

SCHOOL CHOICE MATTERS

Connecticut Policy Report

Introduction

PURPOSE

A combination of well-designed policies give all students access to the broadest range of educational opportunities, including key core policies and helpful policy enhancers. The purpose of this document is to provide insight to how well your state is doing at implementing the Ecosystem of School Choice Policies. This state report summarizes evidence across the seven policy buckets, with each policy component detailed in individual cells.

CORE POLICIES

Key policies expand student opportunities.



[Open Enrollment](#)



[Charter Schools](#)



[Private School Choice](#)



[Homeschooling](#)

POLICY ENHANCERS

Supporting policies enhance those opportunities.



[Part-time Enrollment/Course Access](#)



[Learn Everywhere](#)



[Transportation](#)

CORE POLICIES



Open Enrollment in Connecticut

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Transfers Between Districts</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Sending and/or receiving districts have discretion over transfers</p>	<p>Connecticut has created an interdistrict public school attendance program in statute. This program is limited to those students attending public schools in Hartford, Bridgeport, New Haven, and their surrounding districts.</p> <p>This Open Choice program is an interdistrict public school program with the following goals: to improve academic achievement, reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation, and provide a choice of educational programs for public school students.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-266aa State-wide interdistrict public school attendance program; Connecticut Department of Education, Open Choice Programs: FAQs)</p>
<p>Transfers Within Districts</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>School officials can block transfers</p>	<p>Connecticut Statute gives local and regional boards of education flexibility to develop intradistrict student assignment programs. Subject to local programs and policies, parents have the choice to select the public school their child will attend in the school district in which the student resides.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-221e Intradistrict student assignment programs)</p>
<p>Year-round Transfer Window</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Restricted transfer window</p>	<p>Parents may request application packets for the Open Choice programs from the regional educational service centers nearest their homes.</p> <p>(Connecticut Department of Education, Open Choice Programs: FAQs)</p>

<p>Tuition-Free Public Schools</p>	<p>YES Prohibition on parent tuition</p>	<p>For students participating in the Open Choice program, Connecticut pays a grant of \$3,000 per student enrolled if the number of students participating is less than 2% of the total population of the receiving district; \$4,000 per student if the number is greater than or equal to 2% but less than 3% of the total population of the receiving district; and \$6,000 per student if the number enrolled is greater than or equal to 3% but less than 4% 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%; and \$8,000 per student if the number of students participating is great than or equal to 4% of the total student population of the receiving district. These are paid to schools and there is no cost to parents.</p> <p>(Connecticut Department of Education, Open Choice Programs: FAQs)</p>
<p>School Capacity Transparency</p>	<p>NO No transparency policy</p>	<p>School districts are not required to publicly report capacity in schools by school and grade level.</p>
<p>Transfer Data Transparency</p>	<p>NO No transparency in data reporting</p>	<p>Connecticut policy does not require the state to collect and publicly report district-level open enrollment data.</p>
<p>Transparent Appeal Process</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>Connecticut policy does not provide for an appeals process for a district’s denial of transfer.</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes

- [Conn. Statute 10-221e Intradistrict student assignment programs](#)
- [Conn. Statute 10-266aa State-wide interdistrict public school attendance program](#)

State Department of Education

- [Connecticut Department of Education, Open Choice Programs: FAQs](#)



Charter Schools in Connecticut

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Multiple Charter Authorizers</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>No real authorizer options</p>	<p>Connecticut allows the State Board to grant initial certificates of approval for charter schools, both local and state charters.</p> <p>Applications for the establishment of a local charter school must be submitted to the local or regional board of education of the school district in which the local charter school to be located for approval. If the application is approved by the local or regional board, then it will be forwarded to the State Board, who may approve the application and grant the initial certificate of approval or reject the application by a majority vote.</p> <p>Applications for state charter schools must be submitted directly to the State Board of Education for approval and filed with the local or regional board of education in the school district in which the charter school is to be located.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-66bb Application process and requirements. Initial certificate of approval for charter. Charter renewal. Probation. Enrollment lottery; exceptions)</p>
<p>Charter Appeal Process</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>No appeals process</p>	<p>Connecticut policy does not provide for the ability to appeal the authorizer’s decision.</p>
<p>Charter Regulatory Flexibility</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Some or no exemptions</p>	<p>Connecticut Statute notes that the application may include, or a charter may file, requests to waive provisions of the general statutes and regulations not required under the charter school statutes, and which are within the jurisdiction of the State Board.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-66bb Application process and requirements. Initial certificate of approval for charter. Charter renewal. Probation. Enrollment lottery; exceptions)</p> <p>Charter schools are subject to all federal and state laws governing public schools, except for those that may be waived by Statute.</p>

