JAMES MOL FOR HOUSE DISTRICT 61

SUFFIELD • EAST GRANBY • WINDSOR LOCKS

PLATFORM | PILLAR ONE

School Funding

Hartford writes the formula. Our property taxes cover the difference.

WHAT THE STATE PAYS, AND WHAT YOU PAY

	Schools, share of town budget	State pays, per school $	Washington pays
Suffield	62%	19¢	3¢
East Granby	73%	11¢	3¢
Windsor Locks	54%	18¢	4¢

$11,525 is the reason. That is the per-student amount Connecticut's formula starts from. It was set in 2013, was never based on what schools actually spend, and has never been changed. Costs are up 42 percent since. What the state does not pay, local property taxes do.

Whether or not you have a child in school, education is the largest thing your property tax bill pays for. And whatever you think of the size of state government, the $2.46 billion Connecticut spends on school aid will be spent somewhere. The only question is whether our towns get their share.

NOT A SPENDING PROBLEM

Suffield spends $21,171 per student, less than the state average and less than 112 of Connecticut's 165 districts. Adjusted for inflation, all three of our districts spend less on schools today than in 2013. The belt-tightening has been done.

THE FIGHTS BEYOND THE FORMULA

- **Special education.** A quarter of every school budget here, and growing. The 2025 law created a dedicated grant, then funded it at 16 cents on the dollar: our towns receive about $157,000 against the roughly $998,000 it describes. Washington, which promised 40 percent in 1975, pays about 11.
- **School buildings.** Suffield is planning a new middle school, East Granby is weighing a consolidated school, and Windsor Locks has projects coming. What the state pays is decided in Hartford: the statute reimburses new construction below renovation, bonuses exist for projects designed with special education or early childhood space, and in the last two sessions a dozen towns had their own projects written into law at rates well above the formula. None of that happens by itself.
- **AgriScience.** Suffield High's program serves 173 students from across the region and is Connecticut's farm workforce pipeline. The state caps what sending towns may pay and funds its own share at 42 percent, so one town carries a gap that should be shared. A program this good deserves a permanent formula in law.

A $1.3 MILLION DECISION, MADE NEXT YEAR

Connecticut has set aside $152.2 million more for schools in 2028 and has not decided how to distribute it. The Blue-Ribbon Commission on school funding reports January 15, 2027; turning that into law is months of committee work in the session starting that month.

Suffield and East Granby currently receive slightly more than the formula says they should, and the state has protected that only through 2028. Raise the foundation and our three towns gain about $1.17 million a year. Let the protection lapse without raising it, and Suffield and East Granby lose about $139,000. For over a decade this district has had no seat on the committee that decides.

WHAT I WILL DO IN HARTFORD

- Serve on the Education Committee, and deliver the 2028 money by raising the foundation and indexing it, not by cutting the protection Suffield and East Granby rely on.
- Fully fund the special education grants, and design our building projects to capture every reimbursement bonus the law now allows.
- Write a permanent AgriScience funding formula into law.

James Mol has served nearly six years on the Suffield Board of Education, including the Finance & Facilities subcommittee, and has three children in Suffield schools.

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