

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is “Per Pupil Expenditure?”

Per pupil expenditure is the average total amount that each district spends to educate a student. In 2018-2019, the Suffield Board of Education spent an average of **\$17,418** to educate each student in the Suffield Public Schools. This amount is offset by revenue the Town of Suffield receives through Educational Cost Sharing (ECS). Our Per Pupil Expenditure is 97th in the State of Connecticut, and 20th in our District Reference Group. Our state is comprised of 166 school districts, and our District Reference Group C (DRG) is made up of 30 school districts that are considered “similar” in terms of demographics.

*(CSDE Bureau of Fiscal Services, Net Current Expenditures (NCE) per Pupil (NCEP))*

The following list is of districts within close proximity to Suffield:

Enfield	\$15,239	(DRG F)
Granby	\$16,237	(DRG B)
Somers	\$16,724	(DRG C)
<b>Suffield</b>	<b>\$17,418</b>	<b>(DRG C)</b>
Simsbury	\$17,450	(DRG B)
Windsor Locks	\$19,786	(DRG F)
East Granby	\$19,865	(DRG D)
East Windsor	\$21,632	(DRG F)

### What are some of our legislative mandates?

#### Special Education/504 Programming

Following a Planning and Placement Team process, students who are unable to access the general education curriculum and require accommodations and modifications are provided an Individualized Education Program (IEP). State and federal laws mandate how the Suffield Public Schools provides special education and 504 programming to identified students. Students who are receiving modification and accommodations must be done so in a Least Restrictive Environment, and in accordance with a Free and Appropriate Public Education.

## Teacher and Leader Evaluation and Professional Learning

During the 2013-2014 school year, the teacher and leader evaluation plans were implemented as a means of linking teacher and leader practice, student achievement, and stakeholder feedback. Most importantly, the process of teacher and leader evaluation is intended to promote deep professional learning that is in alignment with Board of Education goals and our vision for teaching and learning in the Suffield Public Schools. Over the past three years, the teacher and leader evaluation model has continued to evolve, and our emphasis during the 2019-2020 school year has been on aligning our district initiatives to professional learning based on the academic, social, and emotional needs of our students.

## Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments

The Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment is an online achievement assessment taken by students in grades 3-8. This assessment measures a student's progress toward meeting grade to grade level standards defined in the Common Core State Standards. The Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment results are used as one of many measures the Suffield Public Schools uses to determine the instructional needs of students.

## SAT

The SAT is a paper and pencil examination that has been administered since 1926 to high school students. The assessment has undergone significant changes since it first debuted, and was administered to over 2 million high school graduates in 2019. This college admissions assessment replaced the Connecticut Mastery Test in Grade 11, and is now a required assessment as per Connecticut Public Act 15-238 and is taken by all Grade 11 students. It serves as a predictor of post-secondary success in Writing, Critical Reading, and Mathematics.

## Scientific Research Based Interventions

Our Scientific Research Based Intervention model requires that we provide a balanced and tiered model of academic and social support for students.

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| Tier I:   | Typical differentiated instruction that occurs in all classrooms (whole class)   |
| Tier II:  | Student who are struggling in Tier I are provided additional support, by classroom teachers and interventionists in accessing classroom instruction and social expectations (small group 5-10 students)              |
| Tier III: | Students who are unable to access the curriculum or programming after Tier II interventions have been implemented are provided more intensive instruction by Intervention Specialists. (Individualized 1-5 students) |

## Magnet Schools

Connecticut General Statute 10-264 requires local boards of education to pay tuition to magnet schools when Suffield students attend these schools.

## Student Data Privacy

Boards of Education must enter into a formal contract with any contractor with whom the district shares student information, student records, or student-generated content. In addition, contracts must have certain provisions built into the agreement. Control of data, opportunities for parents to review, and notification of unauthorized disclosure must all be included in the contract. All contracts must be posted online, and parents must receive annual notification that an agreement exists.