		<p>Charter laws require at least half of the persons providing instruction or student services to possess the proper certificate.</p> <p>The Commissioner is not allowed to waive the provisions of chapters 163c (Education Evaluation and Remedial Assistance), 169 (School Health and Sanitation), and sections 10-15c (Discrimination in public schools prohibited. School attendance by five-year-olds), 10-153a to 10-153g, 10-153i, 10-153j, 10-153m (all relating to Teachers and Superintendents), and 10-292 (Review of final plans by Commissioner of Administrative Services. Exceptions; role of local officials). Note that 10-153a relates to collective bargaining.</p> <p>Further, Statute specifies that the state charter school governing council must act as a board of education for purposes of collective bargaining. Those holding a charter school educator permit, employed by a local charter school must be members of the appropriate bargaining unit for the local or regional school district in which the local charter school is located and are subject to the same collective bargaining agreement as the school professionals employed by such district.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-66dd School professionals and persons holding charter school educator permits employed in charter schools. Charter schools subject to laws governing public schools; exceptions; waivers. Participation in the state teacher retirement system)</p>
<p>Equitable Charter Funding</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Disparities exist</p>	<p>Connecticut Statute provides for charter school funding as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For equalization aid, a student enrolled in a local charter school will be considered a student enrolled in the school district in which the student resides. • For equalization aid, a student enrolled in a state charter school shall not be considered a student enrolled in the school district in which such student resides. • Local boards of education in which a student enrolled in a charter school resides must annually pay, in accordance with the charter, to the fiscal authority for the charter school for each student in the charter. • Local or regional boards of education are responsible for the financial support of the local charter school at a level that is at least equal to the product of: (1) the per pupil cost for the fiscal year two years prior to the fiscal year for which support will be provided; and (2) the number of students attending such local charter school in the current fiscal year. • The State Board may approve a per student grant to a local charter school in an amount not to exceed \$3,000 for each student enrolled provided the local or regional board of education and representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for certified employees mutually agree on staffing flexibility in the school. This agreement must be approved by the State Board. • Charter schools are eligible for grants for special education, competitive state grants, and other grants to the same extent as boards of education.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charter schools will receive any federal funds available for the education of any students attending public schools. <p>(Conn. Statute 10-66ee Charter school funding. Special education students. Transportation. Contracts. Cooperative arrangements)</p> <p>The Connecticut Department of Education explains that beginning in 2021, state charter schools receive a per-pupil base grant of \$11,525 for each student enrolled.</p> <p>(Connecticut Department of Education, Charter Schools: FAQs)</p>
Charter Facilities Funding	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Some or no facilities funding</p>	<p>Connecticut Statute requires the Commissioner of Education to establish a grant program that will be used to assist charter schools in financing school building projects, general improvements to school buildings, and repayment of debt incurred for school building projects. Preference is given to those applicants that provide for matching funds from non-state sources.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-66hh Program to assist charter schools with capital expenses)</p>
Options for High-Performing Charters	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>No opportunities for high-performing charter schools</p>	<p>Connecticut Statute provides that if a new state or local charter school applicant is awaiting funding, the State Board will determine which school is funded first based on consideration of certain factors, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of the proposed program as measured against the criteria required in the charter school application process; Whether the applicant has a demonstrated record of academic success by students; Whether the school is located in a school district with a demonstrated need for student improvement; and Whether the applicant has plans concerning the preparedness of facilities, staffing, and outreach to students. <p>(Conn. Statute 10-66ee Charter school funding. Special education students. Transportation. Contracts. Cooperative arrangements)</p>
Charter Zoning Exemptions	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Less than full protections</p>	<p>It is not clear whether charter schools have exemptions from local zoning and ordinances in Connecticut.</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes

[Conn. Statutes 10-66aa, et al. Charter Schools](#)

