk, IT, Finance, School Construction

Total budget increase (including grants): 5.44%

2026-27 BOE Budget Request Summary

Item	Amount	Contribution	Note
Special Education High-Needs	$6,690,901	1.93%	Out of district tuition, transportation, pupil services, supplies for specialized classrooms
Wages	$6,522,739	1.88%	(31.8) FTE due to FY26 enrollment decline
Benefits	$4,196,946	1.21%	Per updated rates 3/9/26
HS Schedule Reversion Wages & Benefits	$3,000,000	0.86%	+30.0 FTE
All Other Costs	$3,086,050	0.89%	Ex.: Curriculum & diagnostic materials, intervention support, educational software previously funded by grants (**ECS flat funded**)
Sum	**$23,496,636**	**6.77%**	

Operating Budget by Major Object

Object Number & Description	2025-26	2026-27	Variance	Variance %	FY 27 Budget Impact	Notes
100 Salaries and Wages	$201,492,139	$210,384,878	$8,892,739	4.41%	2.56%	Collectively bargained wage increases (increase is 3.6% without FTE changes and certain other non-FTE adjustments)
200 Employee Benefits	$55,652,762	$60,479,708	$4,826,946	8.67%	1.39%	Premium increase of 12.9% offset by use of $1m from reserve, increased grant contributions
300 Educational, Rehabilitative, and Legal Services	$13,622,999	$14,448,429	$825,430	6.06%	0.24%	
400 Building Upkeep and Repair	$10,611,299	$9,974,623	($636,676)	(6.00%)	(0.18%)	Reduction in Electricity delivery costs; $300k building repair/maintenance budgeted to Building Use Fund
500 Transportation, Out-District Tuition, & Other Svcs	$55,501,877	$62,513,495	$7,011,618	12.63%	2.02%	$6.5m increase in Special Education tuition, transportation; $1m free breakfast/lunch added back by BOE
600 Supplies, Materials, and Heating Fuels	$9,029,949	$11,489,845	$2,459,896	27.24%	0.71%	$585k curriculum supplies previously grant funded; $500k SPED supplies incl. for new specialized classrooms; $233k gas heat
700 Equipment	$928,818	$1,020,875	$92,057	9.91%	0.03%	
800 Dues and Fees	$187,023	$211,649	$24,626	13.17%	0.01%	
Sum	**$347,026,866**	**$370,523,502**	**$23,496,636**	**6.77%**	**6.77%**	

The Process

Step One (October-December)

- Consider staffing requests
- Review proposed projects
- Estimate increases in fixed costs (healthcare, wages, transportation, etc.)
- Identify alternate funding sources through Reserve Analysis (Recommend $1m from Healthcare Reserve)

Step One: 7.93% increase

Step Two (December-January)

Reductions (>$8m) including:

Projected FY27 Enrollment^

- HS Teachers
- ES Teachers
- Paraeducators
- Adult Ed Counselor
- New Arrivals Teachers

Master Staffing Analysis*

- MS Schedule Change
- TOSAs
- CLC Pre-School Staff
- TL and DL Restructuring
- Sr. Leadership

Step Two: 5.40% increase

Step Three (January 7, 2026)

BOE votes to reinstate 8-Block A/B (5/8) High School Schedule (+$3m)

- + 30 HS Teacher FTE

Step Three: 6.27% increase

Step Four (January 8-16, 2026)

Additional $3m in reductions:

- DOMUS MS Family Advocates
- Free Meals for All Students
- Coord. Access and Opportunity
- Welcome Center Reduction
- ES Instrumental Music
- Office Support Specialists
- HS Library/Media Specialist
- HS MTSS
- HS Athletic Director
- HS Band Additional Funds (Added FY23)

Step Four: 5.40% increase

Step Five (February 10)

BOE votes to reinstate all non-enrollment reductions from Steps Two and Four (+$6.3m)

- DOMUS MS Family Advocates
- Free Meals for All Students
- HS Band Additional Funds
- 27.0 Middle School Teacher FTE
- 8.5 Clerical FTE
- 4.6 ES Instrumental Music FTE
- 3.0 Pre-School FTE
- 6.0 FTE: TOSA (2.0), MTSS (2.0), Library/Media (2.0)
- 1.0 Welcome Center Para FTE
- 1.0 Coord. Access and Opportunity FTE
- 1.0 Athletic Director FTE
- 1.0 Senior Leadership FTE

Step Five: 7.22% increase (6.77% after post BOE cost updates)

^ Positions eliminated based on 5.5% enrollment decrease from FY25 to FY26 and projected enrollment in FY27
* Master staffing positions deemed fiscally unsustainable

