

Connecticut spends approximately \$3 billion annually on special education services for students.<sup>1</sup> Municipalities are largely required to financially support the expenses necessary to provide special education services for their students with Individualized Education Programs. The Excess Cost grant is Connecticut's method for sharing in the costs associated with educating students with extraordinary special education needs.

Each school district submits its statement of Excess Cost expenditures for reimbursement to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) by December 1st each year. Districts submit their expenditures for reimbursement again by March 1st for expenses for additional students and costs not included in their December filing.

The first filing of Excess Cost expenses provides an opportunity to analyze the grant's current funding level in comparison to the growing needs of students and the increasing costs of providing special education services.

## What is the Excess Cost Grant?

The Excess Cost grant is a three-tiered reimbursement program provided by the State of Connecticut to school districts to assist them in paying for special education expenses for students with extraordinary needs that require high-cost, and often more intensive, services. Local and regional school districts are eligible for partial reimbursement from the State for students who require special education services that cumulatively exceed the school district's "basic contribution," or the portion of a student's education that the school district is responsible for.

The basic contribution is all costs up to 4.5 times the district's average expenditure per student for the prior year.<sup>2</sup> The Excess Cost grant also reimburses school districts for students placed by state agencies.<sup>3</sup> In these cases, the basic contribution is 100% of the school district's net current expenditure per student for the prior year.<sup>4</sup>

In recent years, the funding appropriated by the State to the Excess Cost grant has not kept pace with growing reimbursement requests. This has resulted in the Excess Cost grant being chronically underfunded. Historical underfunding, coupled with inflation-driven rising costs, has added an increased burden on school districts educating students with extraordinary needs and requiring high-cost special education services.

---

<sup>1</sup> Connecticut State Department of Education. (n.d.). EdSight: Special Education Expenditures. Retrieved from <https://public-edsight.ct.gov/overview/per-pupil-expenditures-by-function--district/special-education-expenditures>.

<sup>2</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 165, §§ 10-76g(a)-76g(b).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 165, § 10-76d(e).

## Key Findings from December 1, 2025 Excess Cost Grant Filings<sup>5</sup>

- **For the 2025-26 school year, districts' Excess Cost grant reimbursement requests have increased over the previous year.**
  - Total Excess Cost grant reimbursement requests from districts have grown from \$299,123,458 last year (2024-25 school year) to \$311,912,988 — an increase of approximately \$12.8 million (4.3%).
  - While this growth rate is less than historical trends, the March 1st filing (second of the school year) from school districts is expected to contain further increases in reimbursement requests.
- **The Excess Cost grant remains underfunded.**
  - Since its inception, the Excess Cost grant has failed to fully reimburse districts' requests.
  - An appropriation increase of approximately \$55.6 million is required to fully fund the Excess Cost grant to its statutory minimum tiers.
  - Under the grant's current tiered system, districts should be reimbursed for between 85% and 91% of their total eligible costs. However, due to the underfunding of the Excess Cost grant, districts are projected to be reimbursed for between 70.8% and 75.8% of their eligible costs, far beneath the statutory tiers.
- **The underfunding of the Excess Cost grant puts additional pressure on already limited district budgets.**
  - Special education spending continues to grow faster than general education budgets, shifting resources toward mandated services while leaving fewer dollars for other district needs.

---

<sup>5</sup> For more detailed information on the Excess Cost grant, please visit <https://schoolstatefinance.org/hubfs/Reports/Excess%20Cost%20Grant%20FAQs.pdf>.

## Appendix

The table below provides the estimated Excess Cost grant funding (Column 2) and reimbursement requests (Column 1) for each school district for the 2025-26 school year. The table also provides the estimated Excess Cost grant for each district if the grant was funded according to its statutory tiers (Column 3), as well as the shortfall between each district's actual estimated grant and what it should receive under the grant's tiered system (Column 4).

