



North Stonington Public Schools 2025-2026



Proposed Budget of the Board of Education

Presented
March 12, 2025

Achievements

14th Ranked Middle School in CT by US News and World Report

Highest Elementary Test Scores in the region:

(Stonington, East Lyme, Montville, Groton, Preston, Brooklyn, Ledyard, Killingly, Griswold, Lisbon, Norwich)

Math - Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6

ELA - Grades 3 and 4

Science - Grade 5

High Scores at Wheeler

SAT - 3rd in ELA, 4th in math in the region

Science - 2nd in region for grade 8 and 11

Give Back Club - Hurricane Helene relief in North Carolina, Travis Mills Foundation in Maine

Director of Instruction and Learning



Supports Innovative Instruction

In-house PD:

- Teacher evaluation training
- Collaboration with Preston Teachers on reading instruction
- Student-led parent conferences
- Instructional technology training and support
- Meetings with teachers to discuss instruction and provides resources

Teacher Support

- New Teacher training and observation
- Leadership support (Program Supervisors)

Alignment

- Coordinate district collaboration and programs
- District Data Team
- District NEASC Accreditation
- New program evaluation

Cub Club - Before and After School Program



Number of cubs in the club: **62 in March**

“I wanted to take a brief moment to express my family’s gratitude for the Cub Club after school program that is offered this year at the elementary school. This has been a “game changer” for our family, as both my husband and I work full-time and used to piecemeal childcare after school. My children absolutely love the program and they attend every day. The facilitators keep the kids engaged and I have not heard my children complain once about having to participate. In fact, they often request to stay until to the very end and ask us not to pick them up early. We are thankful to have this resource in district. Have a great day, stay warm!” Regards, Brittany Valentine

Connection with Education Pathway at Wheeler



Impact of Initiative (Materials Processing)

Students in 2023-2024

46

Students in 2024-2025

41



Impact of Initiative (Mental Health)

Responsibilities:

- Home visits (chronic absentee)
- Group counseling
- Individual counseling
- Progress monitoring of IEP Goals
- Sensitivity Training
- Classroom lessons (NSES and MS)
- Advisory Teacher
- Alternative Ed support
- Crisis Team
- De-escalation
- DCF Referrals
- Family liaison
- Juvenile Review Board Representative
- Monitor required staff training (Mandated Reporter)
- Provide staff education
- Coordinate services for families in need
- SAT Team

	'23-'24	'24-'25
Social Worker Caseload at Wheeler	46	45
Counselor Caseload at NSES	29	31
Wheeler-211, 911, State Trooper, Crisis Center and DCF Referrals	32	17
NSES- 211, 911 and DCF Referrals	8	2

Impact on Initiative (Alternative Education)

Purpose: To address the diverse needs of students who may not thrive in traditional educational settings.

Programming

- Flexible schedules
- Regular counseling sessions
- Social Worker meetings
- Edgenuity- credit recovery and traditional classes
- Individualized academics and emotional support
- Mystic Seaport Program
- Recreational activities
- Alley Katz Bowling

NORTH STONINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Math program adoption (*Innovative Instruction*)

- Will be requesting BOE to adopt Bridges program
- All materials will need to be purchased
 - Cost spread over last year and this year
- Consumables only moving forward

Reading (*Innovative Instruction*)

- Right to Read grant expiring
- Year 3 of implementation of Into Reading program
 - Consumables and software licensing
- Building off the work done with Hill for Literacy
- Bringing Amira for screening into the budget

Science

- Renewal of Savvas Elevate program (multi-year)
- Primary resource for Grade 5

Sustainable Technology Plan for NSES



WHEELER



Welcome to Wheeler!



Sure



Harry



Felix



MIDDLE SCHOOL MODEL

- Increased interdisciplinary activities to promote collaboration
- Student-Led Conferences for student accountability before HS experience
- DESMOS, STEMSCOPES (Collaborative programming)

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS (with 6th grade addition)

- Every single sport will run this year!
- Seasons brought in about 5-8 6th graders each season
- Increased expenses in coaching stipends, travel expenses, officials and supplies



HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

- Options for ALL students
- Pathways: Engineering, Business and Education - INTERNSHIPS!
- Continued connections with Preston/Voluntown tuition opportunities
- Co-Ops to increase our already successful sports programs
- NEIT Dual Enrollment Opportunities
- Sustainable Technology Plan for Wheeler Grades 7-12



