

Regional Education in Small Towns

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Issue

Identify the Connecticut towns with populations (1) of less than 10,000, (2) between 10,000 and 20,000, and (3) between 20,000 and 30,000. For each one, indicate whether the town is part of a regional school district and what grades the regional district comprises.

Summary

Based on the most recent Department of Public Health population [estimates](#), 138 out of the 169 towns in Connecticut have fewer than 30,000 residents. Nearly 46% of these towns are either part of a regional school district (47 towns) or have no high school and pay to send resident students to schools in neighboring towns (i.e., “tuition out”) (16 towns). For purposes of this report, we classify both of these practices as forms of regional education.

In all, 72 towns have populations of less than 10,000 and 59 of them (82%) have regional education. The remaining 42 towns with populations between 10,000 and 20,000 and 24 towns with populations between 20,000 and 30,000 have only three towns and one town, respectively, with regional education.

As for the 63 towns that have regional education and populations below 30,000, their regional education breaks down as follows:

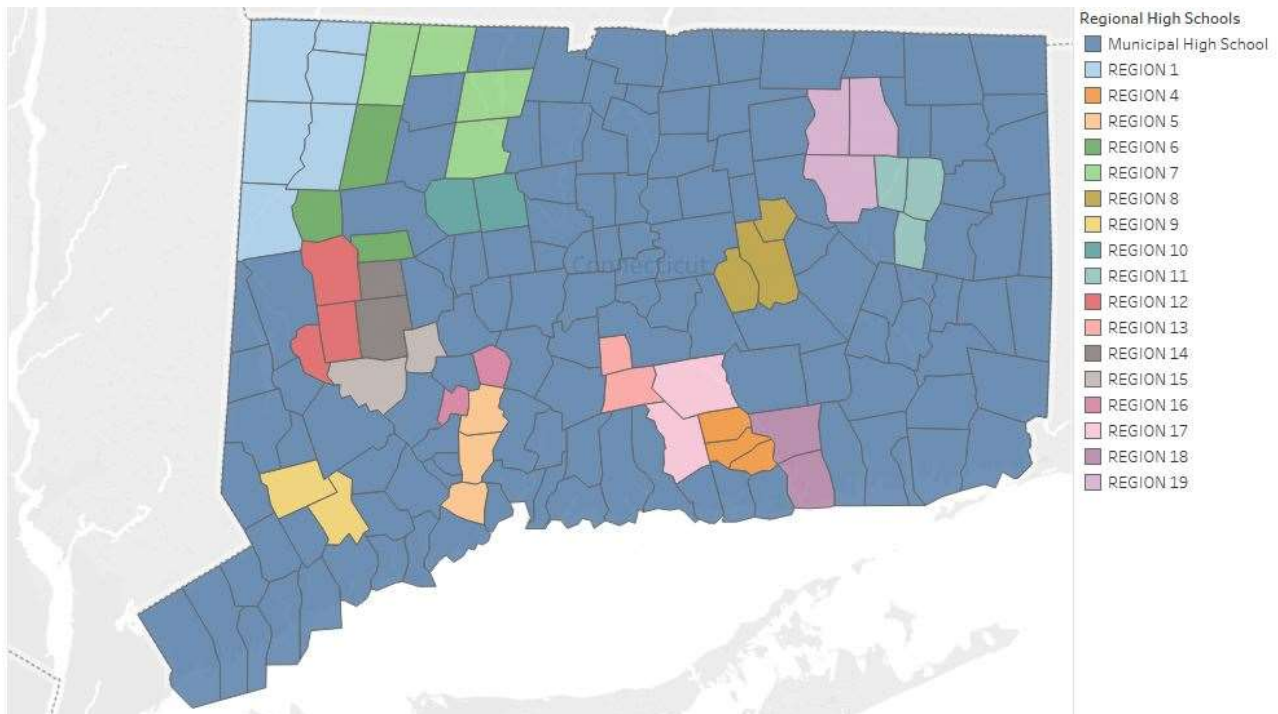
- grades K-12, 20 towns;
- middle and high school, 16; and
- high school (including the 16 tuition out towns), 27.