State Department of Education

[Connecticut Department of Education, Charter Schools](#)

[Connecticut Department of Education, Charter Schools: FAQs](#)



Private School Choice in Connecticut

POLICY	OVERALL RATING	PROGRAM OVERVIEW
Universal Eligibility	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	<p>Connecticut does not have a private school choice program.</p>
Comparable Student Funding	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	
Uncapped Student Access	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	
Extended Application Window	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	
Student Testing Options	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	
School Autonomy	<p>NO</p> <p>No choice program</p>	

Accessible School Participation	NO No choice program	
ESAs and Parent-Directed Spending		
Freedom to Customize	NO No ESA or microgrant program	Connecticut does not have an education scholarship account or microgrant program.
Freedom to Access	NO No ESA or microgrant program	
Carry-Over Funding	NO No ESA or microgrant program	
Tax Credits		
Full Tax Credit	NO No choice program	Connecticut does not have an education tax credit program.



Homeschooling in Connecticut

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Homeschool without Prior Approval</p>	<p>YES No permission required</p>	<p>Connecticut Statute allows parents to homeschool their children so long as the parent is “able to show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the public schools.”</p> <p>(Connecticut Statute 10-184 Duties of Parents. School attendance age requirements)</p> <p>Connecticut does not require parents to receive permission from a local school board or other administrative body to start homeschooling.</p>
<p>No Extra Homeschool Notifications</p>	<p>YES One-time or no notification.</p>	<p>Connecticut does not require annual notification to local or state officials each year a parent plans to homeschool their child(ren).</p> <p>The Connecticut Department of Education website notes that it is <u>suggested</u> that homeschool parents complete the Intent to Homeschool form annually and submit it to the Superintendent’s office, but this does not appear to be a requirement.</p> <p>(Connecticut Department of Education, Homeschooling in Connecticut)</p>
<p>No Certification to Homeschool</p>	<p>YES No certification requirement</p>	<p>Connecticut policy does not require parents to possess teacher certifications.</p>
<p>Flexible Assessment Options</p>	<p>YES Flexible academic accountability</p>	<p>Homeschool parents have flexibility regarding assessing student academic progress.</p> <p>The Connecticut Department of Education website suggests that parents maintain a portfolio for each child that contains samples of activities, assignments, projects, and assessments. This should include the results of any national assessments.</p> <p>(Connecticut Department of Education, Homeschooling in Connecticut)</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes

[Conn. Statute 10-184 Duties of Parents. School attendance age requirements](#)

State Department of Education

[Connecticut Department of Education, Homeschooling in Connecticut](#)

POLICY ENHANCERS



Part-time Enrollment in Connecticut

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Resident Course Access</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>By type of student, type of course, or district policy</p>	<p>Connecticut Statute provides for part-time enrollment within their district of residence; however, this authorization is limited to enrollment in magnet schools.</p> <p>Statute makes clear that nonpublic school students may participate in interdistrict magnet school programs part-time, provided that the total number of students constitute no more than 5% of the full-time equivalent enrollment in the program, and the students are not counted for purposes of determining the amount of grants.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-264I Grants for the operation of interdistrict magnet school programs. Transportation. Enrollment of students; notice. Special education; Section 504 plans. Financial audits. Tuition)</p>
<p>Nonresident Course Access</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Districts only serve resident students or can impose other restrictions</p>	<p>Connecticut policy does not clearly provide for part-time enrollment for students outside their district of residence.</p>

<p>Virtual Course Access</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>No virtual options provided by other entities than the school district in which a student resides</p>	<p>Connecticut offers a Virtual Content Learning Hub. The Academics tab explains this provides Connecticut districts with supplemental digital curricula and courses for students in grades 6-12 for credit accumulation. Note this is supplemental online learning content for math, English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and other course areas.</p> <p>(Conn. Department of Education, Virtual Content Learning Hub Resources – Academics)</p> <p>Connecticut Statute provides for an on-line credit recovery program, which is limited to those districts with a dropout rate of 8% or greater in the previous school year and it is limited to those students identified as in danger of failing to graduate.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-233g On-line credit recovery program. On-line learning coordinator)</p>
<p>Extracurricular Access</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>No requirement to make extra/ co-curricular opportunities available to all students</p>	<p>The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference prohibits homeschool students from participating in athletics, however choice and private school students are allowed, so long as their school offers no sports programs of any kind and at the discretion of the neighborhood school.</p> <p>(Connecticut Office of Legislative Research, Eligibility for Public School Sports (2019))</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS