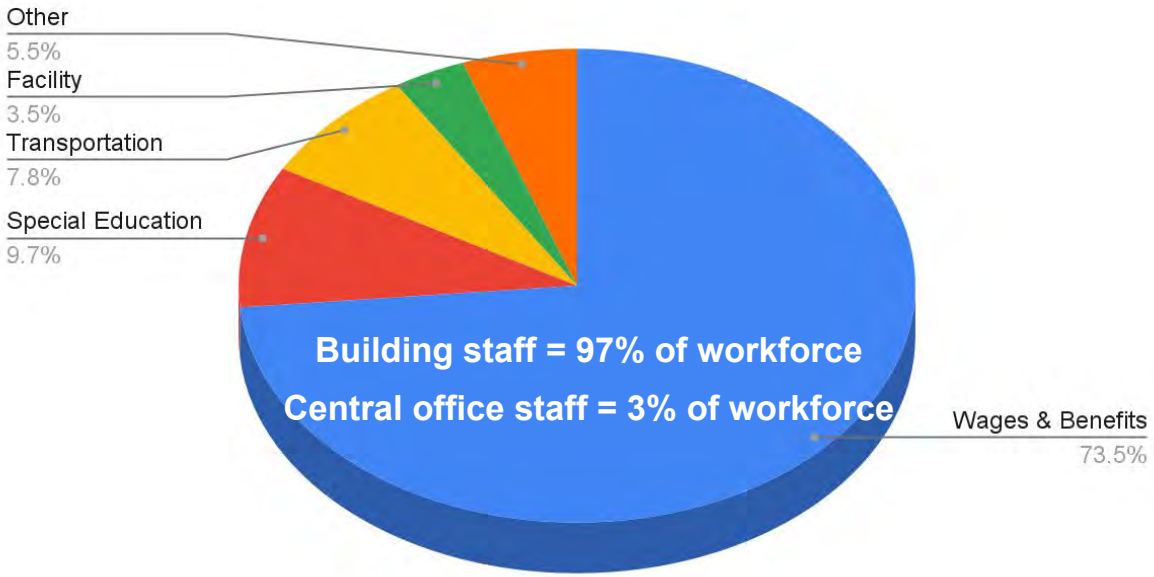
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FTE Adjustments

Object	Description	Change in FTE (Operating)	Change in FTE (Grants)	Change in FTE (Net)	Summary*
510101	Educators (Certified)	(2.2)	(6.6)	(8.8)	30.0 HS Teachers (Schedule); (18.3) ES Teachers (Enrollment); (19.0) HS Teachers (Enrollment); (8.5) ML/New Arrivals (Enrollment); (1.0) Adult Ed Counselor; +4.6 Special Education; +3.4 Net Contingencies
510103	Teacher Support	1.0	1.0	2.0	+1.0 Speech, +1.0 TOSA SEL
510114	Clerical/Technical	1.0	0.0	1.0	+1.0 Welcome Center Enrollment Specialist
510115	Paraeducators	6.0	(2.0)	4.0	+10.0 Special Education; +4.0 Kindergarten; (10.0) New Arrivals
Sum		5.8	(7.6)	(1.8)	

***For a comprehensive list, please see Section 5 of the Budget Book.**

FY27 Budget (All Funding Sources)



Other Category (5.5%) includes ALL of the following:

- Classroom Supplies
- Classroom and Office Furniture
- Textbooks/Workbooks
- Athletic Equipment
- Staff Professional Development
- Districtwide Internet Connection
- Districtwide Software
- Instructional Technology
- Property & GL Insurance
- Telephone Costs
- Postage Costs
- Districtwide Copiers
- Dues & Fees

Fixed costs account for more than 90% of the budget:

- Wages & Benefits
- Special Education
- Transportation

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, salaries and benefits comprise approximately 80 percent of public-school expenditures in the U.S.

