

**Education Committee Hearing - State Capitol
 February 20, 2007 – Noon – Room 2E**

The 07/08 ECS (Educational Cost Sharing) projected grant for Voluntown is another minimal increase. A recent article in the Hartford Courant noted Voluntown, a “poor” municipality, will receive a small increase, especially in comparison to the average statewide ECS distribution.

The ECS funding has been declining in percentage as compared to the total Voluntown education budget. Last year the budget increased by \$423,710 and the \$6,308 ECS grant impacted the local property tax with \$417,402 or 98.5% of the cost. One Mil equals \$216,721 which documents the local increase of the financial burden and support of the community for education.

Voluntown is projected to receive an ECS increase in 07/08 of \$75,044 and \$72,810 in the 08/09 projection. Although these sums are more than previous years, the amounts continue to document a decline in the overall percentage of state support of education in our community. What formula is being used to determine the ECS funds for Voluntown?

Educational Cost Sharing Grant – Voluntown, Connecticut

| Year | Total Budget | ECS Grant | ECS as % of Total Budget |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------|--|
| 2004-2005 | \$4,997,461 | \$2,257,214 | 45.16% |
| + / - | +\$307,015 | +\$63,382 | - 1.42% |
| 2005-2006 | \$5,304,476 | \$2,320,596 | 43.74% |
| + / - | +\$423,710 | +\$6,308 | - 3.12% |
| 2006-2007 | \$5,728,186 | \$2,326,904 | 40.62% |
| + / - | \$376,871 | +75,044 | -1.28% |
| 2007-2008 (Proposed) | \$6,105,057 <i>Proposal will need to be reduced</i> | \$2,401,948 | 39.34% <i>Projected as of 2-8-07</i> |

There is a need to create a plan for maintaining consistency in the ECS funding process. ECS is the cornerstone for sharing the burden of reasonable increases. State funding of education has increased, but the state share or percentage of the total Voluntown education budget has slowly decreased from 45.16% to a projected 39.34% in 07/08 as displayed by the above chart.

ECS Funding History – Voluntown, Connecticut

| 03/04 | Decrease | 04/05 | Increase | 05/06 | Increase | 06/07 | Increase | 07/08 Anticipated | Increase | 08/09 Anticipated | Increase |
|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| ECS | Under Previous 02/03 Year | ECS | Over Previous 03/04 Year | ECS | Over Previous 04/05 Year | ECS | Over Previous 05/06 Year | ECS | Over Previous 06/07 Year | ECS | Over Previous 07/08 Year |
| \$2,162,971 | (\$87,205) -3.87% | \$2,257,264 | \$94,293 +4.36% | \$2,320,596 | \$63,332 +2.80% | \$2,326,904 | \$6,308 +0.27% | \$2,401,948 | \$75,044 +3.23% | \$2,474,758 | \$72,810 +3.03% |

The above chart displays the minimal increases in ECS funds for Voluntown which averaged only \$19,182 more per year for 03/04 to 06/07 or the past four years. And, to return to a 45.16% ECS share of the cost would require an additional increase of \$280,000 for the next fiscal year.

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