

Q: What are Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) and how many are there?

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

- 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.

Q: What do RESCs do? What programs/services do they offer?

A: RESCs offer fee-based services and programs⁴ to public and private school districts, municipalities, and nonprofits.⁵ The programs and services are tailored to the needs of the RESC's members, and can vary from one RESC to another.⁶ The RESC Alliance^A provides 14 examples of programs offered by RESCs:⁷

- 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;
- Minority Recruiting;
- Professional Learning;
- Regional Transportation;
- School Construction Support;
- School Improvement Support;
- Special Education and Related Services; and
- Technology Support and Training.

^A 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 advocacy at the state legislature.

EastConn. (n.d.). Connecticut's RESC Alliance. Retrieved from <https://www.eastconn.org/resc-alliance-information>.

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,⁸ 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,⁹ or purchase classroom materials or fuel oil.¹⁰

Q: Do RESCs operate magnet schools?

A: RESCs are considered local education agencies (LEAs)¹¹ and are eligible to operate interdistrict magnet schools.¹² All RESCs except EdAdvance operate interdistrict magnet schools.¹³ 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.¹⁴ Interdistrict magnet schools can serve students across district lines, as well as students residing in the district in which the school is located.¹⁵ 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.¹⁶ Currently, only RESCs and local boards of education operate interdistrict magnet schools.

RESCs receive state, local and federal funding, with the largest source being state-funded operating grants. Funding for RESC magnet schools^B is divided into two overarching categories: *Sheff* and non-*Sheff*.¹⁷ Funding for both is dependent 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.^C These formulas, which are summarized in the table below, serve to encourage a more diverse student population.¹⁸

^B For more information about magnet school funding, please see: Connecticut School Finance Project. (2019). *Guide to Connecticut's Magnet Schools*. New Haven, CT: Author. Retrieved from <http://ctschoolfinance.org/resources/uploads/files/Guide-to-CTs-Magnet-Schools.pdf>.

^C This does not include Thomas Edison Magnet Middle School, operated by ACES, which uses a separate formula and receives a separate state grant.

Table 1¹⁹

	Operator	Enrollment Criteria	In-district (or dominant district) Per-pupil Grant	Out-of-district (or non-dominant district) Per-pupil Grant	Tuition Amounts and Limits
Non-Sheff	Host District	Between 55 and 75 percent of enrollment from a single district	\$3,060	\$7,227	Operator must apply to the CSDE and the commissioner of the CSDE must take into consideration the average per-pupil expenditure of the operator and any state grants received on a per-pupil basis before the operator can charge tuition.
	RESC	Less than 55 percent of enrollment from a single district	\$8,058	\$8,058	Operator can charge the difference between the average per-pupil expenditure from the prior fiscal year and any grants received from the State on a per-pupil basis.
	RESC	At least 55 percent of enrollment from a single district	\$3,060	\$7,227	Operator can charge the difference between the average per-pupil expenditure from the prior fiscal year and any grants received from the State on a per-pupil basis.
	RESC-operated magnet school that began operations between July 1, 2001 and July 1, 2008 (Edison Magnet School in Meriden)	Between 55 and 80 percent of enrollment from a single district	\$8,344 per student up to the number of in-district students enrolled in 2013 \$3,060 per student for students in excess of the number of in-district	\$8,344 per student up to the number of out-of-district students enrolled in 2013 \$7,227 per student for any student in excess of the number of out-of-district	Operator can charge the difference between the average per-pupil expenditure from the prior fiscal year and any grants received from the State on a per-pupil basis.

	Operator	Enrollment Criteria	In-district (or dominant district) Per-pupil Grant	Out-of-district (or non-dominant district) Per-pupil Grant	Tuition Amounts and Limits
			students enrolled in 2013	students enrolled in 2013	
Sheff	RESC (or non-local public school district, or Great Path Academy)	Between 50 and 60 percent of enrollment from Hartford	\$10,652	\$10,652	Operator can charge the difference between the average per-pupil expenditure from the prior fiscal year and any grants received from the State on a per-pupil basis.
	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	\$10,652	\$8,058 for ½ of non-Hartford students above the 50 percent enrollment \$10,652 for all other non-Hartford students	Operator can charge the difference between the average per-pupil expenditure from the prior fiscal year and any grants received from the State on a per-pupil basis.
	Host District	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	\$13,315	Operators are prohibited from charging tuition.

Interdistrict magnet schools are able to charge tuition to sending districts.²⁰ The amount of tuition charged cannot bring a RESC's average per-pupil above 120 percent of the statewide average per-pupil expenditure, which is the maximum allowable threshold.²¹ In addition, most RESCs operate special education schools that can specialize in autism spectrum disorder;²² development, social emotional, and behavior disabilities;²³ or hearing loss.²⁴

State statute provides for transportation grants through the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) on a per-pupil basis for students attending interdistrict magnet schools outside of the district in which they reside.²⁵ These grant amounts differ depending on whether or not a magnet school is in the *Sheff* region.²⁶ However, the Connecticut General Assembly has not appropriated funding for the transportation grant line item since 2016,²⁷ except, in order to comply with the *Sheff* ruling, for school choice programs in the greater Hartford region.²⁸ As a result, RESCs outside of the greater Hartford region do not receive any state funding for transportation.²⁹ If the

General Assembly restores this funding, the statutory formula would govern the distribution of the funds, as shown in Table 2.³⁰

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 the interdistrict magnet school students that it provides for students attending its local or regional public school.³¹

Table 2³²

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

Q: How are RESCs governed?