**Table 1: Projected 2025-26 Excess Cost Grants Based on December 1st Filing**

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
District	Total Excess Cost Reimbursement Request	Est. Actual Excess Cost Grant	Est. Tiered Excess Cost Grant	Shortfall Between Tiered Grant and Actual Grant (Column 3 - Column 2)
<b>Ansonia</b>	\$3,143,970	\$2,286,326	\$2,861,013	\$574,687
<b>Ashford</b>	\$224,187	\$163,032	\$204,010	\$40,978
<b>Avon</b>	\$2,016,146	\$1,369,490	\$1,713,724	\$344,234
<b>Barkhamsted</b>	\$51,818	\$36,441	\$45,600	\$9,159
<b>Berlin</b>	\$1,235,297	\$868,704	\$1,087,061	\$218,357
<b>Bethany</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Bethel</b>	\$2,106,469	\$1,481,343	\$1,853,693	\$372,350
<b>Bloomfield</b>	\$1,128,711	\$793,749	\$993,266	\$199,517
<b>Bolton</b>	\$56,061	\$39,423	\$49,334	\$9,911
<b>Bozrah</b>	\$24,039	\$16,905	\$21,154	\$4,249
<b>Branford</b>	\$1,583,443	\$1,075,573	\$1,345,927	\$270,354
<b>Bridgeport</b>	\$13,524,300	\$9,834,999	\$12,307,113	\$2,472,114
<b>Bristol</b>	\$10,358,379	\$7,532,711	\$9,426,125	\$1,893,414
<b>Brookfield</b>	\$1,886,742	\$1,281,593	\$1,603,731	\$322,138
<b>Brooklyn</b>	\$692,338	\$503,474	\$630,028	\$126,554
<b>Canterbury</b>	\$155,934	\$113,397	\$141,900	\$28,503
<b>Canterbury</b>	\$1,081,549	\$760,584	\$951,763	\$191,179
<b>Chaplin</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Cheshire</b>	\$1,707,806	\$1,200,990	\$1,502,869	\$301,879
<b>Chester</b>	\$106,446	\$74,858	\$93,672	\$18,814
<b>Clinton</b>	\$849,956	\$597,720	\$747,961	\$150,241
<b>Colchester</b>	\$1,168,985	\$850,097	\$1,063,776	\$213,679
<b>Columbia</b>	\$56,442	\$39,691	\$49,669	\$9,978
<b>Coventry</b>	\$589,537	\$414,584	\$518,793	\$104,209
<b>Cromwell</b>	\$1,673,736	\$1,177,032	\$1,472,888	\$295,856

