

September 12, 2024

### **What are Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs), and how many are there?**

Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs), established in state statute in 1972,<sup>1</sup> are voluntary regional partnerships made up of local and regional school districts created to provide cost-effective education resources, programs, and services.<sup>2</sup> There are six RESCs in Connecticut:<sup>3</sup>

- Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES), which covers south-central Connecticut and includes most of New Haven County;
- Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), which covers north-central Connecticut and includes most of Hartford County;
- Cooperative Educational Services (C.E.S.), which covers lower Fairfield County;
- EASTCONN, which covers northeast Connecticut and includes all of Windham County, most of Tolland County, and upper New London County;
- EdAdvance, which covers northwest Connecticut and includes most of Litchfield County and upper Fairfield County; and
- LEARN, which covers southeast Connecticut and includes parts of New London, Middlesex, and New Haven Counties.

### **What do RESCs do? What programs/services do they offer?**

RESCs offer fee-based services and programs<sup>4</sup> to public and private school districts, municipalities, and nonprofits.<sup>5</sup> The programs and services are tailored to the needs of the RESC's members and can vary from one RESC to another.<sup>6</sup> The RESC Alliance<sup>A</sup> provides 14 examples of programs offered by RESCs:<sup>7</sup>

- Adult Education and Job Training;
- Advocacy;
- Cooperative Purchasing;
- Curriculum Development and Assistance;
- Data Systems Design and Support;
- Early Childhood Programs, Coaching, and Support;
- Magnet Schools and Choice Programs;
- Diversifying the Educator Workforce;
- Professional Learning;
- Regional Transportation;
- School Construction Support;
- School Improvement Support;
- Special Education and Related Services; and
- Technology Support and Training.

---

<sup>A</sup> The six RESCs created the RESC Alliance in the 1990s to improve collaboration amongst themselves. The RESC Alliance develops programs that address statewide public education issues and advocates at the state legislature.

RESC Alliance (n.d.). About Us. Retrieved from <https://www.rescalliance.org/about>.

School districts, towns, and nonprofit organizations taking advantage of a RESC's cooperative purchasing services — whether located in the RESC's geographic region or not<sup>8</sup> — can, for instance, take advantage of construction services such as construction development and planning, budgeting, and forecasting, energy efficiency measures, remote monitoring, and closeout services,<sup>9</sup> or purchase classroom materials or fuel oil.<sup>10</sup>

### Do RESCs operate magnet schools?

RESCs are considered local education agencies (LEAs)<sup>11</sup> and are eligible to operate interdistrict magnet schools.<sup>12</sup> All RESCs except EdAdvance operate interdistrict magnet schools.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, most RESCs operate special education schools for developmental, social-emotional, and behavioral disabilities<sup>14</sup> or hearing loss.<sup>15</sup>

Magnet schools are a type of public school choice program intended to promote racial, ethnic, and economic diversity and offer students a specialized and high-quality curriculum.<sup>16</sup> Interdistrict magnet schools can serve students across district lines, as well as students residing in the district in which the school is located.<sup>17</sup>

The use of state-funded interdistrict magnet schools was increased to meet the State of Connecticut's obligations under the Connecticut Supreme Court's 1996 ruling in *Sheff v. O'Neill* and the case's subsequent stipulated agreements and permanent injunction.<sup>18</sup> Currently, only RESCs and local boards of education operate interdistrict magnet schools.

### How are RESCs governed?

Each RESC is governed by a board of representatives from participating boards of education.<sup>19</sup> The RESC board is authorized to: carry debt; receive and disburse public and private funds; employ personnel; enter into contracts; receive, hold, and convey real or personal property; and otherwise provide the services and activities agreed upon by the member boards of education.<sup>20</sup> The RESC board may create and delegate these powers to an executive board.<sup>21</sup> Boards of education not located within the geographical area of a RESC can join with the approval of a majority of a RESC's board.<sup>22</sup> Board members are not compensated for their service but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses.<sup>23</sup>

