

Although a number of positive steps have been taken by the General Assembly over the past few years to improve how Connecticut funds K-12 public education, the state's education finance system remains inequitable, disjointed, and inadequate.

This is why we are working collaboratively with legislative leaders, education advocates, municipal officials, and community and business leaders across Connecticut to build upon the historic \$150 million investment in K-12 education the General Assembly committed to for fiscal year 2025, and pass a student-centered funding system that will reduce disparities in state education funding, address the state's severe labor and skill shortage, and ensure every child has access to a high-quality education that allows them to reach their full potential.

If passed, H.B. 5212 would:

- **Protect \$150 million investment** in K-12 education for FY 2025
- **Maintain accelerated phase-in schedule** for Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant and fully funds grant beginning in FY 2026
- **Expand ECS weighted funding to students attending public schools of choice** (magnet schools, charter schools, AgriScience programs, and the Open Choice program) while protecting funding for local public schools
- **Fully fund ALL public school students**, according to their needs, effective FY 2026
- **Save local districts tens of millions of dollars annually** by maintaining cap on general education tuition charged by magnet school operators and AgriScience programs in FY 2025 before eliminating tuition altogether in FY 2026

Below is a brief summary of each section of H.B. 5212. The summary reflects substitute bill language, with new policy revisions included in [blue](#).

Section	Policy Change(s)
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1</b> <i>(NEW)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates a choice program grant for students attending interdistrict magnet schools and Agricultural Science and Technology Education (ASTE) programs, starting in FY 2025.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The grant is calculated using the ECS foundation of \$11,525 multiplied by the Total Need Student count based on the prior year enrollment.</li> <li>○ Total Need Students has the same definition as that employed in the ECS formula. The base is the resident student count, which is then modified as follows: an</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Section	Policy Change(s)
	<p>additional weight of 30% for each student who is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL), an additional 15% for each student who resides in a district where 60% or more of the students qualify for FRPL, and an additional 25% for each student who is a multilingual learner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Districts educating students as part of the Open Choice program will receive funding based on the above formula starting in FY 2026.</li> <li>• Districts participating in interdistrict magnet schools operated by local or regional boards of education, ASTE programs, and the Open Choice program (in FY 2026) will receive a choice program grant for each student participating in an amount equal to the ECS grant of the sending district, which is reflective of community need.</li> <li>• <b><i>This system is phased-in at 42% of the additional funding in FY 2025, before being fully funded in FY 2026.</i></b></li> <li>• Districts educating in-district students as part of an ASTE program or magnet school receive the same per-student grant in FY 2025 for these students as the operators received in FY 2024.</li> <li>• Operators of interdistrict magnet schools not operated by local or regional boards of education receive the following choice program grant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ECS foundation multiplied by Total Need Students based on the prior year enrollment of the magnet school.</li> <li>○ The calculation of Total Need Students is the same for other public choice programs as summarized above.</li> <li>○ However, an additional percentage per student is added to an interdistrict magnet school operator's Total Need Student count if the magnet school is assisting the State in meeting its obligations under the <i>Sheff v. O'Neill</i> court case.</li> <li>○ The additional <i>Sheff</i> magnet percentage is 30% in FY 2025 and decreases 2 percentage points each year beginning in FY 2027 until it reaches 20% for FY 2031 and subsequent years.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provides annual growth for RESC choice grants starting in FY 2027 by increasing the foundation by the greater of the increase in personal income or the percentage increase in inflation.</li> <li>• Holds all choice operators (interdistrict magnet school operators and operators of ASTE programs) harmless if the choice grant is less than FY 2024 state aid plus tuition per student.</li> </ul>