PROTECT THE DEN

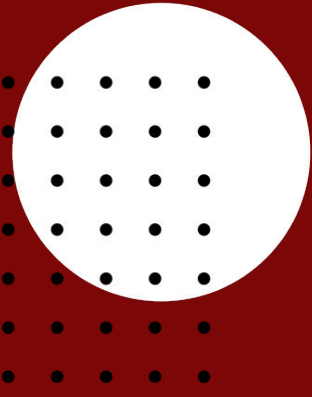


Enhancing Student Success Through Programs/Activities

- Expanded Transition Activities
- Revamping Life Skills at Wheeler
 - Functional Life Skills – Budgeting, meal prep, transportation, time management.
 - Social Skills Development – Communication, relationship-building, and problem-solving.
 - College & Career Readiness – Resume-building, interview practice, job exploration.
- Success of In-District BCBA & RBT Support
 - Reduction in crisis interventions- proactive behavioral supports for students.
 - Strengthening paraeducator training- encouraging RBT certification for improved student support.
 - Increasing Student Success- keeping students in District and fostering engagement



SPECIAL SERVICES



Enrollment and Projected Enrollment



	2024-2025	2025-2026
North Stonington Elementary (PreK-grade 6)	387	382
Wheeler (grades 7-12) <i>Includes 34 students from Preston and Voluntown who pay tuition to the town</i>	351	344
Total Projected Enrollment	738	726

If students choose these options, we are required to support them:

Magnet Schools (we pay tuition) enrollment: 9

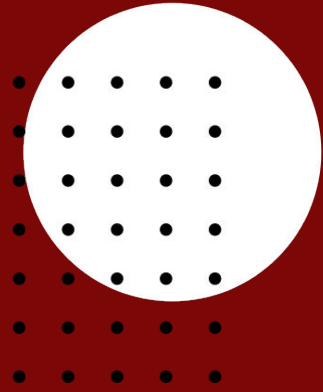
Vocational Agriculture Schools (we pay tuition) enrollment: 4

Technical Schools (we do not pay tuition) enrollment: 26

Budget Drivers

	Amount	Increase
Salaries Mostly Contractual Obligations	10,693,234	516,627
Benefits Health Insurance up 11%	2,797,650	253,280
Technology Implementation of Sustainable Technology Plan and Reorganization of Software	299,049	54,049
Maintenance	246,000	(13,000)
Transportation New contract and Sports Transportation	1,291,250	183,378
Utilities	410,000	105,500
Central Office	268,835	86,105
Other Expenses - Schools	494,771	89,810
Tuition	155,572	(56,309)
Total Budget Increase		\$1,219,440

The total increase of \$1,219,440, adjusted for grants of \$222,035 is down to **\$997,405**



Overall Budget



FY26	FY25	Increase	Percent Increase
\$16,436,326	\$15,438,822	\$997,405	6.46%

TECHNOLOGY- STAFFING

IT Director from LEARN - 2 days per week
(includes different expertise in technology areas)

IT Technician from LEARN - 2 days per week

Cost is \$80,000

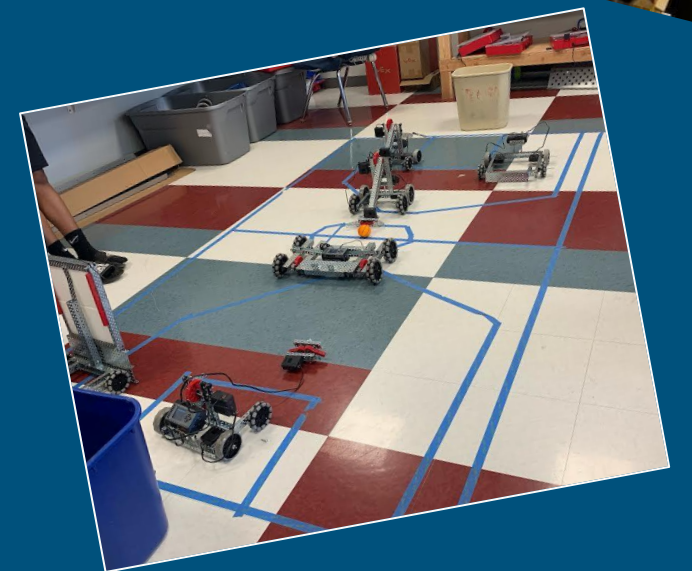
Compared to hiring an IT Director: \$148,737* (salary and benefits)