Town Maps and Populations

Regional Education Towns

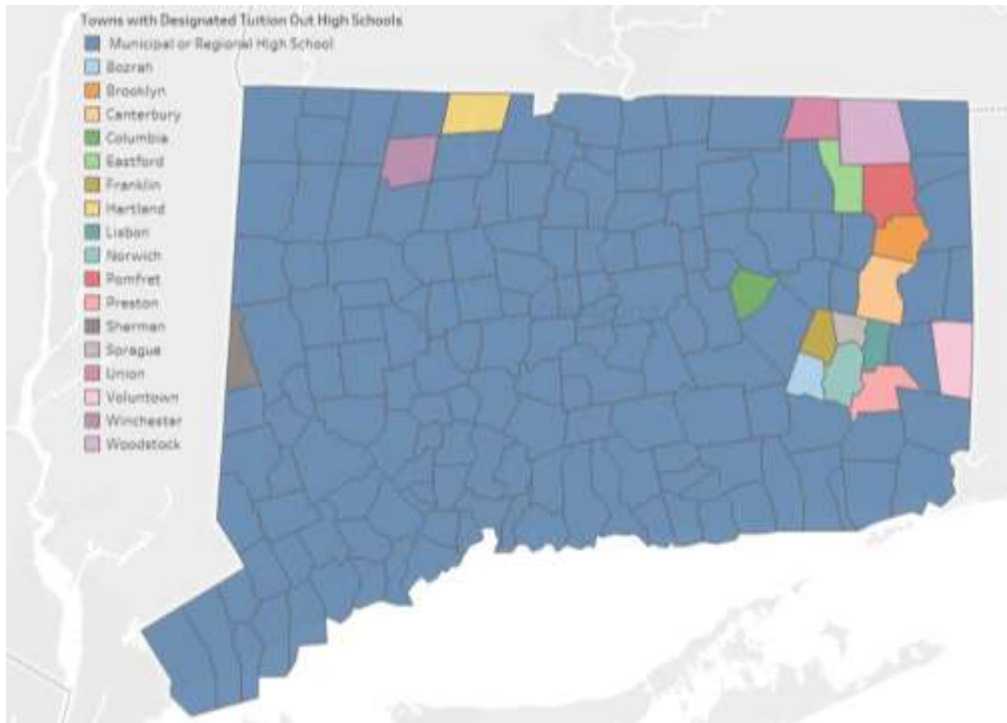
Below are maps depicting the regional education towns that are either part of a regional school district or “tuition out” students to neighboring districts (there are 64 towns with some regional education when all towns are included). Map 1 shows the 47 towns comprising the state’s 17 regional school districts, shaded according to each district’s member towns. For example, Region 1 has six member towns shaded light blue.