Section	Policy Change(s)
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2</b> (NEW)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires the State Department of Education to calculate estimated choice program grants for FY 2025, and annually thereafter, for local public school districts, interdistrict magnet schools, ASTE programs, and charter schools.</li> <li>• Requires the Department to provide estimated FY 2025 grants to each district or choice program operator by June 30, 2024.</li> <li>• Requires the Department to provide estimated grants to each district or choice program operator for future years by February 1<sup>st</sup> of the prior fiscal year.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b> CGS 10-264I</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarifies current practice that students enrolled in interdistrict magnet schools are counted in the ECS Resident Student Count of the district in which the student resides, starting in FY 2025.</li> <li>• Eliminates the existing interdistrict magnet school state operating grant, starting in FY 2025.</li> <li>• Maintains the current 58% tuition cap for FY 2025, then eliminates the requirement that sending towns must support the education of interdistrict magnet school students by paying regular education K-12 tuition, starting in FY 2026.</li> <li>• Maintains the ability for RESC operators who are not assisting the State in meeting the obligations of the <i>Sheff v. O'Neill</i> stipulations (Non-<i>Sheff</i> RESCs) to charge tuition under the 58% cap in FY 2025. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>This revision fixes a drafting error in the original bill language that eliminated the ability for these operators to charge tuition in FY 2025.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Removes the ability for all interdistrict magnet school operators to charge regular education K-12 tuition, starting in FY 2026.</li> <li>• Aligns preschool magnet tuition to K-12 tuition changes, through a 58% percent cap on such tuition in FY 2025 and the elimination of such tuition in FY 2026. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>This revision fixes a drafting error in the original bill language that did not fully contemplate preschool tuition as part of proposed bill.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Entitles interdistrict magnet school operators to the choice program grant created in Sec. 1 in FY 2025 (phase-in) and future years (full funding).</li> <li>• Prohibits local or regional boards of education operating <i>Sheff</i> interdistrict magnet schools from charging K-12 regular education tuition starting in FY 2026.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To the extent the foundation increases are not provided by the General Assembly, the bill allows RESCs to charge tuition in that year in an amount equal to the foundation increase.</li> <li>If RESCs charge tuition in the above scenario, RESCs are required to notify the State Department of Education of the amount of tuition charged.</li> <li>If RESCs charge tuition in the above scenario, the State Department of Education must develop an annual report of tuition and submit the report to the Education and Appropriations Committees of the General Assembly.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4</b> CGS 10-264o(b)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibits RESCs operating <i>Sheff</i> interdistrict magnet schools from charging K-12 regular education tuition starting in FY 2026.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b> CGS 10-66ee(d)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides full funding of the charter school weighted grant formula in FY 2026 and future years.</li> <li>Provides annual growth for charter school grants starting in FY 2027 by increasing the foundation by the greater of the increase in personal income or the percentage increase in inflation.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>6</b> CGS 10-65</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminates the existing state ASTE program grant, including bonus grants above the basic per-student amount, starting in FY 2025.</li> <li>Entitles ASTE operators to the choice program grant created in Sec. 1 in FY 2025 (phase-in) and future years (full funding).</li> <li>Prohibits operators of ASTE programs from charging full-time regular education tuition starting in FY 2026.</li> <li>Clarifies that students enrolled in ASTE programs are counted in the ECS Resident Student Count of the district in which the student resides.</li> <li>Removes the statutory limit for the number of students who can enroll in a ASTE program from each sending town, as the responsibility for regular education tuition is eliminated.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-8</b> CGS 10-64(d) and CGS 10-97(b)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminates the requirement that sending towns must support the education of ASTE students by paying regular education K-12 tuition starting in FY 2025.</li> </ul>

Section	Policy Change(s)
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>9</b> CGS 10-266aa(g)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminates the existing Open Choice per-student grant, including increased per-student grants for increased participation, starting in FY 2026.</li> <li>• Entitles Open Choice receiving districts to the choice program grant created in Sec. 1 starting in FY 2026.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10</b> CGS 10-65a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures that ASTE operators receive the current full \$5,200 per-student grant in FY 2024 by removing “within available appropriations” language.</li> </ul>