

The Early Graduation Reward Plan: Helping High School Students Mature While Municipalities Reduce Spending¹

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Executive Summary

While there is no such thing as a “free lunch,” the simple reform of encouraging high school students to graduate in three years by rewarding those who do so voluntarily with a college scholarship would achieve the following:

1. ... improve the academic quality of public education;
2. ... reduce the skyrocketing state and local taxes required to fund public education;
3. ... attenuate the boredom that drives adolescents to engage in self-destructive behavior, especially drug abuse and promiscuity;
4. ... make higher education more affordable for all students, but especially those from poor and middle class families;
5. ... give adolescents who desire it the option once enjoyed by previous generations to “take some time off” from the education-career path and try something different;
6. ... relieve growing towns and cities from the crushing burden of costly new school construction;
7. ... bring the defenders of the current public education system and its critics together in the common cause of helping future generations.

Background

The idea of allowing high school students to graduate in less than four years is not new. Leon Botstein, the distinguished president of Bard College, has long argued that the current curriculum of American high schools is a hindrance to academic achievement with the worst damage wreaked on average and below-average pupils. Indeed, Bard has become an elite college in part by deliberately admitting many secondary students after their junior year in high school.

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If the notion of eliminating a grade for a sizeable number of students is not new, neither does it turn out to be very difficult. This is because most school districts in North America define graduation requirements, not by years attended, but by the completion of certain required courses. Since high school students are permitted many electives over the course of four years, condensing the curriculum into three grades is largely a matter of students substituting required courses for some electives.

In 2003, the province of Ontario eliminated an entire grade with the only apparent problem being an unusually large number of applicants to Canadian colleges and universities in one year. Also in 2003, Gov. Jeb Bush instituted a voluntary three-grade curriculum for all of Florida's schools.² Any Florida student who elects a "fast track" to high school graduation now has the right to pursue it as long as he or she takes all the state's required courses. On the other hand, there is no compulsion to give up the senior year, and students on the accelerated path have at least one opportunity every year to step off it.

Indeed, in most states the requirements for high school graduation are so flexibly written that the majority of America's local school boards already have the authority to confer diplomas on those who finish before the end of four academic years. In Connecticut, many towns have debated, adopted, reconsidered, and revised their own early graduation policies. Ridgefield, for example, offers a three-and-a-half-year curriculum, allowing seniors to finish in February.³ West Hartford's *Public School Administrative Regulations for Graduation*⁴ acknowledge that "there are students capable of graduating from high school in three years" but require a formal application that must be approved by teachers, guidance counselors, the high school principal, and the superintendent. Middletown, on the other hand, has a streamlined process,⁵ which allows the student's building principal to approve early graduation as long as the request is made at least one semester prior to the desired date. Westport's Staples High School⁶ and the Lewis Mills High School in Burlington⁷ also facilitate early graduation.

Interestingly, the idea of encouraging early graduation is a reform that has the potential to unite political divisions. In his book *Jefferson's Children*,⁸ Botstein makes it clear that he is a long-time liberal opposed to many conservative education reforms, such

² J. Warford (K-12 Chancellor), *Technical Assistance Materials Related to the Implementation of Accelerated Graduation Options Defined in Senate Bill 30A*. Florida Department of Education, 2003.

³ Ridgefield "Graduation and Promotion Requirements" (www.ridgefield.org/rhs/guidance/requirements.html).

⁴ See article VII. Credit Options, subsection D.

⁵ Middle High School *Graduation Requirements*, subsection on "Early Graduation."

⁶ See www.stapleshigh.net/info/coursebook/info.html.

⁷ See www.region10ct.org/LSM/SchoolInfo/StatementOfPurpose.html.

⁸ L. Botstein, *Jefferson's Children*. Doubleday, New York, 1997.

as vouchers, tax credits, and the public subsidy of private and parochial secondary schools. Gov. Bush, on the other hand, has pioneered many of these very same reforms. It seems clear that finding ways to encourage early graduation could heal communities currently divided over the exploding cost of secondary education and unite them in the common cause of helping future generations.

