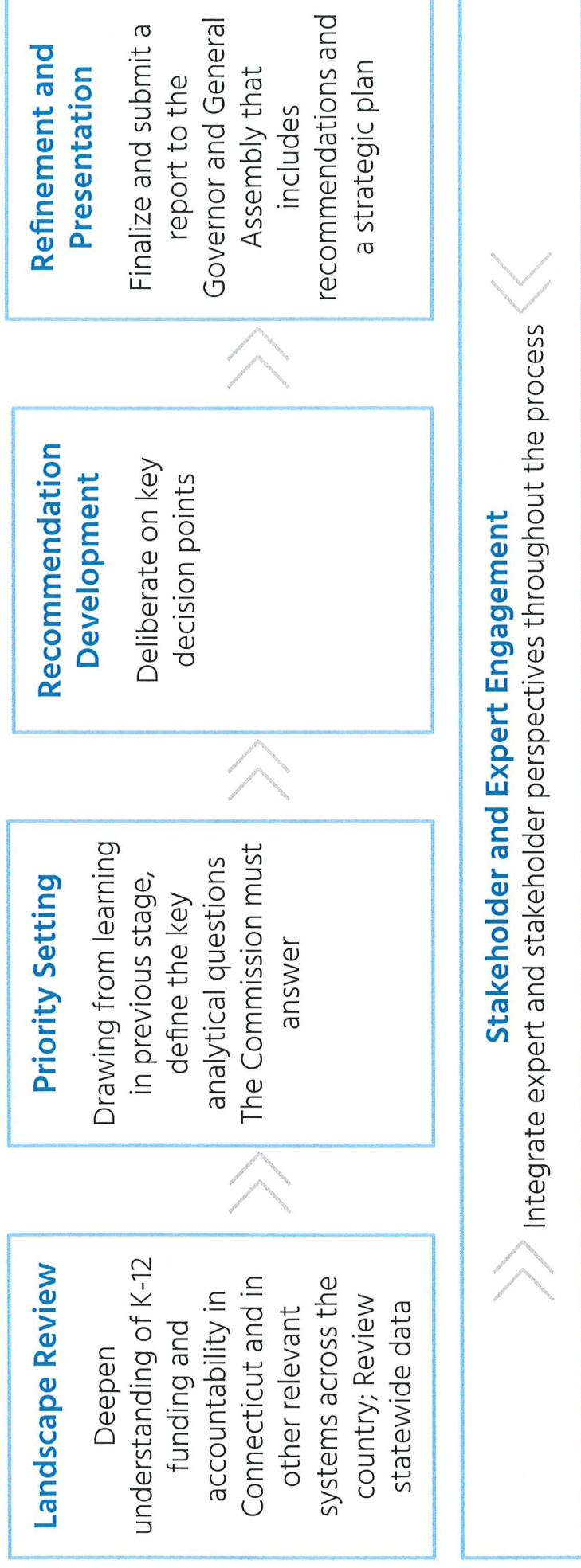


These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

Commission | High-Level Scope

Preliminary overview of Commission process and scope as charged in Governor Lamont's [Executive Order No. 26-3](#)



What is the state's legal responsibility regarding public education?

Connecticut Constitution, Article Eighth, §1 (as amended):

“There shall always be **free public elementary and secondary schools** in the state. The general assembly shall implement this principle by appropriate legislation.”

These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

What are the legal responsibilities and authorities of municipalities?

Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-240: Establishes towns as school districts with the responsibility for maintaining public schools through their Boards of Education

Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-222: Local boards of education submit their financial estimates to the municipal appropriating authority, which then makes the final appropriations and levies the required local taxes

These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

What have key education court cases in CT determined?

Court cases	What it determined	What it led to
Horton v. Meskill (1977, follow-up in 1985)	Public school students are entitled to equal enjoyment of the right to education, and a system of school financing that relied on local property tax revenues without regard to disparities in town wealth and that lacked significant equalizing state support was unconstitutional.	The Guaranteed Tax Base aid, and later the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula; Minimum expenditure requirement (MER) / Minimum Budget requirement (MBR)
Sheff v. O'Neill (1996, follow-ups continuing through 2022)	Public school students have a constitutional right to a substantially equal educational opportunity that is not impaired by racial and ethnic isolation, and the state has a constitutional obligation to remedy the educational inequities in the Hartford schools caused by extreme racial and ethnic isolation .	Significant court-driven investments in Inter-district magnet schools and Open Choice in the greater Hartford area
CT Coalition for Justice in Education Funding v. Rell (2010, follow-up in 2016 for Superior Court and 2018 for Supreme Court)	The state's level of public education spending was above the amount required to be constitutionally adequate . Policy changes are the responsibility of the legislature, not the courts.	N/A

What are goals that state funding systems try to achieve?