District Snapshot: 2024-25 Spending Comparison

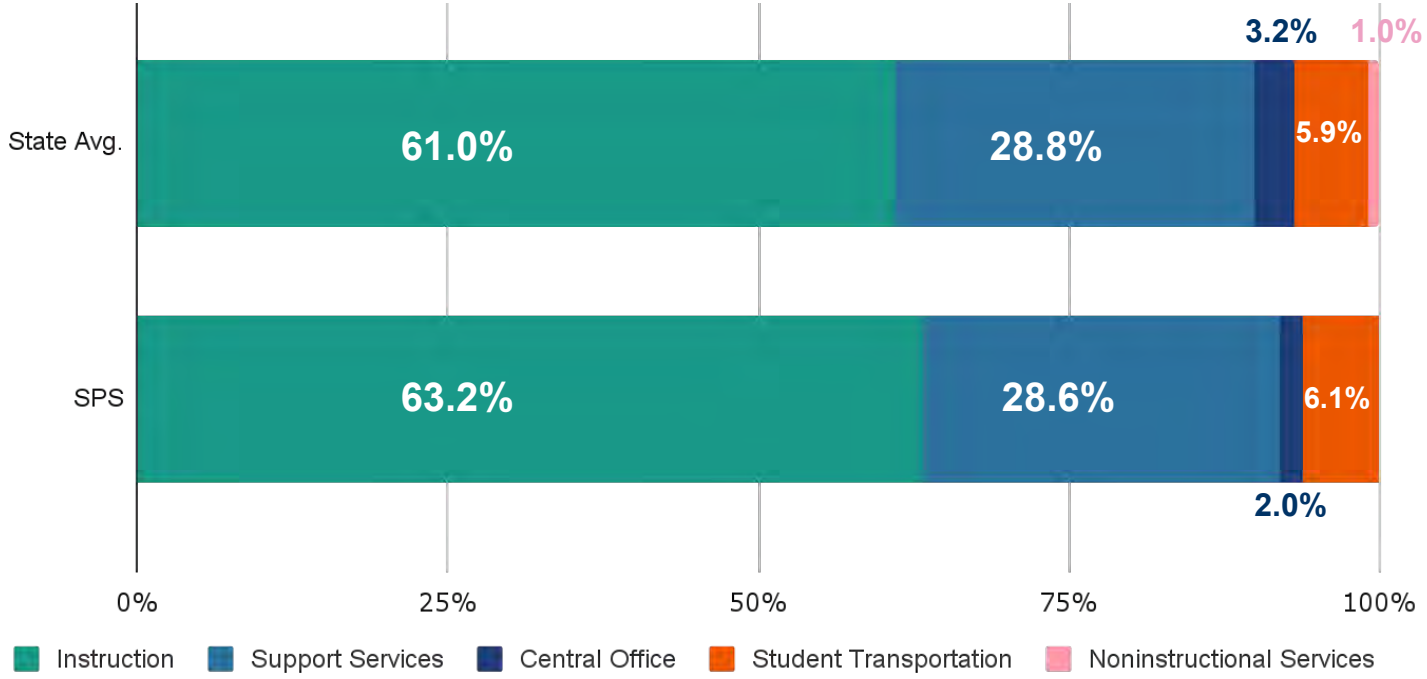
Rank	District	DRG	Average Daily Membership	NCEP 2024-25
1	Redding	A	1,176	$31,257
2	Sherman	C	333	$29,218
3	Weston	A	2,052	$28,973
4	Greenwich	B	8,227	$28,971
5	Westport	A	5,248	$27,715
6	Easton	A	1,249	$26,374
7	New Canaan	A	4,101	$26,345
8	Darien	A	4,643	$26,242
9	Ridgefield	A	4,471	$25,332
10	Wilton	A	3,736	$24,987
11	Fairfield	B	9,095	$24,944
12	New Fairfield	C	2,069	$23,705
13	Stamford	H	15,741	$23,641

Rank	District	DRG	Average Daily Membership	NCEP 2024-25
14	Norwalk	H	11,808	$22,702
15	Newtown	B	3,957	$22,360
16	Stratford	G	6,781	$21,441
17	Brookfield	B	2,587	$20,893
18	Monroe	B	3,474	$20,518
19	Trumbull	B	6,781	$19,924
20	Shelton	D	4,614	$19,330
21	Bethel	D	3,190	$18,721
22	Bridgeport	I	19,752	$18,328
23	Danbury	H	11,856	$17,436

Source: Connecticut State Department of Education Bureau of Fiscal Services

SPS Expenditures vs. State Average

Compared to state average, SPS spends MORE on instruction and LESS on central office. To align with the state average, SPS would have to shift *$4.6m* in expenses from instruction to Central Office.



On average, districts in CT spend 3.2% of their budgets on Central Office.

SPS spends 2.0% of its budget on Central Office.

Chart courtesy of School + State Finance Project. Source: Connecticut State Department of Education. (2024). EdSight - Fiscal Resources: Per Pupil Expenditures by Function (District), 2022-23. Retrieved from https://public-edsight.ct.gov/overview/per-pupil-expenditures-by-function---district.

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Increased Health Insurance Premiums

- The State Partnership Plan (SPP) is currently projecting a **12.9% increase** for FY27.
- A 1% movement in premiums has approximately a **$480,000** effect on the budget.
- The State Partnership Plan (SPP) normally provides an updated figure in February, and a final figure in late Spring.
- Analysis by healthcare industry consultant continues to show multi-million dollar net savings with SPP vs. a high-deductible alternative. This is based on an analysis of claim data and likely costs for Stop Loss coverage, an HSA, and Administrative expenses (see Appendix).
- For FY25, claims paid for SPS members totaled $54.1m, compared to $47.9m in premiums paid, for a loss ratio of 113%. The plan is benchmarked “Market Competitive” based on SPS’s industry, location, and size.



