Description of the Formula

Education Cost Sharing (ECS) Target Aid is still a foundation-type formula and is currently comprised of two components: **Base Aid and a Regional Bonus.** Base Aid - For each weighted student, towns receive a portion of the foundation ($9,687) based on the ratio of the town’s wealth when compared to the guaranteed wealth level—1.75 times the median town’s wealth. Wealth is measured in terms of property per capita and per student adjusted for Per Capita Income and Median Household Income. Students are weighted for poverty and English language learners. **Regional Bonus** – Towns that are members of regional districts receive up to $100 for each such student, depending on the number of regional grades.

However, for 2009-10 and 2010-11, legislation directs that each town receive an ECS entitlement equal to the amount they were entitled to in 2008-09.

### District-Based Components

**Density/Sparsity of Small Schools**
There are no adjustments for population density or sparsity.

**Grade Level Differences**
Does not apply.

**Pupil Weights for District/School Size**
The state provides a per pupil grant increase to the general aid formula grant for those districts participating in regional school systems:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region Grade Range</th>
<th>Additional per Pupil Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>$46.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>$30.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Declining Enrollment or Growth
The state’s Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) represents the minimum level that a town must appropriate to the school district. Generally, the MBR is predicated upon the prior year’s budgeted appropriation to the school district plus the increase in the ECS grant, with no adjustment for changes in student population. For both 2009-10 and 2010-11, the MBR is predicated on a school district’s appropriated budget from 2008-09.

Capital Outlay and/or Debt Service
The state pays 20-80 percent of approved projects, inversely related to district wealth. For regional districts, the state pays an additional 10 percentage points on an equalized basis, but such districts may not receive more than 85 percent reimbursement. In addition, the state pays 95 percent for approved interdistrict magnet schools, agricultural science centers and regional special education facilities. Bonded indebtedness may not exceed 160 percent of the current year estimated tax receipts.

Transportation (2006-07)
The state pays 0-60 percent of eligible prior year expenditures, inversely related to district wealth. Regional high school districts receive an additional 5 percent, and regional K-12 districts receive an additional 10 percent. Districts are guaranteed a minimum grant of $1,000. Grants may be proportionally reduced to stay within the legislatively approved appropriation.

Student-Based Components

Special Education
Since 1995-96, the state’s primary contribution to general special education is through the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula described under Description of Formula. The ECS foundation reflects the cost of regular education and general education. In addition, the students used in the ECS grant determination include both regular education and special education.

The state also supports extraordinary special education costs through its Excess Costs grant, which funds 100 percent of student-based special education costs in excess of established thresholds. For children affected by state agencies, e.g., foster students and judicial placements, the state pays in excess of the district’s prior year average cost per student (including regular and special education). For all other special education placements, the state pays 100 percent of the costs in excess of 4.5 times the prior year’s average cost per student (including regular and special education). These grants may be proportionately reduced to stay within the legislatively approved appropriation.

Compensatory Education
Does not apply.

Bilingual Education
Each district is entitled to receive a portion of the total amount appropriated according to the ratio of the number of eligible pupils in the district as compared to the total number of eligible pupils in the state. Grant eligibility is limited to districts with schools containing 20 or more students with the same dominant language other than English. Those English language learners
that are eligible under the Bilingual grant are included in the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula described under Description of Formula.

Gifted and Talented Education
Does not apply.

Other
Connecticut targets significant funding to those 15 to 20 districts with the highest numbers, or concentrations, of poor and remedial students. Funding for these districts provides quality preschool education, summer school and extended school building hours. The state supports a variety of interdistrict choice programs for the purposes of providing academic alternatives and reducing racial and economic isolation:

- Magnet Schools - 67 interdistrict magnets serving over 27,000 students;
- Charter Schools – 18 charters serving 5,750 students;
- Connecticut Technical High School System – 17 state-operated technical high schools enrolling over 10,000 students;
- OPEN Choice – almost 1,800 city students enrolled in suburban districts; and
- Agricultural Science – 17 regional high schools serving 3,050 students.

Revenue and Expenditure Information

State Mandates Restricting Revenue or Expenditure Increases
Connecticut operates under a constitutional spending cap which requires a balanced budget. The cap limits appropriations based upon two major economic variables: either the five-year average growth in Connecticut personal income or annual growth of the Consumer Price Index, whichever is greater. The cap can only be exceeded if the Governor declares an emergency or the existence of extraordinary circumstances and three-fifths of both chambers of the General Assembly concur.

Property Assessment Ratios Used/Legal Standards For Property Assessment
Assessment ratios used may not exceed 100 percent of true and actual or fair market value.

Measure of Local Ability To Support Schools
For special education, transportation, adult education and school construction grants: Equalized property value per capita, modified by a ratio of the town’s 1999 per capita income to the wealthiest town’s per capita income.

For the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant: Equalized property value per weighted pupil and per capita, modified by a ratio of the town’s 1999 per capita income to the town with the highest per capita income and 1999 median household income to the town with the highest median household income. The pupils are weighted for poverty and limited English proficiency.
School District Budget and Tax Rate Procedures/Sources of Local Revenue
The state’s 166 districts are fiscally dependent. Local boards of finance propose entire town budgets, which include the school budget. Voters accept or reject the total budget. Voter approval is required for a new tax increase.

State Support for Nonpublic Schools
Aid to public schools for mandated services provided to nonpublic schools and/or pupils for health services (doctors, nurses and dental hygienists), transportation, and child nutrition.

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