



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Office of Strategic Planning & Partnerships
Policy 2024-3

TO: Interdistrict Magnet School (IMS) Operators Outside the Greater Hartford Region
(Non-Sheff Region)

FROM: Keith M. Norton, Chief Strategic Planning Officer
Office of Strategic Planning and Partnerships

DATE: August 5, 2024

SUBJECT: Enrollment Policies for Interdistrict Magnet Schools (IMS) and Open Choice (OC)
Programs in the Non-Sheff Region

This memorandum articulates the enrollment and grant payment policies relevant to school choice programs outside the Greater Hartford Region (hereinafter referred to as “Non-Sheff Region”). We provide these policies as a reminder of Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) procedures and to ensure consistent enrollment practices among operators. These updated policies reflect adjustments to accommodate new legislation.

Non-Sheff Region Enrollment Policies

Single School and Dual Enrollment

Non-Sheff IMS operators may not dually enroll students in school choice programs unless specifically approved by the CSDE. For the 2024-25 school year, the CSDE has revised the dual enrollment policy for OC, Agricultural Science and Technology Education (ASTE) Programs, and Public Charter school students enrolling in a part-time IMS. Please review the revised policy that was posted on July 30, 2024, to ensure compliance with CSDE requirements.

[Click here to view the Single School and Dual Enrollment Policies.](#)

Foreign Student Enrollment

The CSDE limits the enrollment of foreign students in an IMS to no more than five (5) students at any point during the academic school year. All foreign students attending an IMS must be reported in the Public School Information System (PSIS). In accordance with C.G.S. § 10-264i and § 10-264l, the CSDE does not include students identified as foreign students in the operating and student transportation magnet grant payments. Please review the policy that was posted on May 1, 2019, to ensure compliance with CSDE requirements.

[View the full Foreign Student Enrollment policy.](#)

IMS Residency and Reduced Isolation Setting Goals¹

C.G.S. § 10-264l and the Interdistrict Magnet Schools Reduced Isolation Standards (RI) Standards, promulgated by the Commissioner of Education pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-264r, set residency and reduced isolation (RI) standards for Non-Sheff Magnets. Please review the Commissioner’s Interdistrict Magnet Schools Reduced Isolation Standards that were posted on August 19, 2020. Non-Sheff Magnets are expected to comply with *both* the residency and RI Standards.

[View the Commissioner’s Interdistrict Magnet Schools Reduced Isolation Standards.](#)

Residency

Per statute and the RI Standards, Non-Sheff Magnets **may not** enroll more than 75% of its total school enrollment from a single participating district. For the 2024-25 school year, the CSDE will waive fiscal penalties associated with noncompliance with the residency standard for good cause as determined by the CSDE if the IMS is operating pursuant to a compliance plan approved by the CSDE.

Reduced Isolation Setting

Per statute and the RI Standards, Non-Sheff Magnets must meet reduced isolation enrollment goals as set by the Commissioner. In accordance with these goals, a Non-Sheff Magnet provides a Reduced Isolation Setting (RIS) if the percentage of RI students enrolled at the school equals at least 25% of total school enrollment.²

Per the RI Standards, Non-Sheff Magnets that are within 1% of the RIS goal or that enroll at least 20% RI students, meet the standards for a RIS, so long as the school is operating pursuant to a compliance plan approved by the Commissioner. The RI Standards also state that if a Non-Sheff Magnet does not meet the 25% RIS goal, there are no negative consequences for any school or school operator as long as such schools are operating pursuant to an approved compliance plan designed to bring the school population into compliance with the RIS goals. IMS operators must complete and submit required compliance plans within the timeframe set by the CSDE and receive approval from the Commissioner to remain eligible for the operating grant.

Enrollment Targets

Beginning July 1, 2021, the Legislature did not continue previous maximum limits on the operating grant based on actual enrollments in C.G.S. §10-264l. As a result, IMS operators may increase enrollment at their respective schools within available appropriations based on a phase-in over time as approved by the CSDE and subject to compliance with residency and diversity goals. To plan for increased financial requirements, the CSDE expects operators to provide a five-year enrollment projection per school and district that is aligned with the school’s building capacity and reflects compliance with diversity and residency goals and the Comprehensive School Choice Plan (CCP). Schools and districts should use the Application for Interdistrict Magnet Funds - ED614 to share

¹ Sections 10-264l and 10-264r of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), as amended in the 2023 Legislative session.

² For purposes of the Commissioner’s standard, a “reduced isolation” student is defined as a student who self-identifies as Native American, Asian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander, and/or White, and does not identify as Black/African American, or Hispanic.

enrollment projections. Proposed enrollment expansion must reflect a phase-in approach over a minimum of three to five years to reach full building capacity as approved by the CSDE within compliance goals. Enrollment growth for FY25 will be approved by CSDE in the ED614 Application for Interdistrict Magnet Funds by the Commissioner of Education, subject to available appropriations.

Interdistrict Magnet Operating Grant Formula

The interdistrict magnet formula set forth in Sections 112 and 114 of Public Act (PA) 24-81, an amendment to C.G.S 10-264l, mirrors the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula and dictates how funds are to be distributed in FY25. The new funding framework replaces the per-pupil rates formerly used for interdistrict magnet school funding.