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Lunch Fund Financial Overview

- Since 2022-23, SPS has opted in to the CEP (Community Eligibility Provision), which has enabled SPS to provide all students with free breakfast and lunch.

- Based on Stamford's current demographics (which impact funding), CEP creates an operating loss in the Lunch Fund. The Fund has been able to cover most of these these losses in recent years due to a surplus arising from high COVID meal reimbursements.

- However, the Lunch Fund required a contribution of $1,000,000 from the Operating Budget in FY26 in order to maintain free breakfast and lunch for all students. The Superintendent's FY27 Budget Request **did not include** these funds, **but they have been added back by the BOE**.

- If Stamford opts out of CEP (free meals) the Operating Budget would need to contribute $250,000 to cover estimated debt arising from unpaid meals.

- Leaving CEP in FY27 would require that families complete applications in order to be eligible for free or reduced lunch, which will put a burden on both families and staff.

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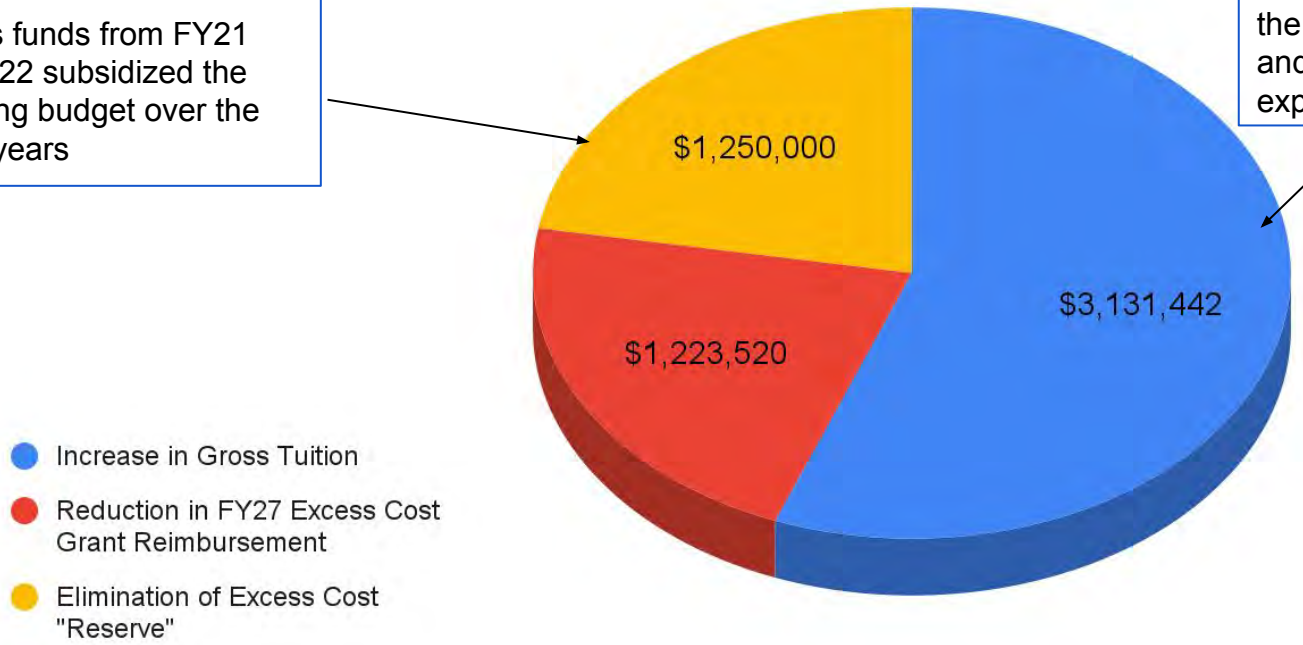
Out of District Tuition Increase Breakdown

Students with disabilities (SWD) who require out of district placement represent 8.9% of all SWD and 1.6% of total PreK-12 enrollment

Out of District Tuition costs could be >$30m more without in-district specialized programming that serves >540 students

