

## The Urgent Problem

Connecticut's broken education finance system has contributed to a **severe labor and skill shortage that is hindering economic growth**, limiting business opportunities, and hurting our state's financial future.

- Nearly **115,000 jobs remain unfilled across Connecticut**. Eighty-seven percent of the state's manufacturers say they are struggling to recruit and retain employees, and 44% say the **lack of skilled applicants is the largest obstacle** to their growth.
- If not addressed, **COVID-19 learning losses are estimated to cost Connecticut \$188.4 billion, or 2.3% of its GDP over the 21<sup>st</sup> century**, with current K-12 students earning an average of 6.8% less over their lifetimes.
- Connecticut must develop its talent pipeline and create career pathways by **investing in our state's most important resource: our students**.
- Currently, **67% of Connecticut public school students** do not receive the funding needed for a high-quality K-12 education that equips them with the tools they need to reach their full potential and thrive in school, their careers, and life.
- Policymakers must act with urgency and **fix this broken system by passing a student-centered funding system** that help address Connecticut's labor shortage, grow our state's economy, and ensure every student has the skills they need to succeed.

## The Solution: Student-Centered Funding

### Prioritizes Students

- Fully funds **ALL public school students** based on their learning needs.
- Ensures every student has access to a **high-quality K-12 education that allows them to reach their full potential** and prepares them for college and the workforce.
- Dramatically reduces the **\$700+ million economic and racial gaps** in Connecticut education funding, which continue to hinder upward mobility, skill-development, and economic growth.

### Invests in What Works

- Makes historic investment in education funding, which **research has repeatedly shown improves student outcomes**, including:
  - Higher test scores, graduation rates, and academic achievement;
  - Higher earnings for life; and
  - Reductions in adult poverty.
- Provides ALL students with access to high-quality K-12 education, which makes them **less likely to place demands on the public healthcare system, commit serious crimes, or need public assistance programs** (ex. welfare, food stamps, Medicaid) as adults.

### **Builds Skills for College & Career**

- Provides the resources necessary to educate the state's future workforce and **equip them with the skills to meet the needs of Connecticut's economy and employers.**
- Ensures Connecticut has the **workforce capacity to successfully fill the over 200,000 jobs** it expects to add by 2030.
- Allows districts the **economic stability to make meaningful, long-term investments** in resources such as teachers, counselors, and career pathways and readiness programming that prepare students to graduate and succeed.

### **Increases Transparency**

- Eliminates the **tangled web of over 10 formulas and grants** currently used to fund Connecticut's public schools.
- Ensures funding **increases go directly toward improving student achievement**, hiring and retaining high-quality teachers, and engaging parents.
- Creates a task force focused on **holding districts accountable for increased funding**.
- Makes it **easier for parents and taxpayers to know how education is funded** and where their dollars are going.

### **Supports Choice & Innovation**

- Fully funds **students attending public schools of choice**, including magnet, Vo-Ag, and state charter schools.
- Ensures students attending schools of choice are **funded based on their learning needs**.
- **Removes financial barriers and statutory caps that have limited student choice** and disincentivized district participation in school choice programs.

## **3 Ways You Can Be Part of the Solution**

1. Talk with legislators and the governor about how **investing in K-12 education benefits the business community** and is critical to meeting the needs of Connecticut's economy.
2. Sign our Statement of Support urging policymakers to **pass a student-centered funding system that helps all Connecticut students** reach their full potential.
3. Discuss with policymakers how the **current funding system negatively impacts your ability to do business in Connecticut** and affects your ability to hire and retain a skilled workforce.