1. **Adequate:** Does the funding provide enough resources to provide a sufficient level of services for all students?
2. **Need-Driven:** To what extent does the funding address differences in student need & local wealth disparities?
3. **Transparent:** Is the system clear and easily understood?
4. **Predictable:** To what extent do levels of funding and changes enable districts to meet their annual obligations, and support multi-year strategic planning?
5. **Flexible & Effective:** How does the system support districts in using resources flexibly and effectively to meet students' needs?

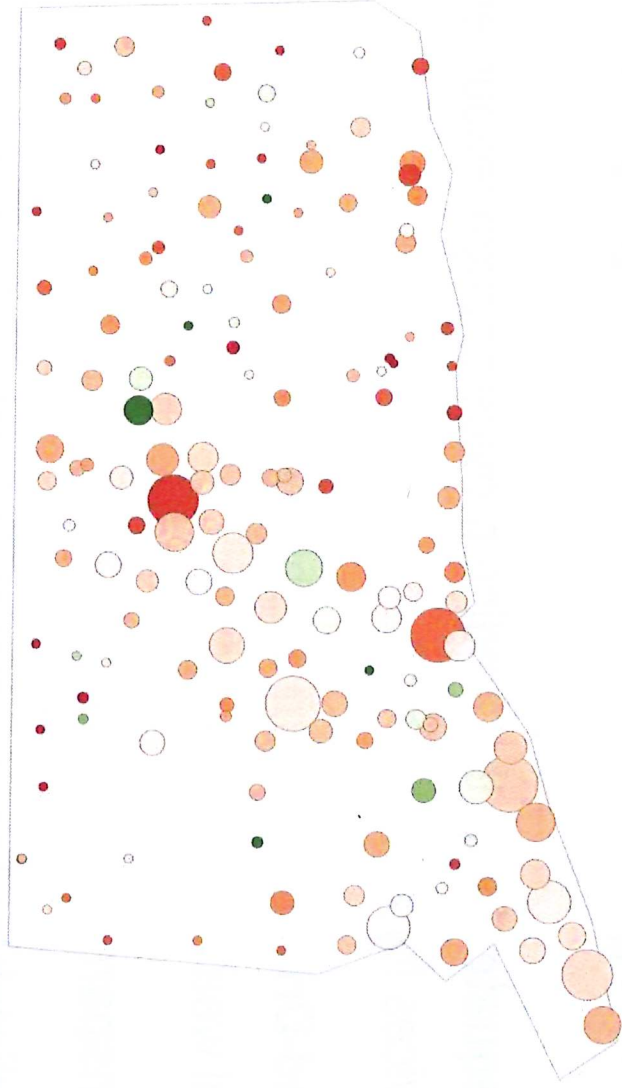
These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

There are about ~498,000 public school students in CT; most districts have experienced enrollment decline over the last several years

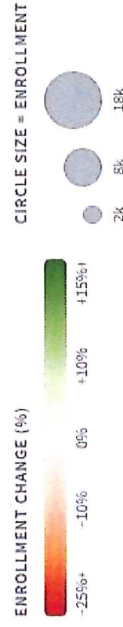
Enrollment Change by Town / Regional District:

Geographic Heat Map

School Years 2018-19 to 2025-26



	Total CT Public School Enrollment Including Charters & RESC
2018-19	530,612
2025-26	497,764
Difference	-32,848 (-6.2%)



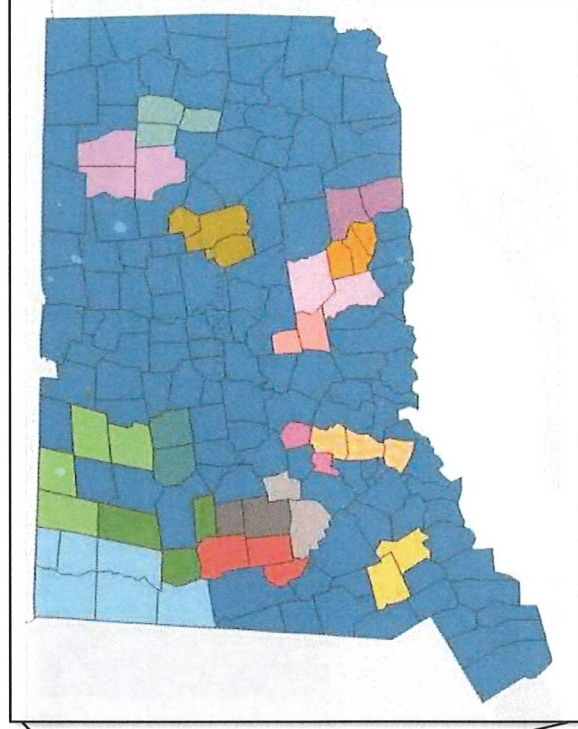
Notes: CSDE is currently commissioning a student enrollment projections study to forecast future enrollment levels (findings not yet available); District enrollment is the district in which a student is enrolled on October 1. District-level enrollment includes students outplaced to non-publics, detention centers, and out-of-state facilities
Sources: CPRL & ERS Analysis; [EdSight enrollment export](#) (SY19 & SY26)