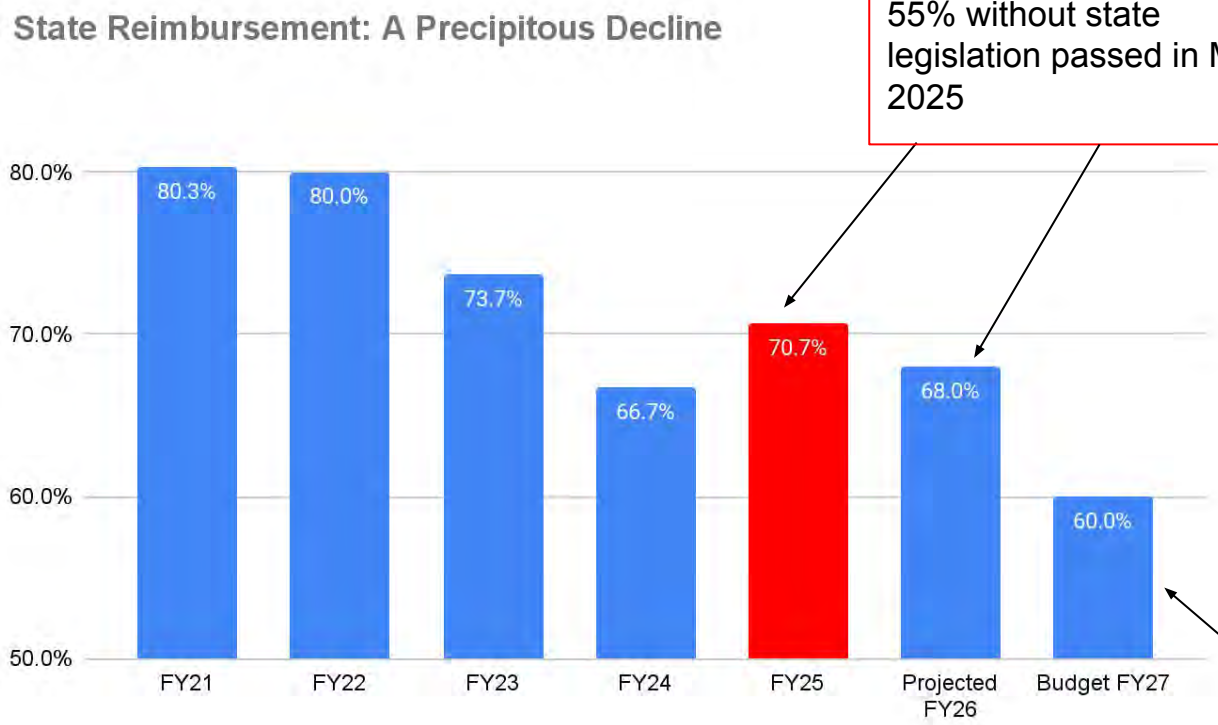
Surplus funds from FY21 and FY22 subsidized the operating budget over the past 4 years

Projecting a 1.7% increase in the number of placements and a 9% increase in expected cost per placement



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Out of District Tuition: Decrease in State Aid



Would have been 58% and 55% without state legislation passed in March 2025

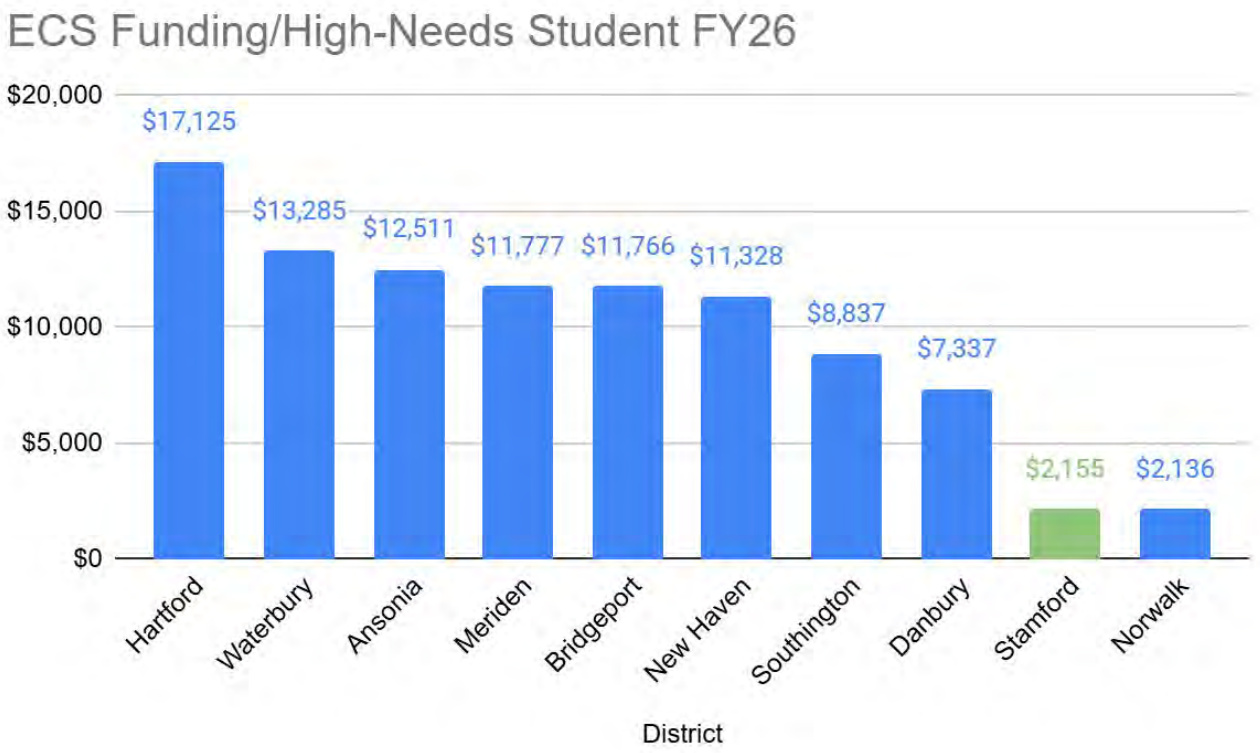
Creates a $2.8M funding deficit compared to state law; deficit will be covered by Stamford taxpayers