The webinar provided by the CSDE includes those estimates as well as a detailed explanation of the formula calculation.

[View the Magnet School Formula Changes and Grant Estimates Per PA 24-81 webinar.](#)

The following Interdistrict Magnet Operators are eligible to receive a calculated grant award amount for students enrolled in accordance with the standards for operating an interdistrict magnet school program. For the following **RESC and/or College Affiliated Magnet School Operators**, the operating grant formula is detailed below and is included in the linked presentation above:

Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES), Cooperative Educational Services (CES), EASTCONN, and LEARN

FY25 Grant - RESC Operators & College Affiliated Operators Formula

Base Funding (FY24 Per Pupil (PP) Statutory Grants *multiplied by* the FY25 Magnet Enrollment)
PLUS

New Funding (42% of \$11,525 *multiplied by* Total Magnet School Need Students^(A) *minus* Base Funding)

PLUS a hold harmless amount if needed based on FY24 PP revenue *less* FY25 PP revenue

(A) Total Magnet School Need Students:

Part-Time (PT) & Full-Time (FT) students enrolled in RESC Magnet School

PLUS

30% of the # of PT & FT students eligible for Free & Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL)

PLUS

15% of the # of PT & FT students eligible for FRPL in excess of the # of PT & FT eligible for FRPL that is equal to 60% of the total # of students enrolled in program

PLUS

25% of the # of PT & FT students who are English Language Learners (ELL)

PLUS

30% of the # of PT & FT student enrolled in CREC or Goodwin Operated program

Note: A hold harmless provision is in place for all operators, if applicable, in accordance with the terms of the PA.

For the following **Board of Education (BOE) Interdistrict Magnet School Operators**, the operating grant formula is detailed below and is included in the linked presentation above:
Bridgeport Public Schools, Danbury Public Schools, New Haven Public Schools, New London Public Schools, Norwalk Public Schools, Stamford Public Schools, Waterbury Public Schools, and Windham Public Schools

FY25 - Grant District/BOE District Operators Formula

Base Funding (FY24 PP Statutory Grants *multiplied by* the FY25 In-District & Out-of-District Enrollment)

PLUS

New Funding (42% of the Sum of Sending Town Adjustment Factors for Each Sending Town^(B) *plus* FY24 PP Grants *multiplied by* In-District Enrollment *minus* Base Funding)

(B) Sum for all Sending Towns Adjustment Factors:

of Resident Choice Program Students

MULTIPLIED BY

The Greater of Total Revenue PP for FY24 *OR* Weighted Funding Amount PP (\$11,525 *multiplied by* town’s Total Need Students *divided by* resident students)

Note: A hold harmless provision is incorporated in the grant calculation, if applicable, in accordance with the terms of the PA.

Maximum Student Tuition Charge

Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-264(k), as amended by PA 24-81 Sections 114(k) and 115(c), (d), for the 2024-25 school year, the per student tuition charged to a local or regional board of education shall not exceed 58% of the student tuition charged for school year 2023-24.

[Click here to view the attached memo and the maximum 2024-25 tuition rates.](#)

Financial Reduction or Financial Penalty

Failure to comply with certain criteria set forth in this memorandum may result in an impact to the IMS operating grant based on the CSDE’s review of October 1 enrollment data based on noncompliance with enrollment standards per statute and the Commissioner’s Standards. IMS operators operating pursuant to a timely compliance plan approved by the CSDE will not receive a penalty to their grant allocation due to noncompliance with residency requirements or RIS goals.

Irrespective of CSDE waiver policies, the CSDE expects the IMS operator to monitor enrollments to attempt to reconcile non-compliance. The CSDE will notify operators of discrepancies it becomes aware of through its own concurrent monitoring of enrollment data.

Residency

A Non-Sheff Magnet that does not meet the 75% residency requirement, is required by C.G.S. 10-264/(b)(3) to operate pursuant to an approved compliance plan which is designed to bring the school into compliance with the residency enrollment requirements in order to remain eligible for the IMS operating grant. For the 2024-25 school year, the CSDE may waive fiscal impacts from residency noncompliance for good cause if the IMS completes and submits an approved compliance plan within the timeframe required by the CSDE. Pursuant to C.G.S. 10-264/(b)(4), the CSDE may impose fiscal penalties or other remedies for noncompliance with residency requirements for more than one year.

Reduced Isolation Setting

Per the RI Standards, Non-Sheff magnets will not receive a penalty to their grant allocation from noncompliance with the RIS goals if such schools are operating pursuant to a timely and approved compliance plan as indicated in this memorandum. The IMS must complete and submit the compliance plan within the timeframe required by the CSDE.

Operator/District Actions

Non-Sheff IMS operators must implement and communicate the contents of this policy in school and/or district administrative documents and publications (e.g., school website, student application, electronic notification messages, acceptance letters, printed publications) to facilitate compliance with the enrollment policies.

CSDE Contact

Please contact Meliha Korkutovic at Meliha.Korkutovic@ct.gov or 860-713-6939 with any questions.

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