These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

CT has a variety of types of public schools, although most are traditional schools in local districts

Number of Public Schools by Type of Organization 2024-25

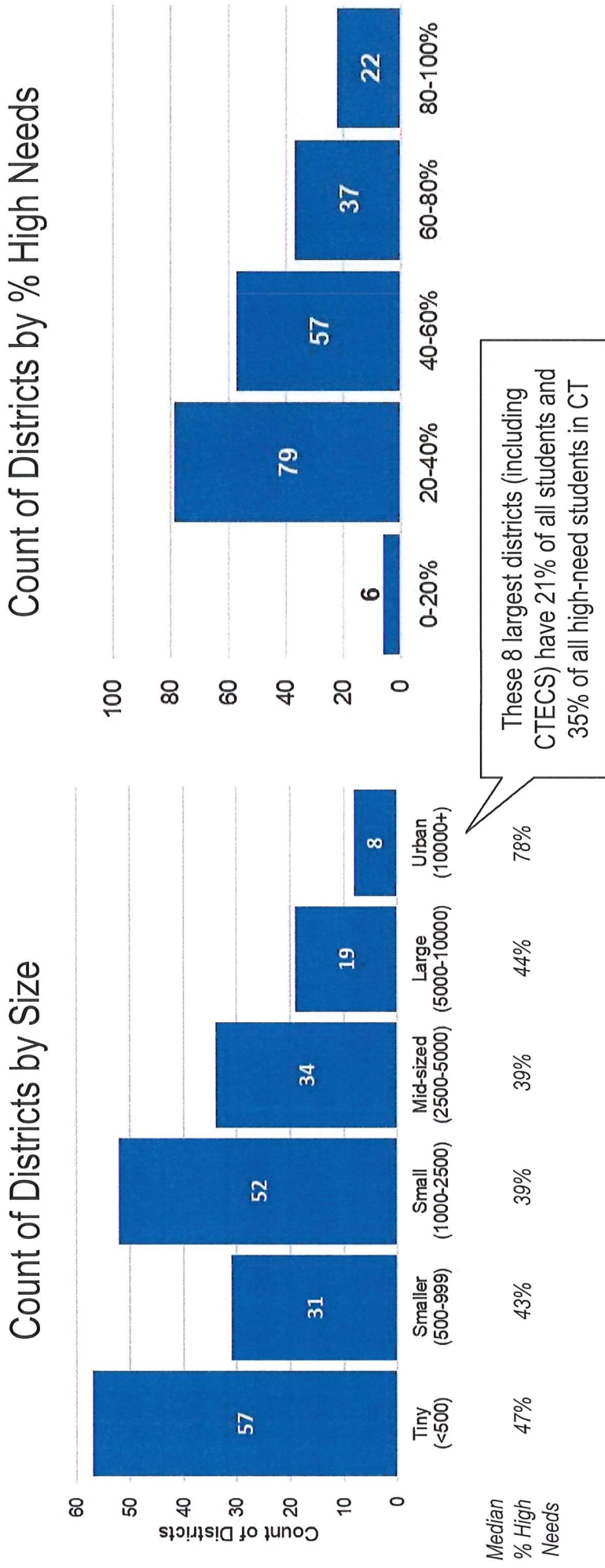
Organization Type	# of Schools	% of Schools
Public Schools in Local and Regional Districts	931	90%
Regional Educational Service Center Schools	26	2.5%
Public Charter Schools	21	2.0%
Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS)	17	1.7%
Other (Endowed Academies, State Agency Facilities, College Affiliated Schools)	34	3.4%
Total Number of Schools	1,030	100%



CT has mostly **town-based school districts**. There are also 17 regional school districts, shown in color on this map

These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

CT districts vary in terms of size and student need



Notes: District enrollment is the district in which a student is enrolled on October 1. District-level enrollment includes students outplaced to non-publics, detention centers, and out-of-state facilities; "High Needs" is defined as EL/MLs, students with disabilities and/or students from low-income families; This data includes town and regional districts, RESCs, and CTECS.