District	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
District	Total Excess Cost Reimbursement Request	Est. Actual Excess Cost Grant	Est. Tiered Excess Cost Grant	Shortfall Between Tiered Grant and Actual Grant (Column 3 - Column 2)
<b>Danbury</b>	\$2,870,628	\$2,087,548	\$2,612,271	\$524,723
<b>Darien</b>	\$3,500,781	\$2,377,946	\$2,975,664	\$597,718
<b>Deep River</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Derby</b>	\$948,487	\$689,748	\$863,123	\$173,375
<b>East Granby</b>	\$649,279	\$456,597	\$571,366	\$114,769
<b>East Haddam</b>	\$620,202	\$436,148	\$545,778	\$109,630
<b>East Hampton</b>	\$956,971	\$672,976	\$842,134	\$169,158
<b>East Hartford</b>	\$2,161,391	\$1,571,784	\$1,966,866	\$395,082
<b>East Haven</b>	\$2,764,662	\$2,010,487	\$2,515,842	\$505,355
<b>East Lyme</b>	\$955,995	\$672,290	\$841,276	\$168,986
<b>East Windsor</b>	\$479,557	\$337,241	\$422,010	\$84,769
<b>Easton</b>	\$25,933	\$17,614	\$22,043	\$4,429
<b>Ellington</b>	\$972,221	\$683,700	\$855,554	\$171,854
<b>Enfield</b>	\$2,746,612	\$1,997,362	\$2,499,417	\$502,055
<b>Essex</b>	\$52,685	\$35,786	\$44,782	\$8,996
<b>Fairfield</b>	\$3,679,942	\$2,499,644	\$3,127,951	\$628,307
<b>Farmington</b>	\$2,098,317	\$1,425,305	\$1,783,569	\$358,264
<b>Franklin</b>	\$86,373	\$60,739	\$76,008	\$15,269
<b>Glastonbury</b>	\$3,545,408	\$2,408,260	\$3,013,597	\$605,337
<b>Granby</b>	\$1,004,886	\$706,672	\$884,300	\$177,628
<b>Greenwich</b>	\$2,436,613	\$1,655,097	\$2,071,121	\$416,024
<b>Griswold</b>	\$1,814,898	\$1,319,811	\$1,651,557	\$331,746
<b>Groton</b>	\$1,315,347	\$924,999	\$1,157,505	\$232,506
<b>Guilford</b>	\$1,096,494	\$744,807	\$932,020	\$187,213
<b>Hamden</b>	\$6,811,888	\$4,953,669	\$6,198,818	\$1,245,149
<b>Hartford</b>	\$17,130,049	\$12,457,135	\$15,588,345	\$3,131,210
<b>Hartland</b>	\$40,312	\$28,350	\$35,475	\$7,125
<b>Hebron</b>	\$216,062	\$151,942	\$190,135	\$38,193
<b>Killingly</b>	\$1,523,291	\$1,107,753	\$1,386,195	\$278,442
<b>Lebanon</b>	\$411,411	\$289,320	\$362,042	\$72,722
<b>Ledyard</b>	\$791,691	\$575,725	\$720,439	\$144,714
<b>Lisbon</b>	\$575,241	\$418,321	\$523,469	\$105,148
<b>Madison</b>	\$1,223,327	\$830,959	\$1,039,828	\$208,869
<b>Manchester</b>	\$5,780,310	\$4,203,496	\$5,260,082	\$1,056,586

District	Column 1 Total Excess Cost Reimbursement Request	Column 2 Est. Actual Excess Cost Grant	Column 3 Est. Tiered Excess Cost Grant	Column 4 Shortfall Between Tiered Grant and Actual Grant (Column 3 - Column 2)
<b>Mansfield</b>	\$91,294	\$66,391	\$83,078	\$16,687
<b>Meriden</b>	\$7,904,889	\$5,748,511	\$7,193,449	\$1,444,938
<b>Middletown</b>	\$2,757,472	\$2,005,260	\$2,509,300	\$504,040
<b>Milford</b>	\$2,897,859	\$1,968,404	\$2,463,180	\$494,776
<b>Monroe</b>	\$2,013,055	\$1,367,391	\$1,711,097	\$343,706
<b>Montville</b>	\$1,285,270	\$934,660	\$1,169,596	\$234,936
<b>Naugatuck</b>	\$3,389,072	\$2,464,566	\$3,084,056	\$619,490
<b>New Britain</b>	\$17,904,425	\$13,020,269	\$16,293,027	\$3,272,758
<b>New Canaan</b>	\$1,005,084	\$682,714	\$854,321	\$171,607
<b>New Fairfield</b>	\$1,978,782	\$1,344,112	\$1,681,965	\$337,853
<b>New Hartford</b>	\$95,169	\$66,926	\$83,749	\$16,823
<b>New Haven</b>	\$13,117,945	\$9,539,494	\$11,937,330	\$2,397,836
<b>New London</b>	\$1,440,433	\$1,047,498	\$1,310,794	\$263,296
<b>New Milford</b>	\$3,054,362	\$2,147,935	\$2,687,839	\$539,904
<b>Newington</b>	\$2,432,198	\$1,710,408	\$2,140,334	\$429,926
<b>Newtown</b>	\$2,938,799	\$1,996,214	\$2,497,979	\$501,765
<b>Norfolk</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>North Branford</b>	\$643,507	\$452,537	\$566,286	\$113,749
<b>North Haven</b>	\$1,255,669	\$852,928	\$1,067,319	\$214,391
<b>North Stonington</b>	\$43,859	\$30,844	\$38,596	\$7,752
<b>Norwalk</b>	\$7,699,148	\$5,229,735	\$6,544,276	\$1,314,541
<b>Norwich</b>	\$3,519,284	\$2,559,256	\$3,202,548	\$643,292
<b>Old Saybrook</b>	\$153,219	\$104,077	\$130,236	\$26,159
<b>Orange</b>	\$295,922	\$201,009	\$251,534	\$50,525
<b>Oxford</b>	\$1,081,259	\$734,458	\$919,070	\$184,612
<b>Plainfield</b>	\$609,006	\$442,874	\$554,195	\$111,321
<b>Plainville</b>	\$1,104,873	\$803,474	\$1,005,434	\$201,960
<b>Plymouth</b>	\$754,819	\$548,912	\$686,885	\$137,973
<b>Pomfret</b>	\$637,204	\$448,106	\$560,740	\$112,634
<b>Portland</b>	\$695,069	\$505,460	\$632,513	\$127,053
<b>Preston</b>	\$268,085	\$188,527	\$235,915	\$47,388
<b>Putnam</b>	\$1,198,953	\$871,891	\$1,091,047	\$219,156
<b>Redding</b>	\$336,950	\$228,877	\$286,408	\$57,531
<b>Region #1</b>	\$260,910	\$177,228	\$221,774	\$44,546