A New Twist

The proposal made here would increase the frequency of early graduation by employing a financial incentive that would greatly benefit both students and taxpayers. **Specifically, it is recommended that students who graduate early be granted a college scholarship equal to one third of the high school's annual per pupil cost.** At a time when this number for many Connecticut high schools is rapidly approaching \$15,000, such a policy could translate into a \$5,000 student scholarship and a \$10,000 rebate to property taxpayers, as well as to state income and sales taxpayers (who subsidize secondary education in some towns and cities through the mechanism of Education Cost Sharing).

Under this recommended plan, a higher sum is rebated to taxpayers (than to students) for two reasons. First, some school districts will want to reserve part of the taxpayer rebate to cover the fixed costs of maintaining a high school that would not necessarily be reduced by lowering the senior census through early graduation. As the definition of a high school's fixed costs is potentially a debatable issue until the plan is actually implemented by a given school board, the relatively higher rebate to taxpayers ensures that there will be more than enough funds to reduce the education budget, even after a generous reserve for building maintenance. Once a high school's administrators and its governing board become more comfortable with the financial benefits of early graduation, the scholarship amount can always be raised.

Second, as we shall see, a \$5,000 scholarship can be used by graduating students to fill the inevitable gaps in the financial aid packages offered by the vast majority of private and public colleges.

Let us proceed to examine in greater detail each of the benefits of a senior year, early graduation reward policy:

1. Improve the Overall Quality of Public Education

The structure of public education as we practice it today is an invention of the late-eighteenth century, a time when factory owners cared little for employee morale ... when family harmony meant physically punishing a disobedient child or wife ... and when seriously sick people got better care in their homes than in hospitals. Things have certainly improved for factory workers, family members, and hospital patients; but what about for students? A quirk in the design of teacher colleges in America -- whereby

future educators are trained, not to master a field (math, English, history, biology) but an age group (elementary school, middle school, high school) -- has led many people to mistakenly conclude that the surviving organization of public education is both natural and appropriate.

Yet, when we step back and look at public education objectively, we make a surprising discovery. Americans are so accustomed to hearing that their schools are inferior compared to those of the Japanese and the Europeans that they have missed an important fact. If we were only comparing American children in grades K-to-4th grade with their foreign counterparts, we would be surprised to learn that students in the United States do quite well when measured against their contemporaries abroad. Indeed, according to federal monitoring⁹, the math and science skills of the typical American nine-year-old have actually improved considerably since the late 1960s. It is only during the middle school, and particularly the high school, years when our educational process begins to break down.

“The weakest part of America’s educational system is located at the juncture between adolescence and schooling,” says Bard’s Botstein.¹⁰ “For all income classes, races, and regions, the ... years from ages twelve and thirteen to seventeen and eighteen mark a time of trouble The traditional high school is an out-of-date strategy and system. In terms of its curriculum, it remains a useless middle ground that helps neither fast nor slow learners.”

While some might argue that encouraging students to graduate early deprives them of the opportunity to take more electives, there is growing evidence to suggest that having them focus on “the basics” would be a significant educational improvement. According to a report by the National Center for Educational Statistics at the United States Department of Education, so few high school graduates in the 1990s could read and write at minimum levels of proficiency that an astonishing 90 percent of colleges must offer remedial instruction and tutoring.¹¹ Instead of trying to justify a fourth year of high school with an odd mixture of advance placement and eclectic non-core courses, perhaps it makes more sense to concentrate on fulfilling the real mission of secondary education and make sure that students are learning the basics when they need to -- earlier.

2. Reduce State and Local Taxes

The appendix at the end of this paper shows what would happen if different Connecticut schools boards were to adopt a policy of rewarding those high school students who willingly graduate one year early. It lists all the high school districts in the

⁹ National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

¹⁰ L. Botstein, *Jefferson’s Children*, p. 44.

¹¹ L. Botstein, *Jefferson’s Children*, pp. 35-36.

state and shows the remarkable savings for taxpayers (before reserving for fixed costs, such as fuel oil and electricity) if 10 percent, 25 percent, or 50 percent of students agreed to graduate in three years with a scholarship equal to one third of the per pupil cost.