### How are RESCs funded?

All RESCs typically have similar funding sources. However, the degree to which a RESC relies on each source varies from one to the other. Generally, RESCs rely on a combination of: state and federal grants and contracts;<sup>24</sup> member dues;<sup>25</sup> fee-for-service work for member districts, out-of-district LEAs, municipalities, and state agencies;<sup>26</sup> and private donations and fundraising.<sup>27</sup> The State allocated approximately \$225 million<sup>28</sup> to RESCs in FY 2024. However, with budgets ranging from approximately \$47,197,648<sup>29</sup> to over \$400,951,382,<sup>30</sup> state funding is often a small portion of overall RESC funding.<sup>31</sup>

Connecticut statutes provide an annual magnet school operating grant for RESCs, which is distributed to interdistrict magnet schools by the Connecticut State Department of

Education (CSDE) on a per-student basis.<sup>32</sup> A RESC magnet school's funding from this grant is determined by the percentage of students attending the magnet school from a single school district and whether or not the school is in the *Sheff* region.<sup>33</sup> The state magnet school operating grants are structured to reduce student racial, ethnic, and economic isolation by offering higher grant amounts for schools that maintain a higher percentage of students who do not reside in the district where the interdistrict magnet school is located.<sup>34</sup> The distribution percentages for the magnet school operating grant are as follows:

- 50 percent of the grant appropriation is divided equally among the RESCs;<sup>35</sup>
- 25 percent of the grant appropriation is multiplied by the ratio of the number of the RESC's member boards of education to the total number of statewide boards of education;<sup>36</sup> and
- The final 25 percent is multiplied by the ratio of the sum of the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grants for the RESC's member boards of education to the total ECS appropriation.<sup>37</sup>

For state-funded operating grants, funding for RESC magnet schools<sup>B</sup> is divided into two overarching categories: *Sheff* and non-*Sheff* regions.<sup>38</sup> Funding for both depends on the sending districts for the RESC magnet school's students.

RESC-operated *Sheff* magnet schools with less than 60 percent of their students from Hartford receive more than RESC-operated *Sheff* magnets with more than 60 percent of their students from Hartford. Similarly, RESC-operated non-*Sheff* magnet schools with less than 55 percent of their students from a single town receive more than RESC-operated non-*Sheff* magnets with more than 55 percent of their students from a single town.

These formulas, summarized in the table on the following page, encourage a more diverse student population at interdistrict magnet schools.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>B</sup> For more information about magnet school funding, please see: School and State Finance Project. (2023). *Guide to Connecticut's Magnet Schools*. Hamden, CT: Author. Retrieved from <https://schoolstatefinance.org/resource-assets/Guide-to-CTs-Magnet-Schools.pdf>.

Table 140

	Operator	Enrollment Criteria	FY 2025		FY 2026 and each FY thereafter	
			In-district (or dominant district) Per-Student Grant	Out-of-district (or non-dominant district) Per-Student Grant	In-district (or dominant district) Per-Student Grant	Out-of-district (or non-dominant district) Per-Student Grant
Non-Sheff	RESC	Less than 55 percent of enrollment from a single district	At least \$8,058	Operators receive phased-in, ECS-based funding from the State based on sending town demographics.  FY 2025 grant equals the school's FY 2024 grant per student + 42% of the difference between FY 2024 and ECS-based weighted funding.	There is no funding formula currently in statute.	There is no funding formula currently in statute.
	RESC	At least 55 percent of enrollment from a single district	At least \$3,060	Operators receive phased-in, ECS-based funding from the State based on sending town demographics.  FY 2025 grant equals the school's FY 2024 grant per student + 42% of the difference between FY 2024 and ECS-based weighted funding.	There is no funding formula currently in statute.	There is no funding formula currently in statute.

	Operator	Enrollment Criteria	FY 2025		FY 2026 and each FY thereafter	
			In-district (or dominant district) Per-Student Grant	Out-of-district (or non-dominant district) Per-Student Grant	In-district (or dominant district) Per-Student Grant	Out-of-district (or non-dominant district) Per-Student Grant
Sheff <sup>c</sup>	RESC (or non-local public school district, or Great Path Academy)	Between 50 and 60 percent of enrollment from Hartford	At least \$10,652	Operators receive phased-in, ECS-based funding from the State based on sending town demographics.  FY 2025 grant equals the school's FY 2024 grant per student + 42% of the difference between FY 2024 and ECS-based weighted funding.	There is no funding formula currently in statute.	There is no funding formula currently in statute.
	RESC (or non-local public school district, or Great Path Academy) for 2015-16 and later classes	Less than 50 percent of enrollment from Hartford	At least \$10,652	Operators receive phased-in, ECS-based funding from the State based on sending town demographics.  FY 2025 grant equals the school's FY 2024 grant per student + 42% of the difference between FY 2024 and ECS-based weighted funding.	There is no funding formula currently in statute.	There is no funding formula currently in statute.