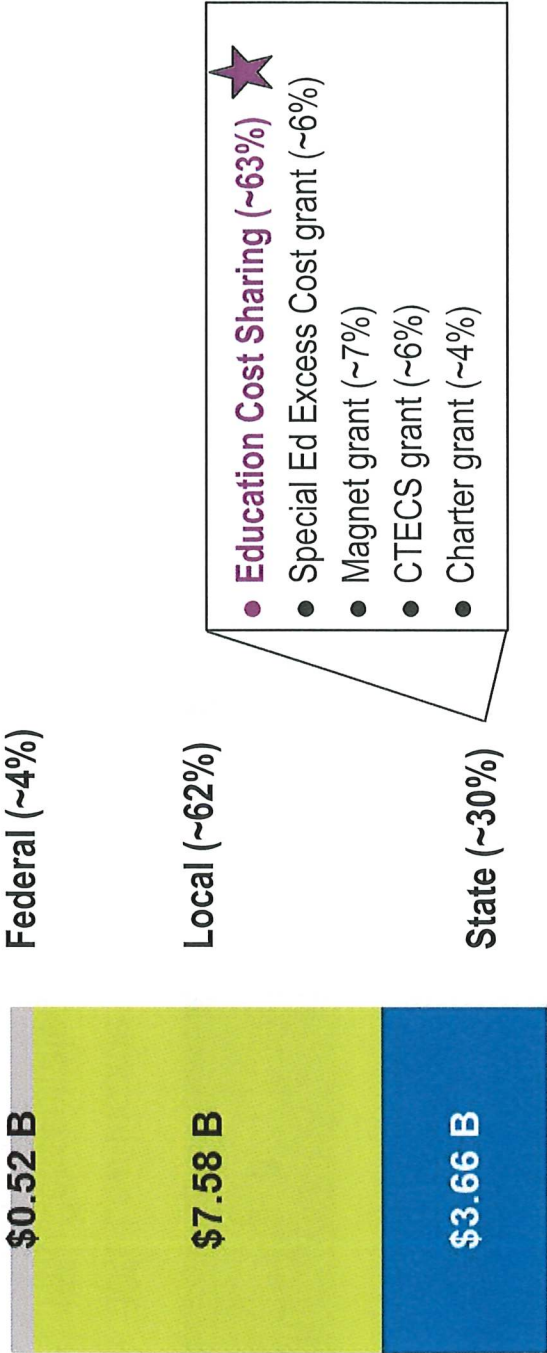
Sources: ERS Analysis; [EdSight enrollment export](#) (SY26)

These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

About 30% of CT school district spending comes from state sources, of which the Education Cost Sharing formula is the largest portion