Map 1. Connecticut's 47 Regional School District Towns



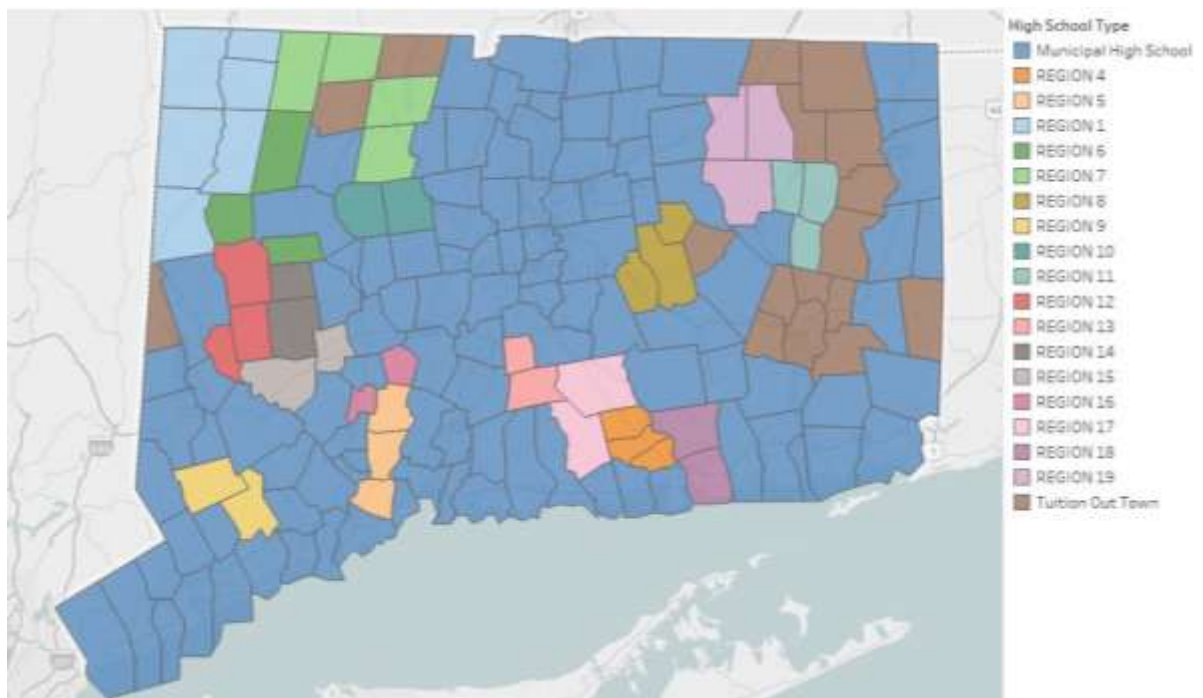
Map 2 shows the 17 “tuition out” towns. These are towns that pay tuition to send students to high school in a neighboring town.

Map 2. Connecticut's 17 "Tuition Out" Towns



Map 3 combines the towns from the previous two maps to show all of the regional education towns. The tuition-out districts are shaded brown.

Map 3. Regional District and Tuition Out Towns



Towns with Populations Less Than 10,000

Table 1 lists the 72 towns with populations less than 10,000, presented in alphabetical order, and indicates the type of regional education they provide, if any. As it shows, 44 of these towns are part of a regional district and 15 of them “tuition out” students. The remaining 13 towns (Bolton, East Granby, East Haddam, Lebanon, Litchfield, North Stonington, Portland, Putnam, Salem, Sterling, Thomaston, Thompson, and Westbrook) do not have regional education.

Of the 44 regional district towns, 19 are regional for grades K-12, 15 for middle and high school, and 10 for high school. All of the tuition-out towns do so only for high school students.

Table 1. Regional Education in Towns with Fewer than 10,000 Residents

Town	Estimated Population	Served by Regional District			Tuition-Out (High School)
		K-12	Middle and High school	High School Only	
Andover	3,248		√		
Ashford	4,244			√	
Barkhamsted	3,651		√		
Beacon Falls	6,168	√			
Bethany	5,497		√		
Bethlehem	3,439	√			
Bolton	4,916				
Bozrah	2,563				√
Bridgewater	1,644	√			
Brooklyn	8,208				√
Burlington	9,640	√			
Canaan	1,062			√	
Canterbury	5,075				√
Chaplin	2,241		√		
Chester	4,254		√		
Colebrook	1,413		√		
Columbia	5,418				√
Cornwall	1,376			√	
Deep River	4,494		√		
Durham	7,240	√			
Eastford	1,756				√
East Granby	5,166				