<sup>c</sup> The information provided in this row also reflects Goodwin University Magnet Schools (GUMS).

### Funding Changes for FY 2025

In 2024, the General Assembly passed Public Act 24-81, which partially extended student-centered, ECS-based funding to students attending RESC magnet schools for FY 2025, and allocated \$36.8 million of an additional \$150 million in funding for K-12 education to RESC magnet schools. As a result, students at RESC magnet schools will receive 42 percent of their full weighted funding amount and — for the first time in state history — all public school students will be funded based on their individual learning needs. Additionally, Public Act 24-81 provided an additional \$1.2 million to Goodwin University Magnet Schools to assist with enrollment expansion and costs associated with the *Sheff v. O'Neill* settlement.<sup>41</sup>

While the exact impact these additional funds will have on RESCs is unclear at this time, it is expected the additional \$36.8 million for RESC magnet schools will be used to increase per-student grant amounts. However, as statutory language only extends student-centered, ECS-based funding to RESC magnet schools for FY 2025, it is unclear how state funding for RESCs will be impacted beyond FY 2025.

### General Education Tuition

RESC-operated interdistrict magnet schools can also charge tuition to sending districts.<sup>42</sup> The amount of tuition charged cannot bring a RESC's average spending per-student above 120 percent of the statewide average per-student expenditure.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, beginning in FY 2025, the per-student amount of general education tuition a magnet school operator may charge a sending district is capped. For FY 2025 and future years, the per-student tuition amount an operator of a magnet school may charge a local or regional school district can be no more than 58 percent of the per-student tuition amount the operator charged in FY 2024.<sup>44</sup>

**Table 2<sup>45</sup>**

	Operator	Tuition Amounts and Limits, FY 2025 and Beyond
Non-Sheff	RESC (or non-local public school district, or Great Path Academy)	Operators can charge up to 58% of the per-student general education tuition it charged in FY 2024.
Sheff <sup>D</sup>	RESC (or non-local public school district, or Great Path Academy)	Operators can charge up to 58% of the per-student general education tuition it charged in FY 2024.

<sup>D</sup> The information provided in this row also applies to Goodwin University Magnet Schools (GUMS).

### Student Transportation

State statute also provides transportation grants through the CSDE on a per-student basis for students attending interdistrict magnet schools outside of the district in which they reside.<sup>46</sup> These grant amounts differ depending on whether or not a magnet school is in the *Sheff* region.<sup>47</sup>

**Table 3<sup>48</sup>**

Per-Student Transportation Grants for Interdistrict Magnet Schools	
Operator Type	Per-Student Grant Amounts
Host Districts and RESCs	\$1,300
CREC and host districts assisting the State in meeting the requirements of the <i>Sheff</i> Stipulated Agreements and Permanent Injunction	\$2,000 plus any additional supplemental grants within available appropriations. All state transportation funding is currently directed to CREC.

Currently, the General Assembly appropriates funds for schools in both *Sheff* and non-*Sheff* regions. Magnet schools operating in the *Sheff* region received \$70.8 million for transportation in FY 2024 and are expected to receive \$75.5 million in FY 2025. Magnet schools operated outside the *Sheff* region received \$14.9 million for transportation in FY 2024 and are expected to receive \$15.7 million in FY 2025.<sup>49</sup>

For students attending an interdistrict magnet school in the same district in which they reside, the local or regional board of education is required to provide the same kind of transportation to students attending the interdistrict magnet school as it provides for students attending its local or regional public schools.<sup>50</sup>

