



**Testimony  
Robert Valentine  
First Selectman, Town of Goshen  
Before the Education Committee  
March 17, 2021**

**HB-6621 - AN ACT CONCERNING ASSORTED REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES.**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) established a working group to identify challenges faced by Regional School Districts. Regional School District enrollment in Connecticut accounts for 4.76% of the overall student population, creating a unique situation that is often overlooked in considering and adopting legislation.

One of the issues identified by the working group was the need to allow for flexibility in how the average daily membership (ADM) is calculated. Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-261(a)(2), average daily membership (ADM) is calculated from the previous October's Public School Information System (PSIS).

I respectfully request that a provision be added to SB-1032 to allow towns to use a five-year rolling average in determining the ADM in schools for purposes of calculating member town allocations. As towns continue to face debilitating cuts in nearly every facet of aid from the state, COST respectfully requests the Education Committee to strongly consider our suggested language changes, which are attached for your review.

This change will allow the use of a five-year rolling average to determine ADM, which is far more predictable and gives towns the ability to effectively budget in the near term. The current trend of diminishing student enrollment can create substantial volatility in a town's yearly assessment, using the current method of allocating expense by ADM. Allowing towns and districts the ability to use a five year rolling ADM will lessen substantial swings in a town's annual assessment. In doing so, towns and districts will be able to concentrate on delivering a quality education rather than being pressured to cut spending merely because of substantial changes in a town's assessment.



As an example, using the current method, the Town of Goshen will see an increase next fiscal year of \$655,201 or 9% over current, while the Regional School District 6 budget is proposed to hold even for the coming year. Under a five year rolling average the change would be a \$139,170 increase or 2%.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this important issue for regional school districts throughout the state.

Respectfully,

Robert P. Valentine  
First selectman, Goshen



### Proposed language change

Subsection (b) of section 10-51 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(b) For the purposes of this section, "net expenses" means estimated expenditures, including estimated capital expenditures, less estimated receipts as presented in a regional school district budget. On the date or dates fixed by the board, each town in the district shall pay a share of the cost of capital outlay, including costs for school building projects under chapter 173, and current expenditures necessary for the operation of the district. The board shall determine the amount to be paid by each member town as follows: (1) In an amount that bears the same ratio to the net expenses of the district as the number of pupils resident in such town in average daily membership in the regional school district during the preceding school year bears to the total number of such pupils in all the member towns, provided that the board may recalculate such amount based on the number of pupils in average daily membership in the regional school district for the current school year and may adjust each member town's payment to the regional school district for the following fiscal year by the difference between the last such payment and the recalculated amount, or (2) by a majority vote of legislative body or in any town in which the legislative body is a town meeting, by the board of selectmen of the sending towns, the use of a five year rolling average of the average daily membership (3) in an amount established pursuant to an agreement, approved by the State Board of Education, among such member towns, provided if the payment by any such member town deviates in an amount that is greater than or equal to one per cent of the amount established in such agreement, the state board shall review and may approve or reject such deviation. Until the regional school district has been in operation for one year, such amounts shall be based on the average daily membership of pupils in like grades from each of such towns at any school at which children were in attendance at the expense of such towns during the preceding school year or in accordance with the provisions of the agreement between the member towns described in subdivision (2) of this subsection.