## Background and Employment Checks for School Employees

Public Act 16-67 adds new requirements regarding the completion of employee background checks within 90 days of a hiring. Any employee or contractor, whether certified or non-certified, must agree to the disclosure of any substantiated claims of child abuse, neglect, or sexual misconduct. The law also requires that a prospective employee share information that may be currently under investigation. Separation agreements, which may have been previously non-disclosable per agreement, must also be disclosed by a previous employer. In completing background checks, employers are required to complete a formal background check with ALL previous employers in which the individual being considered was working with children. This includes previous employers in public, quasi-public, and private agencies. If a prospective employee has any substantiated claims, they may not be hired. Further, the would-be employer must also notify the State Department of Education to inform them that an employee background check revealed a substantiated claim or investigation.

## **What is the approximate costs of mandates?**

Although it is very difficult to provide exact costs of federal and state mandates, here are several mandates that we must allocate funding in our budget to ensure compliance. The following represents 2019-2020 estimates:

Common Core/Next Generation Science Standards	\$811,985
Special Education/Section 504	\$7,326,350
Special Education Tuition	1,701,560
Scientific Research Based Interventions	\$419,740
Magnet School Tuitions	\$157,900
Teacher and Leader Evaluation	\$171,674
State Mandated Assessments	\$36,958
TEAM	\$18,600 (\$10,000 BOE)
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$10,644,767</b>

## What is Educational Cost Sharing (ECS), and how much do we anticipate receiving for 2019-2020?

Educational Cost Sharing (ECS) is state aid that municipalities receive to offset the cost of educational expenses for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. The state utilizes a formula to determine the reimbursement that each community receives. The following list provides a snapshot of ECS revenue for the past several years for the Town of Suffield.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total ECS Allocation</u>	<u>PreK-12 Enrollment</u>
2013-2014	\$6,230,106	2,447
2014-2015	\$6,267,108	2,399
2015-2016	\$6,344,484	2,365
2016-2017	\$6,221,145	2,283
2017-2018	\$5,393,592	2,221
2018-2019	\$6,197,461	2,151
2019-2020	\$6,181,618	2,125

Beginning July 1, 2019, the legislature adopted a phase-in schedule for the new ECS revenue calculation. It is projected that the Town of Suffield ECS revenue will decrease to \$6,046,236 by 2028. Important to note, this is subject to change based on factors that make up the new formula. Low income and English Learner student population, Town Median Household Income, and Town Equalized Net Grand List will all factor into the ECS calculation.

## What is Open Choice, and how much do we receive in state aid relative to program participation?

The Open Choice program allows urban students to attend public schools in nearby suburban towns. It allows suburban and rural students to attend public schools in a nearby urban center. Enrollments are offered by school districts on a space-available basis in grades K-12. Lotteries are used to place students when there are more applications than spaces available. The program includes Hartford, Bridgeport and New Haven and their surrounding districts.

The state pays a grant of \$3,000 per student enrolled if the number of Open Choice students is less than 2 percent of the total population of the receiving district; \$4,000 per student enrolled if the number of Open Choice students is greater than or equal to 2 percent but less than 3 percent of the total population of the receiving district; \$6,000 per student enrolled if the number of Open Choice students is greater than or equal to 3 percent but less than 4 percent of the total population of the receiving district; \$6,000 per student if enrollment is greater than 4,000 students and the number of students in the program increased by 50 percent; and \$8,000 per student enrolled if the number of Open Choice students is greater than or equal to 4 percent of the total student population of the receiving district. There is no cost to parents.

(CSDE, 2019)

Currently, the Suffield Public Schools has a 2019-2020 enrollment of 43 students in the Open Choice program.

## What is our ASTE Program, and how much do we receive in state aid relative this program?

Agricultural Science and Technology Education (ASTE) programs serve secondary students in full- and shared- time programs. Each program is located at a comprehensive high school. The ASTE programs prepare students for college and careers in animal science, agribusiness, agricultural mechanics, aquaculture, biotechnology, food science, marine technology, natural resources, and plant science. The ASTE programs incorporate a hands-on, active curriculum that integrates subject area skills and knowledge, applied skills in the core subjects of mathematics, science and English/Language Arts while incorporating leadership skills and work-based learning experiences through the National FFA Organization and supervised agriculture experiences.

(CSDE, 2019)

### Suffield ASTE Program Enrollment History

#### Suffield Agriscience Enrollment

	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021 (Projected)
Freshman	44	36	47	31	34	47
Sophomore	30	36	35	35	37	45
Junior	21	28	34	45	46	40
Senior	22	19	25	49	48	38
Total Enrollment	<b>117</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>170</b>