



STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Summary of Education Cost Sharing and Choice Grant Legislative Changes for FY 2024 & FY25

During the recently completed legislative session there was a proposed bill, HB 5003, that if passed as originally drafted, would have made significant changes to our school choice funding formulas and accelerated the timeline for phasing-in to full funding of the Education Cost Sharing Grant (ECS). During the final negotiations over the budget, some of the proposed changes in HB 5003 were adopted and others were not.

To ensure you have the most current information we have developed and are sharing with you below a summary of the legislative changes that impact the following grant programs: ECS, Interdistrict Magnet Schools, Charter Schools, Open Choice and Agricultural Science and Technology Education Centers. In the coming weeks, in collaboration with CAPSS, we will set up information sessions about these and other legislative changes that may impact your districts.

Education Cost Sharing Grant:

- **Fiscal Year 2024**
 - Phase-in to “Full Funding” Continues
 - Districts that would have begun losing funding because they are funded above their “Full Funding” level will continue to be held harmless. They will receive the same amount of ECS as they received in Fiscal Year 2023.
 - Alliance District program has no changes.
- **Fiscal Year 2025**
 - Phase-in percentage to “Full Funding” is increased from 25% of the balance still needed to reach full funding to 56.5% of the balance still needed to reach “Full Funding”. (Please note: in Fiscal Year 2026 the balance of the increase needed to reach “Full Funding” will be funded.)
 - Districts that would have begun losing funding because they are funded above their “Full Funding” level will be held harmless for an additional year. They will continue to receive the same amount of ECS as they received in Fiscal Year 2024. (Please note: In Fiscal Year 2026 for districts that are funded above the “Full Funding” level the annual phased-in reduction will restart and continue through Fiscal Year 2032.)
 - Alliance District program has no changes in the biennium.

Choice Programs:

- **Fiscal Year 2024 – Magnet School Programs**
 - Per pupil grant amounts for the following magnet school programs remain the same as Fiscal Year 2023:
 - Non-Sheff Host Operated Magnet Schools
 - Non-Sheff RESC Operated Magnet Schools
 - Sheff Host Operated Magnet Schools
 - Sheff RESC/University Operated Magnet Schools
 - Magnet School tuition cap – If any of the following districts have more than 4% of their students enrolled in a Magnet School program then the district will not be responsible for \$4,400 of the per student tuition charged for each student in excess of the 4%.

(Please note: this amount may be proportionately reduced to remain within the available appropriation.)

- East Hartford
 - Manchester
 - Bloomfield
 - New Britain
 - New London
 - Windsor
- **Fiscal Year 2025 – Magnet School Programs**
 - Per pupil grant amounts for all magnet school programs must be **“at least”** equal to the per pupil amount they received in Fiscal Year 2024.
 - Magnet School programs that charge tuition **may not** charge more than 58% of the per student tuition charged in Fiscal Year 2024.
 - There is no longer a cap on tuition for Bloomfield, New Britain, New London and Windsor if they have more than 4% of their students enrolled in magnet school programs. East Hartford and Manchester continue to have a cap on tuition if more than 4% of their students are enrolled in magnet school programs.
 - **Charter Schools – Phase-in to “full funding” continues.**
 - For Fiscal Year 2024 the per pupil grant amount is equal to the foundation (\$11,525) plus 36.08% of its charter grant adjustment.
 - For Fiscal Year 2025 the per pupil grant amount is equal to the foundation (\$11,525) plus 56.7% of its charter grant adjustment.
 - **Open Choice**
 - For Fiscal Year 2024 the tiered per pupil grant amounts based on participation remain the same.
 - For Fiscal Year 2025 the tiered per pupil grant amounts based on participation must be **“at least”** the same amount as Fiscal Year 2024.
 - **Agricultural Science and Technology Education Center (ASTE)**
 - For Fiscal Year 2024 the per pupil grant amount remains the same as Fiscal Year 2023.
 - For Fiscal Year 2025 the per pupil grant amount must be **“at least”** the same amount as Fiscal Year 2024.
 - Beginning in Fiscal Year 2025, ASTE programs **may not** charge tuition that is more than 58% of the per student tuition charge in Fiscal Year 2024.

Education Finance Reform

The legislature appropriated \$150 million to the department in Fiscal Year 2025 to be divided as follows among the programs listed below. ***It is important to note that the legislation ties the distribution of the funds to the current statutory formulas for these programs. This means that with the exception of ECS and charter schools, updated per pupil amounts for Magnet Schools, Open Choice, and ASTE programs will need to be determined in order to distribute these funds. When developing your Fiscal Year 2025 budget you should use the per pupil grant amounts currently in statute.***

Distribution of the \$150 million:

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|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Education Cost Sharing Grant: | \$68,499,497 |
| Charter Schools: | \$ 9,378,313 |
| RESC Magnet Schools: | \$40,188,429 |
| Host Magnet Schools: | \$13,254,358 |
| Open Choice: | \$11,430,343 |
| ASTE Programs: | \$ 7,249,060 |