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Federal & State Grant Funding is Stagnant

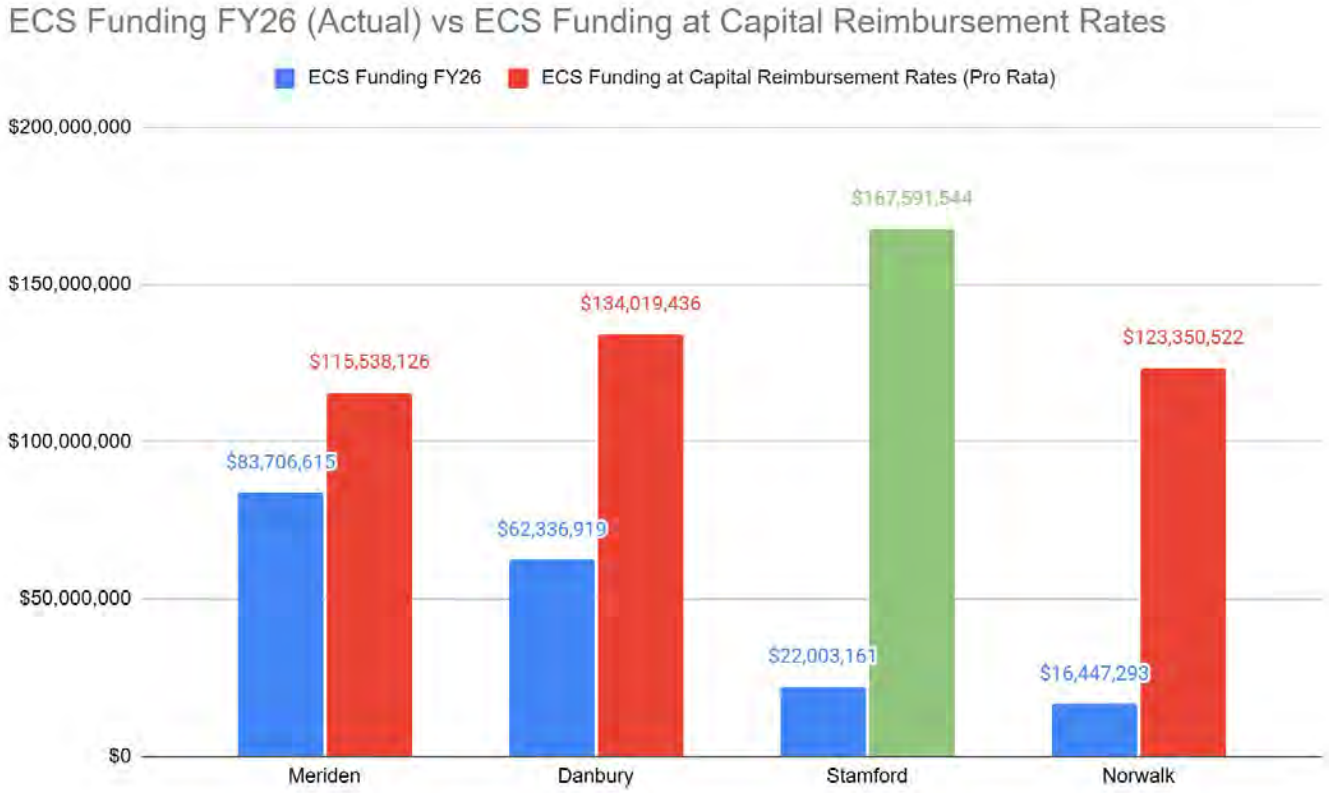
Grant	Projected FY27 Income	Fully Funded (or COLA) Amount	Variance
Excess Cost Grant (state program that partially reimburses districts for special education expenses above a specific threshold, usually 4.5 times the average per-pupil cost). ***The Excess Cost Grant does not fully reimburse for all qualifying costs***	$6,695,103	$11,158,504	($4,463,402)
Title Grants (federal funding via the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) ***Title Grant Funding has been flat in recent years***	$10,990,055	$11,319,756	($329,702)
Alliance Grant (state funding from CT General Assembly) ***General Assembly did not approve cost of living increase in Alliance Grant for FY27***	$14,024,284	$14,445,013	($420,729)