***cost if paid the same as our retired IT Director**

TECHNOLOGY - HARDWARE

Sustainable Technology Plan

- One:one Chromebook program: Grades 5-8, Grades 9-12
- Interactive Whiteboards
- Teacher Laptops (no desktop replacements) so one computer per teacher instead of two



TECHNOLOGY- INFRASTRUCTURE



We are experiencing IT infrastructure failures

We must replace aging infrastructure including switches, batteries, fiber connectors

The budget includes \$40,000 for IT infrastructure replacement. Plan - Over 8 years replace all switches (equivalent of 30)

Important for Internet, phones, public address system, cameras

FACILITIES

	FY26 Budget	FY25 Budget	Increase
Supplies	80,000	53,220	26,780
Uniform Allowance	9,500	5,000	4,500
General Building Services (repairs, inspections, contracts)	105,000	105,000	0

FACILITIES - STAFFING

Increased maintenance and repair needs

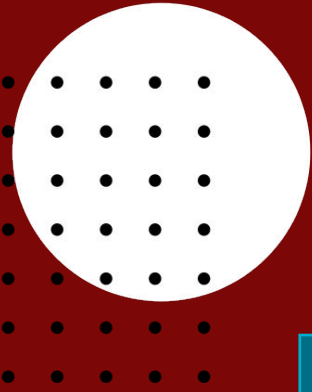
Challenges in maintaining grounds

Response this year:

- adjusted work hours to help with grounds
- hired additional custodian

This budget adds

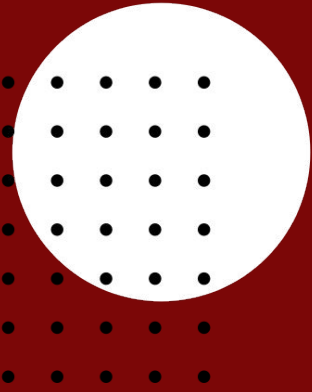
- 7% of hourly rate to existing custodian, creating a maintenance position
- no outsourcing landscaping, however would like to do so in the future but continue to prepare athletic fields



Projected Revenue to the Town



	Amount
ECS (Educational Cost Sharing)	\$2,564,202 (\$96,105 less than current year)
School of Choice Tuition <i>Second Cohort Graduating in 2025</i> As out-of-town families continue to realize the value of the high quality of education and extracurricular opportunities offered by our schools, we expect this tuition revenue to grow.	\$510,814
Total	\$3,075,016



Funded with Nonlapsing Account (not in Budget)



Item	Cost
IT Infrastructure	\$40,000
Teacher Laptops and Docking Stations (12)	\$24,000
Interactive Whiteboards (5)	\$20,000
Chromebooks (62)	\$27,900
Security Cameras (28) 8 Replacement and 20 New	\$10,385
Total	\$122,285

Budget History

Year	Increase
2016-2017	0.91%
2017-2018	0.00%
2018-2019	4.97%
2019-2020	1.93%
2020-2021	2.50%
2021-2022	1.13%
2022-2023	1.74%
2023-2024	4.41%
2024-2025	1.79%
2025-2026	6.46%
10 year average	2.58%

Average Rate of Inflation during the same time period is 3.26% (2016-2025*)

***projected at 3.0% for 2025**

Other CT School Districts - Actual Increases in 2024-2025, and BOE approved budgets for 2025-2026

School District	Actual Increase 2024-2025	Increase Requests 2025-2026	Total of Actual in '24-'25, and Requests in '25-'26
Hebron	6.78%	5.75%	12.53%
Stonington	4.5%	6.66%	11.16%
Somers	5.21%	5.68%	10.89%
Guilford	4.99%	5.50%	10.49%
Waterford	3.98%	6.51%	10.49%
Lyme-Old Lyme	3.00%	7.39%	10.39%
Portland	5.08%	4.97%	10.05%
Preston	3.53%	6.50%	10.03%
North Stonington	1.79%	6.46%	8.25%
Putnam	2.94%	4.66%	7.60%

CT towns for which data was available as of 3/7/2025 from Connecticut Association of School Business Officials (CASBO)



Thank You

