



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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February 10, 2025
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Ellington Board of Education Adopts Budget Increase of 2.89% with the State-Wide Average Over 5%

**In-District Special Education Programs Developed Since 2017
Have Saved Millions for Ellington Taxpayers and Other Area Towns**

ELLINGTON, CT – On Wednesday, January 29th, the Ellington Board of Education adopted a spending increase of \$1,350,213 or 2.89% for the 2025-2026 budget. This brings the total board-adopted budget to \$48,065,373.

This budget will fully fund programs and services preK-12 as supported by per-pupil spending in the bottom 10% of the State of Connecticut (CT) average. Ellington’s return on investment (ROI) relative to taxpayer money spent and student academic performance using State measures is ranked second highest amongst all CT school districts.

Historically, the Ellington Public Schools frequently [buck state-wide trends](#).

To put the Board’s adopted \$48 million budget into perspective, Ellington is nine (9) million dollars below the State per pupil average. The fiscally responsible budget highlights are as follows:

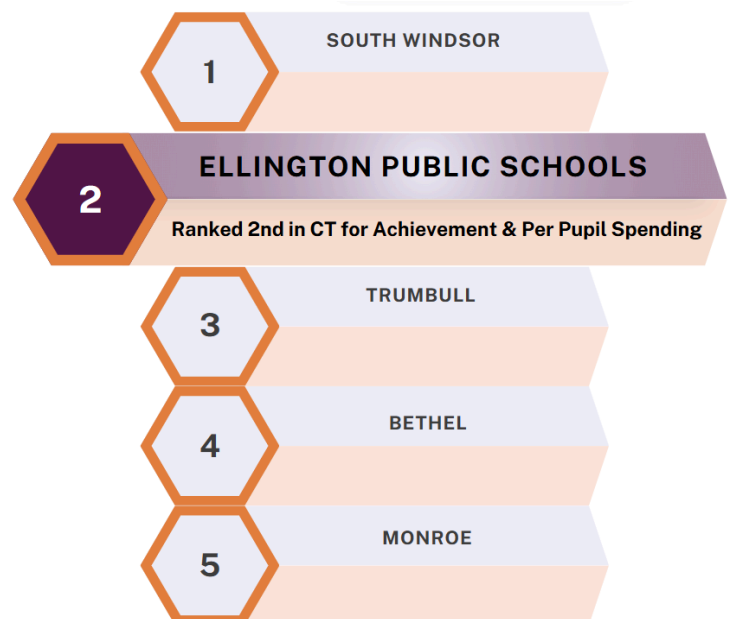
- 2.89% increase—average state-wide increase is over 5%
- 337 out of 521 budgeted accounts—reduced or remained flat totaling \$861,445 in savings
- Aggressive budgeting projections—Special Education, Electricity, and Health Insurance
- No new positions—with \$687,488 justified staffing requests denied, primarily for special education

Board member and Finance Committee Chair Steve Viens stated, *“We are so pleased that Ellington spends far less than almost all CT school districts yet still has great student academic performance while offering a variety of extra-curricular programs. I am gratified to see our return on investment ranking at number two in Connecticut.”*

In-District SPED Programs Save Taxpayers Millions

For the past eight years, since 2017, the Ellington Public Schools have developed an alternative-6th school—currently located at 89 and 105 West Road. This innovative, in-house, and cost-effective special education programming has saved millions of dollars for Ellington taxpayers and other area towns such as Stafford, East Windsor, and Somers.

Most importantly, this special programming affords



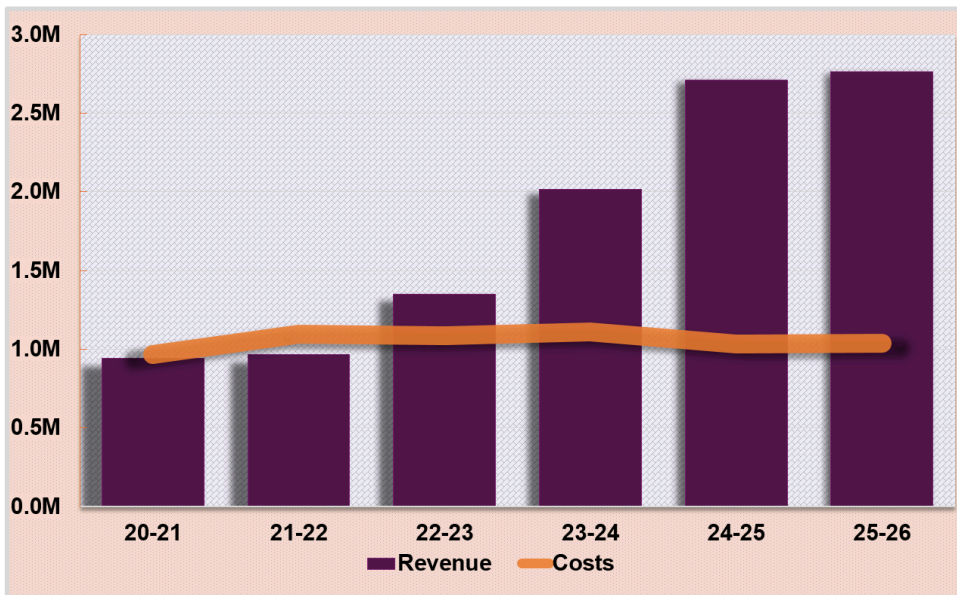
Student Achievement and Pupil Spending Ranking in CT

Ellington-area students with an outstanding educational experience as supported by our dedicated and talented staff.

The alternative-6th school saves millions by not out-placing students to expensive private special education for-profit businesses and by offering affordable tuition to other local school districts with students needing outplacement. The result is special education programming costs remaining virtually flat over the last five years contributing to annual average budget increases of around 3%—which is lower than state-wide averages.

Approximate financials that minimize special education annual costs:

- \$2.8 million revenue—23 non-Ellington students’ tuition and other service billing
- \$2.6 million savings—not out-placing 36 Ellington students (*after State reimbursement*)



“By managing special education revenue and savings wisely, with a long-term approach, the Board has kept annual costs down in what is typically a highly volatile funding area. We are so proud to have accomplished this while providing Ellington and other local students with an outstanding educational experience.”

Jennifer Mullin, Board Liaison to Special Programming

Increased SPED Revenue Offsets Cost Saving Taxpayers

Although last year’s budget process was challenging, with a budget referendum [failing for the first time](#) in well over a decade and [passing on the second attempt](#), the Board of Finance fully supported the Board of Education’s budget prioritizing long-term financial sustainability and ensuring K-12 educational programs and services were not impacted by unnecessary monetary reductions.

Jennifer Dzen, Chair of the Ellington Board of Education echoed this sentiment, *“Last year was a challenging budget process and we greatly appreciate our partnership with the Board of Finance. This year’s proposed budget continues award-winning [financial practices](#) that the Town and Board of Education have been recognized for three consecutive years. In particular, the honor focused on financial information communicated to the public in the ‘spirit of full disclosure.’*

The next step in the budget process will be the Board of Education’s budget presentation to the Board of Finance on March 12th at 6 PM at the Town Hall. Updates, including all presentations, may be found on the [Ellington Public Schools 2025-2026 Budget Information](#) webpage.