The calculations are based on the most recently available data from the Connecticut Department of Education on school enrollment and per pupil expenditures by district for the 2002-03 academic year. Given the generally rapid rate of inflation in the cost of educating Connecticut high school students (which shows no sign of abating), the question of how much of the taxpayer savings should be reduced for fixed costs ought to be viewed in light of the fact that the savings would be at least 15 percent higher in most cases, if 2004-05 data were available. In other words, for the sake of general argument, it is reasonable to assume that any need to take into account a reserve for fixed costs is offset by per pupil cost inflation -- and, therefore, that the savings calculated for 2002-2003 are very close to today's net savings.

It is also worth noting that, due to the extremely wide variation in the distribution of Education Cost Sharing (ECS) dollars from state income tax revenues, many towns and districts effectively support their schools almost exclusively with local property taxes. What this means is that these towns and districts are in the enviable position of being able to unilaterally offer an early graduation reward without enabling legislation from Hartford. Of course, once it becomes clear how much all constituencies -- students, their parents, and taxpayers without young children -- would benefit from the proposed policy, it is hard to imagine the Legislature denying a similar opportunity to any Connecticut school district that requests it.

3. Stop the Boredom that Promotes Substance Abuse and Promiscuity

It doesn't take an academic study to convince parents, teachers, and students what they already know in their hearts: that the senior year of high school is largely a waste of time. This is true for almost all seniors: those who are bright, those who are slow, and those in between.

Only part of the problem of this "wasted" year stems from the fact that students apply earlier to college than in times past and, once accepted, feel they have effectively finished high school long before graduation. In addition, today's adolescents mature far more rapidly, both intellectually and physiologically, than they did when public education was invented two centuries ago.

The result is that we now confine adolescents to a secondary educational system that they have long outgrown by the age of 18. Indeed, about all a community gets for its investment in one of the highest cost years of public education is a valiant attempt by school guidance counselors to keep their most restless seniors out of trouble.

Unfortunately, even the best counselors are not always successful. By the time high school students reach their senior year, most can drive a car. The resulting combination

of freedom and boredom is an open invitation for trouble -- sometimes deadly trouble. In 2002, one in six high school seniors admitted to driving while high, making traffic crashes the leading cause of death for young people age 15 to 20.¹² According to the non-partisan Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 61.6 percent of high school students have had sex, much of it unprotected.¹³ The CDC also finds that 33 percent have been involved in violent incidents and 75 percent drink alcohol.¹⁴

The tragedies implied by these statistics are not confined to any particular class, race, or district. In fact, the largest demand for illegal drugs in America comes from white middle-class suburbs, not from minority populations in poor urban areas; and more suburban high school seniors abuse alcohol and have sex with people with whom they have no romantic relationship than urban seniors.¹⁵ A recent report by New York's Manhattan Institute, sponsored by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and other federal agencies, found that suburban public high school students have sex, drink, smoke, use illegal drugs, and engage in delinquent behavior at least as often as their urban counterparts and that all students engage in these behaviors more often than their parents realize.¹⁶

Interestingly, the depressing statistics on self-destructive adolescent behavior do offer some hope. It turns out that most young people are quite capable of handling the availability of alcohol, drugs, and sex, if there is something meaningful at stake that can compete with these influences. Recognizing this fact, many school boards (particularly those in affluent communities) have attempted to keep juniors and seniors "occupied" with an ever expanding menu of sports, hobbies, and non-academic electives, effectively turning their high schools into playgrounds for oversized children. The flaw in this well-intentioned, if expensive, strategy is that American adolescents have an uncanny sense of hypocrisy. They know they are being deliberately distracted and that most high school electives are not on a caliber with a real college course or activity.

Psychological research strongly suggests that the most effective way we can help our young people to engage their latent talents and avoid harmful distractions is to encourage them to get out into the wider world and on with their lives at a younger age.¹⁷ In Botstein's words, the current design of our high schools is "obsolete." The reality we should no longer ignore is that they were designed two centuries ago for 15-to-18 year-

¹² "Drugged Driving," National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2003.

¹³ *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System -- US 2003*.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ J. Greene and G. Forster, *Sex, Drugs, and Delinquency in Urban and Suburban Public Schools*. New York, Manhattan Institute, 2004.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ J. Allen, G. Kupermine, S. Philliber, K. Herre, "Programmatic Prevention of Adolescent Problem Behaviors," *American Journal of Community Psychology* (Vol. 22, #5, 1994).

old *children* and are now filled with *young adults*, who just happen to be the same age. In truth, the senior year can no longer fulfill the high academic expectations that taxpayers legitimately place on it. The four year curriculum is an increasingly inadequate solution to the problem of how to successfully motivate and educate contemporary adolescents. The best experience for many maturing teenagers is an alternative to the senior year of high school.