A: Each RESC is governed by a board made up of representatives from participating boards of education.³³ 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.³⁴ The RESC board may create and delegate these powers to an executive board.³⁵ Boards of education not located within geographical area of a RESC can join with the approval of a majority of a RESC's board.³⁶ Board members are not compensated for their service, but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses.³⁷

Q: How are RESCs funded?

A: 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;³⁸ member dues;³⁹ fees for service work for member districts, out-of-district LEAs, municipalities, and state agencies;⁴⁰ and private donations and fundraising.⁴¹

Connecticut statute provides for an annual grant for RESCs.⁴² A formula is applied to the total regional education services appropriation to determine each RESC's grant amount.⁴³

- 50 percent of the appropriation is divided equally among the RESCs;⁴⁴
- 25 percent of the 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;⁴⁵ and

^D Funding has not been appropriated since 2016 for school choice transportation outside of the greater Hartford/*Sheff* region.

- 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.⁴⁶

State funding to RESCs has decreased from \$1.17 million in fiscal year 2015⁴⁷ to \$262,500 in FY 2020.⁴⁸ With budgets for the RESCs ranging from approximately \$32 million⁴⁹ to over \$300 million,⁵⁰ state funding is often a small portion of overall RESC funding.⁵¹

Endnotes

- ¹ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-66ca.
- ² RESC Alliance. (n.d.). About Us. Retrieved from <http://www.rescalliance.org/about/>.
- ³ RESC Alliance. (n.d.). Find Your RESC. Retrieved from <http://www.rescalliance.org/>.
- ⁴ RESC Alliance. (n.d.). About Us. Retrieved from <http://www.rescalliance.org/about/>.
- ⁵ Connecticut Association of School Business Officials. (2015). *Shared Service Whitepaper*. West Hartford, CT: Author. Retrieved from http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.ct-asbo.org/resource/resmgr/CASBO_Shared_Services_Whitep.pdf.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ RESC Alliance. (n.d.). RESC Programs & Services. Retrieved from <http://www.rescalliance.org/programs/>.
- ⁸ Capitol Region Education Council. (2018). *2017-2018 Annual Report*. Hartford, CT: Author. Retrieved from http://www.crec.org/about/docs/annual/AR_2018.pdf.
- ⁹ Connecticut Association of School Business Officials. (2015). *Shared Service Whitepaper*. West Hartford, CT: Author. Retrieved from http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.ct-asbo.org/resource/resmgr/CASBO_Shared_Services_Whitep.pdf.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ RESC Alliance. (2013). *Connecticut's Regional Educational Service Centers* [PowerPoint slides]. Hartford, CT: Author. Retrieved from http://www2.housedems.ct.gov/more/BOE/pubs/RESC_Presentation.pdf.
- ¹² 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>.
- ¹³ Connecticut State Department of Education. (n.d.). EdSight: Public School Enrollment. Available from <http://edsight.ct.gov/SASPortal/main.do>.
- ¹⁴ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ 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>.
- ¹⁷ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i.
- ¹⁸ 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>.
- ¹⁹ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i, as amended by Conn. Acts 19-117 § 270.
- ²⁰ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² ACES, Center for Autism Spectrum and Development Disorders. (n.d.). Schools & Programs: Overview. Retrieved from <https://www.aces.org/schools-programs/special-education-schools/center-for-autism-spectrum-and-developmental-disorders/about-us/overview>.
- ²³ LEARN. (n.d.). Student Support Services. Retrieved from <http://learnstudentsupportservices.org/>.
- ²⁴ CREC. (n.d.). About Soundbridge. Retrieved from <http://www.crec.org/soundbridge/index.php>.
- ²⁵ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i.
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ State of Connecticut, Office of the State Comptroller. (n.d.). Open Budget: Transport of School Children broken down by Line-Item. Available from <http://openbudget.ct.gov/>.
- ²⁸ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i.
- ²⁹ State of Connecticut, Office of the State Comptroller. (n.d.). Open Budget: Transport of School Children broken down by Line-Item. Available from <http://openbudget.ct.gov/>.
- ³⁰ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i(f).
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 172, § 10-264i.
- ³³ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66b.
- ³⁴ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66c.
- ³⁵ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66b.
- ³⁶ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66i.
- ³⁷ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66b.

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- ³⁸ EdAdvance. (2019). *Annual Report 2019*. Litchfield, CT: Author. Retrieved from https://edadvance.org/uploads/files/About_Us/Annual_Report_2019.pdf.
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- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Cooperative Educational Services. (2019). *2018-19 Annual Report*. Trumbull, CT: Author. Retrieved from <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1568043244/ces/ham3prpa3pjgfdlgddvj/cesannualreport2018-19.pdf>.
- ⁴² Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66j(b).
- ⁴³ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66j(b)(1).
- ⁴⁵ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66j(b)(2).
- ⁴⁶ Conn. Gen. Statutes ch. 164, § 10-66j(b)(3).
- ⁴⁷ Conn. Acts 14-47 § 1.
- ⁴⁸ Conn. Acts 19-117 § 1.
- ⁴⁹ EdAdvance. (2019). *Annual Report 2019*. Litchfield, CT: Author. Retrieved from https://edadvance.org/uploads/files/About_Us/Annual_Report_2019.pdf.
- ⁵⁰ Capitol Region Education Council. (2019). *Annual Report 2018-2019*. Hartford, CT: Author. Retrieved from http://www.crec.org/docs/9331/CREC_201819_Annual_Report_web.pdf.
- ⁵¹ State of Connecticut, Office of the State Comptroller. (n.d.). Open Budget: Regional Education Services. Retrieved from https://openbudget.ct.gov/#!/year/2020/operating/0/program/Regional+Education+Services/0/fund_type?vis=lineChart.