Town	Estimated Population	Served by Regional District			Tuition-Out (High School)
		K-12	Middle and High school	High School Only	
East Haddam	9,036				
Easton	7,579			√	
Essex	6,588		√		
Franklin	1,944				√
Goshen	2,888	√			
Haddam	8,264	√			
Hampton	1,844		√		
Hartland	2,112				√
Harwinton	5,452	√			
Hebron	9,507		√		
Kent	2,800			√	
Killingworth	6,401	√			
Lebanon	7,209				
Lisbon	4,274				√
Litchfield	8,168				
Lyme	2,354	√			
Marlborough	6,397		√		
Middlebury	7,725	√			
Middlefield	4,393	√			
Morris	2,277	√			
New Hartford	6,718		√		
Norfolk	1,642		√		
North Canaan	3,279			√	
North Stonington	5,270				
Old Lyme	7,432	√			
Pomfret	4,167				√
Portland	9,360				
Preston	4,666				√
Prospect	9,797	√			
Putnam	9,357				
Redding	9,233			√	
Roxbury	2,171	√			
Salem	4,141				
Salisbury	3,623			√	
Scotland	1,677		√		

Town	Estimated Population	Served by Regional District			Tuition-Out (High School)
		K-12	Middle and High school	High School Only	
Sharon	2,718			√	
Sherman	3,643				√
Sprague	2,914				√
Sterling	3,742				
Thomaston	7,602				
Thompson	9,288				
Union	839				√
Voluntown	2,558				√
Warren	1,410	√			
Washington	3,453	√			
Westbrook	6,956				
Willington	5,921			√	
Woodbridge	8,853		√		
Woodbury	9,557	√			
Woodstock	7,809				√

Sources: [Connecticut Department of Public Health and school district websites](#)

Towns with Populations Between 10,000 and 20,000

Table 2 lists the towns with populations between 10,000 and 20,000 and indicates whether they have regional education. Two of the 42 towns, indicated below, are part of regional districts (Orange for middle and high school and Southbury for K-12). One, Winchester, is a tuition-out town for high school only.

Table 2. Regional Education in Towns with Between 10,000 and 20,000 Residents

Town	Estimated Population	Regional Education	Town	Estimated Population	Regional Education
Ansonia	18,813		New Fairfield	14,017	
Avon	18,352		North Branford	14,208	
Bethel	19,802		Old Saybrook	10,132	
Brookfield	17,133		Orange	13,997	Regional District (middle and high school)
Canton	10,298		Oxford	13,035	
Clinton	12,957		Plainfield	15,093	
Colchester	16,029		Plainville	17,705	
Coventry	12,439		Plymouth	11,718	
Cromwell	13,956		Seymour	16,583	
Derby	12,581		Somers	11,106	
East Hampton	12,901		Southbury	19,571	Regional District (K-12)
East Lyme	18,789		Stafford	11,949	
East Windsor	11,395		Stonington	18,593	
Ellington	16,195		Suffield	15,698	
Granby	11,357		Tolland	14,722	
Griswold	11,687		Waterford	19,007	
Killingly	17,172		Weston	10,331	
Ledyard	14,837		Wilton	18,581	
Madison	18,196		Winchester	10,739	Tuition-out (high school)
Monroe	19,635		Windsor Locks	12,554	
Montville	19,149		Wolcott	16,672	

Sources: [Connecticut Department of Public Health](#) and school district websites

Towns with Populations Between 20,000 and 30,000

Table 3 lists the towns with populations between 20,000 and 30,000 with regional education, if any, shown. Only one town in this group, Mansfield, participates in a regional district (high school only).

Table 3. Regional Education in Towns with Between 20,000 and 30,000 Residents

Town	Estimated Population	Regional Education	Town	Estimated Population	Regional Education
Berlin	20,505		Newtown	27,965	
Bloomfield	21,406		North Haven	23,751	
Branford	28,111		Ridgefield	25,187	
Cheshire	29,330		Rocky Hill	20,105	
Darien	21,887		Simsbury	24,952	
East Haven	28,857		South Windsor	25,937	
Farmington	25,572		Vernon	29,289	
Guilford	22,283		Watertown	21,740	
Mansfield	25,912	Regional District (high school)	Westport	28,042	
New Canaan	20,376		Wethersfield	26,195	
New London	27,072		Windham	24,686	
New Milford	27,099		Windsor	28,898	

Sources: [Connecticut Department of Public Health](#) and school district websites

JM:rp