District	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
District	Total Excess Cost Reimbursement Request	Est. Actual Excess Cost Grant	Est. Tiered Excess Cost Grant	Shortfall Between Tiered Grant and Actual Grant (Column 3 - Column 2)
<b>Region #4</b>	\$289,788	\$196,843	\$246,320	\$49,477
<b>Region #5</b>	\$1,402,461	\$952,637	\$1,192,092	\$239,455
<b>Region #7</b>	\$488,618	\$343,614	\$429,984	\$86,370
<b>Region #8</b>	\$568,657	\$399,900	\$500,418	\$100,518
<b>Region #9</b>	\$992,219	\$673,975	\$843,386	\$169,411
<b>Region #10</b>	\$1,726,178	\$1,213,910	\$1,519,037	\$305,127
<b>Region #11</b>	\$100,564	\$73,131	\$91,513	\$18,382
<b>Region #12</b>	\$6,018	\$3,083	\$5,115	\$2,032
<b>Region #13</b>	\$929,300	\$653,517	\$817,784	\$164,267
<b>Region #14</b>	\$678,759	\$461,055	\$576,945	\$115,890
<b>Region #15</b>	\$3,230,565	\$2,194,399	\$2,745,980	\$551,581
<b>Region #16</b>	\$950,658	\$668,536	\$836,579	\$168,043
<b>Region #17</b>	\$1,289,579	\$875,962	\$1,096,142	\$220,180
<b>Region #18</b>	\$493,200	\$335,012	\$419,220	\$84,208
<b>Region #19</b>	\$158,966	\$115,601	\$144,659	\$29,058
<b>Region #20</b>	\$190,022	\$129,074	\$161,519	\$32,445
<b>Ridgefield</b>	\$1,794,897	\$1,219,204	\$1,525,662	\$306,458
<b>Rocky Hill</b>	\$1,884,172	\$1,325,016	\$1,658,071	\$333,055
<b>Salem</b>	\$75,508	\$53,100	\$66,447	\$13,347
<b>Salisbury</b>	\$10,292	\$6,992	\$8,748	\$1,756
<b>Seymour</b>	\$1,342,695	\$976,421	\$1,221,852	\$245,431
<b>Shelton</b>	\$3,068,737	\$2,158,045	\$2,700,489	\$542,444
<b>Sherman</b>	\$116,518	\$79,145	\$99,040	\$19,895
<b>Simsbury</b>	\$3,560,128	\$2,418,259	\$3,026,109	\$607,850
<b>Somers</b>	\$451,235	\$328,142	\$410,624	\$82,482
<b>South Windsor</b>	\$2,284,810	\$1,551,984	\$1,942,089	\$390,105
<b>Southington</b>	\$4,745,277	\$3,337,047	\$4,175,844	\$838,797
<b>Sprague</b>	\$394,683	\$287,018	\$359,162	\$72,144
<b>Stafford</b>	\$661,491	\$481,042	\$601,957	\$120,915
<b>Stamford</b>	\$10,940,068	\$7,431,168	\$9,299,058	\$1,867,890
<b>Sterling</b>	\$425,299	\$309,282	\$387,022	\$77,740
<b>Stonington</b>	\$476,468	\$323,646	\$404,998	\$81,352
<b>Stratford</b>	\$4,875,291	\$3,428,478	\$4,290,256	\$861,778
<b>Suffield</b>	\$2,062,599	\$1,450,493	\$1,815,087	\$364,594