ECS Funding in Context

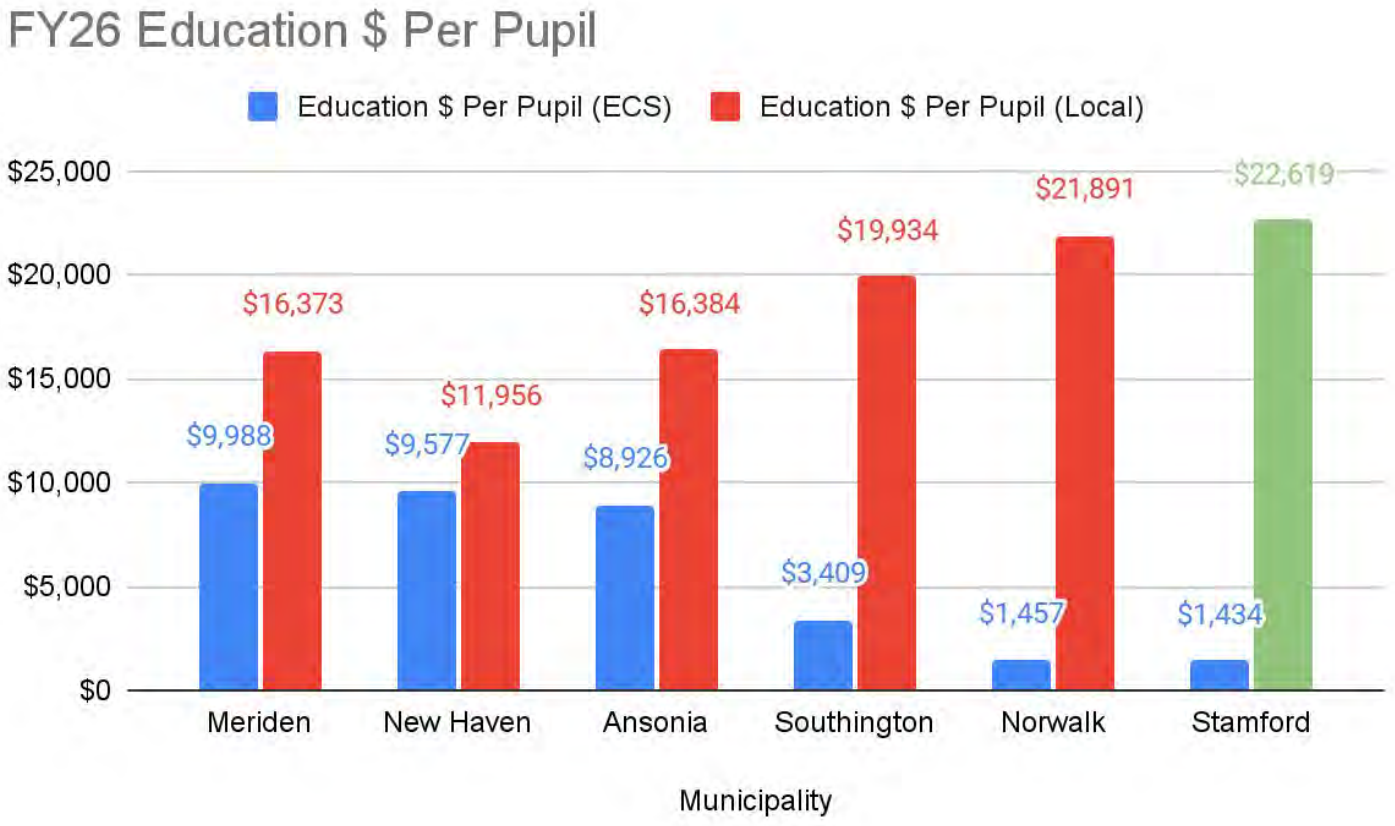


In Connecticut, "High Needs" students are defined by the State Department of Education as students who are economically disadvantaged, English Learners, or students with disabilities.