## Endnotes

---

- <sup>1</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-66ca.
- <sup>2</sup> RESC Alliance. (n.d.). About Us. Retrieved from <http://www.rescalliance.org/about/>.
- <sup>3</sup> RESC Alliance. (n.d.). Find Your RESC. Retrieved from <http://www.rescalliance.org/>.
- <sup>4</sup> RESC Alliance. (n.d.). About Us. Retrieved from <http://www.rescalliance.org/about/>.
- <sup>5</sup> Connecticut Association of School Business Officials. (2015). *Shared Service Whitepaper*. West Hartford, CT: Author.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> RESC Alliance. (n.d.). RESC Programs & Services. Retrieved from <http://www.rescalliance.org/programs/>.
- <sup>8</sup> Capitol Region Education Council. (2018). *2017-2018 Annual Report*. Hartford, CT: Author. Retrieved from [http://www.crec.org/about/docs/annual/AR\\_2018.pdf](http://www.crec.org/about/docs/annual/AR_2018.pdf).
- <sup>9</sup> Connecticut Association of School Business Officials. (2015). *Shared Service Whitepaper*. West Hartford, CT: Author.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> RESC Alliance. (2013). *Connecticut's Regional Educational Service Centers* [PowerPoint slides]. Hartford, CT: Author.
- <sup>12</sup> Moran, J.D., & Bolger, A. (2018). *Comparison of Charter, Magnet, Agricultural Science Centers, and Technical High Schools* (2018-R-0030). Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research. Retrieved from <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2018/rpt/pdf/2018-R-0030.pdf>.
- <sup>13</sup> Connecticut State Department of Education. (n.d.). EdSight: Enrollment Dashboard. Available from [https://public-edsight.ct.gov/students/enrollment-dashboard?language=en\\_US](https://public-edsight.ct.gov/students/enrollment-dashboard?language=en_US).
- <sup>14</sup> LEARN. (n.d.). Student Support Services. Retrieved from <http://learnstudentsupportservices.org/>.
- <sup>15</sup> CREC. (n.d.). Soundbridge. Retrieved from <https://www.crec.org/soundbridge/>.
- <sup>16</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264l.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Lohman, J. (2010). *OLR Backgrounder: State Funding for Interdistrict Magnet Schools* (2010-R-0399). Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research. Retrieved from <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2010/rpt/2010-r-0399.htm>.
- <sup>19</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66b.
- <sup>20</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66c.
- <sup>21</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66b.
- <sup>22</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66l.
- <sup>23</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66b.
- <sup>24</sup> EdAdvance. (2019). *Annual Report 2019*. Litchfield, CT: Author.
- <sup>25</sup> Capitol Region Education Council. (2018). *2017-2018 Annual Report*. Hartford, CT: Author. Retrieved from [http://www.crec.org/about/docs/annual/AR\\_2018.pdf](http://www.crec.org/about/docs/annual/AR_2018.pdf).
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>27</sup> Cooperative Educational Services. (2019). *2018-19 Annual Report*. Trumbull, CT: Author. Retrieved from <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1568043244/ces/ham3prpa3pjgfdlgddvj/cesannualreport2018-19.pdf>.
- <sup>28</sup> Conn. Acts 23-204.
- <sup>29</sup> EdAdvance. (2023). *Annual Report 2022-2023*. Litchfield, CT: Author. Retrieved from <https://s3.amazonaws.com/s3.edadvance.org/About+Us/Publications%2C+Media+%26+Other+Resources/Annual+Reports/Annual+Report+2022-2023.pdf>.
- <sup>30</sup> CREC. (2023). *Annual Report, 2023-2024*. Hartford, CT: Author. Retrieved from [https://www.crec.org/about/docs/annual/AR\\_2023.pdf](https://www.crec.org/about/docs/annual/AR_2023.pdf).
- <sup>31</sup> State of Connecticut, Office of the State Comptroller. (n.d.). Open Budget: Regional Education Services. Available from <https://openbudget.ct.gov/#!/year/default>.
- <sup>32</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66j(b).
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66j(b)(1).
- <sup>36</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66j(b)(2).
- <sup>37</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66j(b)(3).
- <sup>38</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264l.



---

<sup>39</sup> Lohman, J. (2010). *OLR Backgrounder: State Funding for Interdistrict Magnet Schools* (2010-R-0399). Hartford, CT: Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research. Retrieved from <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2010/rpt/2010-r-0399.htm>.

<sup>40</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i.

<sup>41</sup> Conn. Acts 24-81.

<sup>42</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Conn. Acts 24-81.

<sup>45</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Conn. Acts 23-204.

<sup>50</sup> Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i.