

EAST HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS (EHPS) LEGISLATIVE AGENDA 2021

The following document provides a framework for EHPS' policy positions that we ask our legislative delegates to consider in their policy development and advocacy work during the 2021 Legislative Session. For each of these positions, EHPS is prepared to develop a comprehensive data package that would provide tangible pieces of evidence to support forthcoming legislation. Thank you for your support of the children of East Hartford and for your continued advocacy for our schools and community.

Priority Description/Supporting Evidence

Funding *Implement the ECS Phase in Formula (2028):* In the 2018 Legislative Session, the General Assembly voted to support an Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula that included a phase in process through 2028. For FY22, this phase in process projected a \$2,222,2155 increase for East Hartford. EHPS incorporated this increase in preparing the FY22 budget by funding the remaining Grade 1, all of Grade 2, and (3) Grade 3 teachers (28 FTEs total) out of the Alliance Grant instead of the general budget. After this change, the Alliance Grant will now fund (139) certified teachers in the district, up from (57) in FY19. Implementing the phase in schedule that previously received bi-partisan support remains the number one legislative priority for our schools and community. EHPS urges our legislative delegates to continue their strong advocacy for funding that promotes equity and adequacy for our kids.

Fully fund the 7% Magnet Cap Language: In the 2014-2015 Legislative session, the EH Delegation successfully developed language that set a 7% cap on EHPS' disproportionate financial responsibility for magnet school tuitions. While this cap has provided approximately \$900,000/year to offset costs, it has remained flat, limited by an excusatory legislative clause. Implemented as originally intended, the current magnet cap would provide \$2.09M of the \$4.6M tuition charges for FY21. While this cap is not necessarily the entire solution to a complex school funding context, this change would represent nearly 1% of our annual district budget. EHPS encourages the Connecticut Legislature to ensure this cap is funded per the established formula enabling it to provide the escalation protection as designed.

Maintain Current Grants: Under the umbrella of school funding, EHPS encourages the Connecticut Legislature to pay special attention to the maintenance of multiple grants that have significant impact on programs that are currently offered in our schools. The following chart provides a listing of the grants as well as the history of reductions.

Grant	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21 Estimate	FY22 Projection
Alliance District Grant	7,853,667	7,364,339	8,247,859	10,473,264	12,676,195	14,898,450
Priority School Grant	1,067,211	1,043,461	879,414	885,760	899,804	899,804
School Accountability/ Summer School	175,769	175,873	162,576	163,787	165,307	165,307
Family Resource Center	325,553	309,000	200,000	203,060	203,060	203,060
Extended School Hours	152,925	152,176	136,761	140,543	141,339	141,339
21 st Century Grant	542,819	434,374	425,000	480,000	340,000	290,000
Smart Start Grant	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
Commissioner's Network EHMS	899,960	779,998	835,000	850,000	0	0
7% Magnet Cap	915,084	881,177	900,000	900,000	915,000	915,000
State Head Start Enhancement	159,818	161,466	161,466	100,000	100,000	100,000
State Head Start Expansion	141,733	143,195	143,195	143,195	143,195	143,195
State Head Start Link	42,956	\$25,343	\$25,343	0	0	0

Policy

Provide Mandate Relief/Unfunded Mandates: EHPS asks our legislators to pay careful attention to bills and language that despite good intention include additional mandates and requirements for school districts. While we understand the strong lobbying abilities of specific action groups as well as the power of compelling personal narratives, additional legislation is not the only path to improving practice or solving a specific problem. Reviewing the most recent list of mandates composed by the CAPSS reflects 380 requirements. Implementing this number of mandates presents a significant logistical and operational challenge. In light of this scale of mandates that seems to continually grow each session, EHPS encourages the Connecticut Legislature to consider the impact of the current mandates, refuse to support additional mandates and work to eliminate any mandates that are hindrances to our school system.