ECS Funding in Context (Continued)



ECS Funding in Context (Continued)



2025 Legislative Session: Thank You, Stamford Delegation!

Grant or Program	Anticipated FY26 Revenue
ECS (Alliance Grant): Acceleration of the multi-year phase-in	$2,200,000
Special Education Expansion and Development (SEED) Grant: A state-funded initiative established in 2025 to support school districts in providing special education services.	$250,000
District Repair and Improvement Project: Provides reimbursement grants to school districts for minor capital repairs and improvements to public school buildings, grounds, and infrastructure.	$600,000
Roxbury and Westhill New Construction Projects. Additional state funding was authorized for both new school construction projects.	$434,800,000

2026 Legislative Session: Advocacy Focus

Grant or Program	Anticipated FY27 Revenue or Target (If unfunded)
ECS (Alliance Grant): Cost of living increase	$420,000^
Special Education Expansion and Development (SEED) Grant: Continue to fund and provide additional funding.	$250,000*
District Repair and Improvement Project: Continue to fund and provide additional funding.	$600,000*
School Meals: Work with the School + State Finance Project to identify state funding	$1,250,000^
Excess Cost: Fully fund eligible reimbursements	$11,400,000^

* Currently **Funded** in FY27 State Budget

^ Currently **Unfunded** in the FY27 State Budget

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P.O. Box 9310, Stamford, CT 06904

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Phone (203) 977-4105

www.stamfordpublicschools.org

Tamu Lucero, Superintendent of Schools

To: Board of Education

From: Ryan Fealey, CFO

Re: Budget Reallocation FY27

Date: May 8, 2026

The Board of Education's 2026-27 Operating Budget request was reduced by **$12,100,000** by the Board of Finance and $0 by the Board of Representatives. The resulting final budget of **$359,975,133** represents a **3.73%** increase over the 2025-26 budget.

Below please find the Superintendent's proposed re-allocation, summarized by Major Object.

Object Number & Description	2026-27 BOE	Adjustments	2026-27 Proposed Final	Notes
100 Salaries and Wages	$210,099,758	($4,743,076)	$205,356,682	76.4 FTE (See Below)
200 Employee Benefits	$62,518,824	($6,037,059)	$56,481,765	$2m State/City aid; $1.92m Plan Premium reduction; $1.6m due to FTE reduction; OPEB/Pension/Workers Comp adjustments
300 Educational, Rehabilitative, and Legal Services	$14,448,429	($253,466)	$14,194,964	$305k reduction (DRIP grant); $100k reduction (external legal); $90k reduction (Urban Assembly); $242k addition (city legal cross-charge)
400 Building Upkeep and Repair	$9,919,623	($250,868)	$9,668,756	$305k reduction (DRIP grant); $55k addition (electricity costs)
500 Transportation, Out-District Tuition, & Other Svcs	$62,366,130	($852,635)	$61,513,495	$1m reduction (lunch program); $147k addition (city insurance cross-charge: GL, P&C)
600 Supplies, Materials, and Heating Fuels	$11,489,845	$37,103	$11,526,948	$170k reduction (supplies); $207k addition (bus fuel)
700 Equipment	$1,020,875	$0	$1,020,875	
800 Dues and Fees	$211,649	$0	$211,649	
Sum	**$372,075,133**	**($12,100,000)**	**$359,975,133**	

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Tamu Lucero, Superintendent of Schools

Operating FTE will be reduced by **76.4**, from 2088.8 to 2012.4:

Object	Description	Change in FTE (Operating)	Summary
510101	Educators (Certified)	(59.6)	(24.0) Middle School Schedule; (30.0) HS Contingencies; +9.6 HS; (11.3) Special Education/ML; (3.9) Other
510102	Administrative (Certified)	(2.0)	(1.0) Associate Superintendent; (1.3) Cloonan AP/APSE; (0.2) Stillmeadow APSE; 0.5 Westover AP
510103	Teacher Support	1.2	3.5 Elementary; (0.3) MS; (1.3) HS; (0.7) All District
510114	Clerical/Technical	(3.0)	(2.0) Central Office Clerical, (1.0) Enrollment Specialist
510115	Paraeducators	(12.0)	(8.0) Special Education; (4.0) New Arrivals
510117	Security Worker	(1.0)	(1.0) TBD based on analysis (added to contingency)
Sum		**(76.4)**	

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Tamu Lucero, Superintendent of Schools

The Grants budget will be increased by $2,000,000 to account for additional state funds. This may have to be adjusted pending the split of state funds between the Board of Education and the City of Stamford:

Object Number & Description	2026-27 BOE	Adjustments	2026-27 Proposed Final	Notes
100 Salaries and Wages	$31,829,479	$0	$31,829,479	
200 Employee Benefits	$7,705,383	$2,000,000	$9,705,383	$2m placeholder in Alliance pending resolution of additional state funds and split with City of Stamford
300 Educational, Rehabilitative, and Legal Services	$1,412,927	$0	$1,412,927	
400 Building Upkeep and Repair	$58,540	$0	$58,540	
500 Transportation, Out-District Tuition, & Other Svcs	$8,644,158	$0	$8,644,158	
600 Supplies, Materials, and Heating Fuels	$380,460	$0	$380,460	
700 Equipment	$350,828	$0	$350,828	
800 Dues and Fees	$0	$0	$0	
Sum	**$50,381,775**	**$2,000,000**	**$52,381,775**	

Grants FTE are unchanged at 300.3.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at rfealey@stamfordct.gov