



Connecticut Education Cost Sharing (ECS) Formula – Fact Sheet **ECS Funding: A Fair Chance for Students. A Fair Deal for Property Taxpayers.**

1. ECS is Connecticut's primary education funding formula.

- The ECS formula is designed to **equalize educational opportunity** by distributing state aid based on student enrollment, community wealth, and student need.
- ECS calculates state aid by multiplying weighted student counts by a per-pupil Foundation amount.
- ECS grants represent the largest single component of Connecticut's state education aid, accounting for approximately **35% of total state education funding** to local school districts.

Context: Despite ECS being the state's largest education grant, approximately **57% of total K-12 education funding in Connecticut is raised locally through property taxes**, not state support.

2. The ECS Foundation has been frozen since 2013, eroding its real value.

- The ECS Foundation amount has not been adjusted for inflation in more than a decade, significantly weakening the state's investment in public education.
- The current Foundation is set at **\$11,525 per student**, unchanged since 2013.
- If adjusted for inflation, the Foundation would be over **\$16,000 per student**.
- Even among their lowest-funded districts, **Massachusetts invests 40% more in education: \$14,343 per pupil versus Connecticut's \$10,343 in the bottom 10 districts**.
- This underfunding represents an **annual loss of more than \$820 million to municipalities since 2013**, shifting **education costs away from the state and onto local communities**.

3. State fiscal capacity has grown. ECS investment has not.

- Since 2013, Connecticut has experienced approximately **\$9.7 billion in budget surpluses**, yet ECS funding has **remained effectively flat**.
- When adjusted for inflation, this prolonged stagnation has **shifted more than \$800 million in education costs onto local property taxpayers**.
- Municipalities have been forced to compensate for the state's inaction **through property tax increases**, deepening **the affordability crisis for residents**.
- In 2013, total General Fund revenue from state taxes was **\$14.55 billion**. In 2025, that number was **\$22.14 billion**. That's an **increase of \$7.59 billion or 52% in 12 years**.

4. Stagnant ECS funding shifts costs to municipalities and property taxpayers.

- Because ECS does not automatically adjust for inflation or rising education costs, **local governments are forced to absorb the financial impact**.
- Municipalities face a stark choice: **cut educational services and programs or raise local revenue** to close funding gaps.
- In practice, this means **higher property taxes for homeowners and renters**, intensifying affordability pressures across the state.
- Heavy reliance on local property taxes to fund education **directly undermines household financial stability** and economic competitiveness.

5. Outdated state aid drives inequity and affordability challenges.

- The imbalance between state support and local revenue capacity **deepens both educational and economic disparities**.
- Communities with lower property wealth struggle to raise sufficient revenue without imposing steep tax increases.
- Wealthier communities can rely on higher property values, creating **wide disparities in educational resources and unequal tax burdens**.
- This **structure reinforces inequity while amplifying affordability pressures** for residents statewide.

Bottom Line:

An adequately funded, inflation-adjusted ECS formula is essential to educational equity, municipal stability, and taxpayer relief. Modernizing ECS is not only a policy imperative, it is a fiscal fairness and affordability necessity for Connecticut families and communities.