CT School District Spending*, by Source

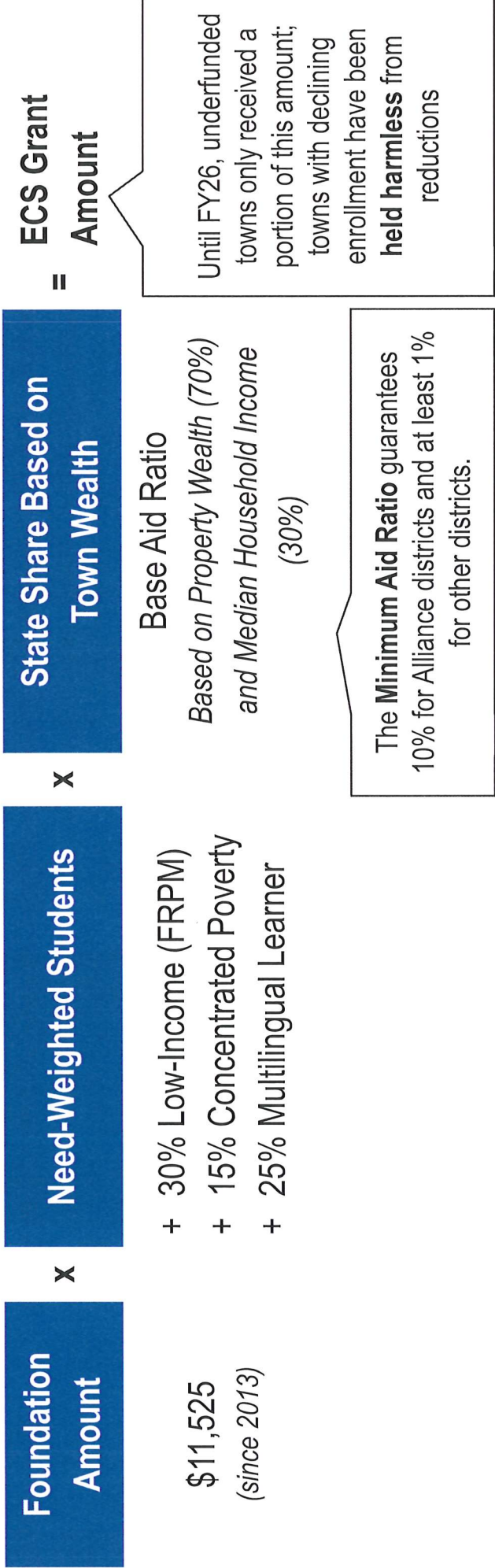
SY 2024-25



*This does not include pensions or School Construction Grants

These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

The largest source of state education aid in CT is the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula



These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

Recent ECS Changes

- The foundation amount of \$11,525 has not been adjusted since 2013
- As of FY26, underfunded towns now receive 100% of their formula amount after an 8-year phase-in period
 - Overfunded towns continue to be “held harmless” from reductions in ECS funding for FYs 2026 and 2027; gradual reductions are scheduled to start in FY 2028
- In 2026 the legislature passed two temporary supplemental grants - the **Supplemental Education Aid grant** and the **District Relief and Compensatory Use Learning Aid grant** - that, in combination, ensure that all towns receive increases in state education funding for FY 2027 that are equal to *at least* 4% of their FY 2027 ECS grant amounts

These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

Commission | Upcoming Meetings

- The full Commission will meet every month **from June 2026 - January 2027**
- Each meeting will last **approximately 2 – 3 hours**

Session 2: 6/25
10 am-12 pm
Zoom

Build shared understanding of special education and prepare for stakeholder engagement

Session 3: 7/16
10 am-1 pm
Zoom

Provide overview of state education accountability structures

Session 4: 7/30
10 am-1 pm
In-person

Identify guiding principles and focus areas; Provide overview of choice system

Session 5: 8/20
10am-1pm
In-person

Provide a deeper dive on ECS

July 1:1 meetings:

7/6 through 7/31

These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

Recap | Blue Ribbon Commission

✓ Summer Introductory Calls

- Met with 20 Commission members and gathered common topics, potential resources and stakeholders, informational requests, and logistical concerns



Session #1: Thurs. 6/4, 10:00 am-1:00 pm

- Confirmed the Commission's charge and scope
- Gained a preliminary understanding of CT's current funding system, including an overview of Education Cost Sharing (ECS)
- Raised potential issue areas, learning methods, and guiding principles
- Shared hopes for the future of the Commission's work together

✓ Session #2: Thurs. 6/25, 10:00 am-12:00 pm

- Knowledge-building session on special education in CT, including funding mechanisms and cost drivers
- Discussed pertinent issues and key takeaways about special education for further exploration in working sessions
- Brainstormed ways to encourage public participation and provided ideas for continued stakeholder engagement

✓ Session #3: Thurs. 7/16, 10:00 am-1:00 pm

- Knowledge-building session on state of student learning in CT and CT's accountability system
- Discussed key issues and takeaways about accountability

Stakeholder Engagement | Overview

These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

Since June, we've gathered input through multiple channels to understand stakeholder perspectives.

Methods

- **38** One-on-one interviews
- **1,013** Statewide public survey
- **Bi-weekly** virtual listening sessions

Who We Heard From

- Commission members & district leaders
- Educators, advocates & families
- Districts of varying size, wealth & geography across CT

What We Asked

- What's working well today?
- What's not working / needs improvement?
- What role should the Commission play?

These slides originated from the [K-12 Blue-Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Accountability](#).

Ongoing Opportunities | Stakeholder Engagement

It's not too late to participate. Below are ways experts, stakeholders, and community members can participate throughout the process.

**Take and
share survey**

[bit.ly/BlueRibbon
PublicSurvey](https://bit.ly/BlueRibbonPublicSurvey)



Contact the Commission

k12commission@ct.gov

FYI: Engagement Support

CPRL can provide materials, talking support, and other support for Commission members to add Commission items to an existing meeting. Submit requests by [survey](#).

Attend virtual listening sessions

Bi-weekly sessions from June 2026 - January 2027
Full schedule is available on Commission website

Participate in a virtual 1:1 interview