<p>Statutes</p>	<p>State Department of Education</p>	<p>Other Resources</p>
<p>Conn. Statute 10-233g On-line credit recovery program. On-line learning coordinator</p> <p>Conn. Statute 10-264l Grants for the operation of interdistrict magnet school programs. Transportation. Enrollment of students; notice. Special education; Section 504 plans. Financial audits. Tuition</p>	<p>Conn. Department of Education, Virtual Content Learning Hub Resources – Academics</p>	<p>Connecticut Office of Legislative Research, Eligibility for Public School Sports (2019)</p>



Learn Everywhere in Connecticut

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
Provider Qualification Standard	NO No program	Connecticut has not established a Learn Everywhere program.
Course Credit Standard	NO No program	
Core Course Opportunities	NO No program	
Central State List	NO No program	



Transportation in Connecticut

POLICY	RATING	POLICY OVERVIEW
<p>Open Enrollment Transit</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Less than equitable and/or for some students only</p>	<p>For students participating in intradistrict assignment programs, boards of education have the option to provide transportation services to students.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-221e Intradistrict student assignment programs)</p> <p>For students participating in the limited Open Choice Program, the transportation costs will be paid by the state. Arrangements for transportation will be made by the regional educational service center serving the area.</p> <p>(Connecticut Department of Education, Open Choice Programs: FAQs)</p>
<p>Fair Transportation Access</p>	<p>LIMITED</p> <p>Equitable transportation offered to some charter OR private students</p>	<p>Charter School Students</p> <p>Local or regional boards of education of the school district in which the charter school is located are required to provide transportation services for students who reside in the school district, unless the charter school chooses to make other arrangements for transportation.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute Sec. 10-66ee Charter school funding. Special education students. Transportation. Contracts. Cooperative arrangements)</p> <p>Private School Students</p> <p>Connecticut Statute provides that towns or regional school districts that are transporting students have the authority, in their discretion, to provide similar transportation to nonpublic high schools or junior high schools located in the same town; or to nonpublic high schools or junior high schools located in a town adjacent to the transporting town or regional school district. If a town or regional school district does provide transportation, they must be reimbursed.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-277 Reimbursement for transportation of high school pupils from towns or regional school districts not maintaining high schools. Transportation to nonpublic schools)</p> <p>Statute further provides that any local or regional board of education may, but are not required to, provide transportation to a student attending an elementary or secondary nonpublic school, not conducted for profit</p>

		<p>and approved by the State Board, outside the school district where the student resides, provided the nonpublic school is located in the state.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 10-280a Transportation for pupils in nonprofit private schools outside school district)</p>
<p>Vehicle Flexibility</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>Strict vehicle requirements</p>	<p>Connecticut Statutes require school buses to meet certain requirements in order to transport students to and from school or school activities.</p> <p>(Conn. Stat. 14-275 Equipment and color of school buses. Information displayed on school buses and student transportation vehicles)</p> <p>Schools may not use motor vehicles with a seating capacity of more than 10 passengers, unless it is a school bus that has met requirements in statute.</p> <p>(Conn. Statute 14-275a Use of standard school bus required, when. Use of mass transportation permitted, when. Use of certain motor vehicles prohibited)</p>

SOURCE CITATIONS

Statutes

[Conn. Statute Sec. 10-66ee Charter school funding. Special education students. Transportation. Contracts. Cooperative arrangements](#)

[Conn. Statute 10-221e Intradistrict student assignment programs](#)

[Conn. Statute 10-277 Reimbursement for transportation of high school pupils from towns or regional school districts not maintaining high schools. Transportation to nonpublic schools](#)

[Conn. Statute 10-280a Transportation for pupils in nonprofit private schools outside school district](#)

[Conn. Stat. 14-275 Equipment and color of school buses. Information displayed on school buses and student transportation vehicles](#)

[Conn. Statute 14-275a Use of standard school bus required, when. Use of mass transportation permitted, when. Use of certain motor vehicles prohibited](#)