District	Column 1 Total Excess Cost Reimbursement Request	Column 2 Est. Actual Excess Cost Grant	Column 3 Est. Tiered Excess Cost Grant	Column 4 Shortfall Between Tiered Grant and Actual Grant (Column 3 - Column 2)
<b>Thomaston</b>	\$541,623	\$393,874	\$492,877	\$99,003
<b>Thompson</b>	\$135,470	\$98,516	\$123,278	\$24,762
<b>Tolland</b>	\$1,570,299	\$1,104,290	\$1,381,863	\$277,573
<b>Torrington</b>	\$4,254,074	\$3,093,603	\$3,871,207	\$777,604
<b>Trumbull</b>	\$3,133,578	\$2,203,644	\$2,757,549	\$553,905
<b>Vernon</b>	\$1,679,405	\$1,221,280	\$1,528,259	\$306,979
<b>Voluntown</b>	\$16,160	\$11,753	\$14,706	\$2,953
<b>Wallingford</b>	\$3,045,537	\$2,141,731	\$2,680,073	\$538,342
<b>Waterbury</b>	\$6,660,471	\$4,843,558	\$6,061,029	\$1,217,471
<b>Waterford</b>	\$1,219,681	\$828,483	\$1,036,729	\$208,246
<b>Watertown</b>	\$2,190,590	\$1,593,018	\$1,993,437	\$400,419
<b>West Hartford</b>	\$9,653,040	\$6,556,940	\$8,205,084	\$1,648,144
<b>West Haven</b>	\$7,744,221	\$5,631,671	\$7,047,241	\$1,415,570
<b>Westbrook</b>	\$53,715	\$36,487	\$45,658	\$9,171
<b>Weston</b>	\$854,373	\$580,342	\$726,217	\$145,875
<b>Westport</b>	\$1,531,975	\$1,040,612	\$1,302,179	\$261,567
<b>Wethersfield</b>	\$2,893,421	\$2,034,755	\$2,546,210	\$511,455
<b>Willington</b>	\$497,682	\$361,920	\$452,891	\$90,971
<b>Wilton</b>	\$2,452,545	\$1,665,919	\$2,084,663	\$418,744
<b>Winchester</b>	\$1,686,309	\$1,226,299	\$1,534,541	\$308,242
<b>Windham</b>	\$1,268,416	\$922,406	\$1,154,259	\$231,853
<b>Windsor</b>	\$1,568,362	\$1,102,928	\$1,380,159	\$277,231
<b>Windsor Locks</b>	\$662,440	\$465,851	\$582,947	\$117,096
<b>Wolcott</b>	\$1,683,848	\$1,224,511	\$1,532,302	\$307,791
<b>Woodbridge</b>	\$207,824	\$141,167	\$176,650	\$35,483
<b>Woodstock</b>	\$468,810	\$329,683	\$412,553	\$82,870