4. Make College More Affordable

At the very least, encouraging students to graduate early, earning something like a \$5,000 scholarship in the process, accomplishes three things. First, it permits those students who are ready intellectually and emotionally to move on at the right time.

Second, it gives them a sense of real adult accomplishment, a reward for their hard work that is tangible and not at all gimmicky.

Third, it expands their options for future success by making expensive colleges more affordable, especially if they need financial aid beyond family resources. With the exception of a few elite colleges, even the most generous support packages from private and public universities have substantial “gaps,” which an early graduation scholarship could neatly fill.

For many the early graduation scholarship will mean nothing less than the opportunity to attend the school of their choice; for others it might just mean having more time to focus on extra-curricular activities or not having to go as deeply into debt. But at a time when college students are piling up more loans than ever before,¹⁸ an early high school graduation scholarship is a substantial financial incentive for students of parents in nearly every income bracket.

It should be added that, if early graduation were to become widely popular in the United States, it would mean that millions of high school students would be giving up electives in lower grades to concentrate on core courses in reading, literature, math, and history. This would inevitably reduce college and university tuitions over the long run, because schools of higher education would not need to spend as much as they currently do on remedial tutoring and coursework.

5. Give Adolescents the Time Honored Chance to “Find Themselves”

Getting the intellectual boost of an accelerated education, earning a valuable scholarship, and saving himself or herself from the potentially self-destructive boredom

¹⁸ According to the Public Interest Research Group’s Higher Education Project, 39 percent of college graduates with loans carry an “unmanageable debt,” defined as requiring payments of 8 percent or more of the borrower’s monthly income.

of a wasted senior year are not the only ways that a student could benefit from the early graduation reward option. The graduating junior would also receive the priceless gift of time -- an extra year that could be spent in any number of ways.

Some, of course, will want to go on to college right away. But others will now have the freedom to work for a year, apprentice in something like broadcasting or computer programming, volunteer for community service, or attend a community college for a semester or two before leaving home.

This freedom is no small gift. Many experts say that the level of college and professional school debt many students take on has deprived current and future generations of the important opportunity to pause and try something different before entering the worlds of work and family.

In 2003, the *New York Times* ran a front page story headlined “College Loans Rise, Swamping Graduates’ Dreams.”¹⁹ In it, the writer quotes William Wright-Swadel, director of career services at Harvard, who confirms that many college graduates have lost the freedom enjoyed by previous generations to take some time off from their career tracks and pursue an offbeat interest while they are still young.

The early graduation reward would be a way to preserve for those who need it the vanishing option to learn something unexpected about the world -- and themselves. Canadian journalist Barbara Aggerholm surveyed a number of teenagers who took time off before college after the province of Ontario recently eliminated one year of high school and found that both they and their parents were quite pleased with the results.²⁰

6. Lower the Need for Costly New School Construction

Paying for the day-to-day operation of a school is not the only educational expense the community must assume. In areas where the student population is growing, districts find themselves repeatedly having to build or expand school facilities simply to accommodate an ever higher census. The real expense of such construction is often obscured by the practice of bonding it out over 20 or more years.

In addition, many states have “highest prevailing wage” laws, which require that workers on public buildings be paid far in excess of what might be available on the open market. As a result, even school boards in small districts of 4,000 to 5,000 households can end up committing taxpayers to \$80 and \$90 million in cumulative payouts of interest and principal for just one school project.

¹⁹ G. Winter, “College Loans Rise, Swamping Graduates’ Dreams,” *New York Times* (January 28, 2003), pp. A1 + A16.

²⁰ B. Aggerholm, “Good Year for the Gap,” *The Record* (May 31, 2004), pp. C1 + C2.

By trimming the high school census with a reward for voluntarily graduating early, school boards in growing communities can trim future requirements for expensive school construction.

7. Bring Well-Intentioned Citizens Together

It is hardly news that almost every community in America is divided on the issue of how to cope with the exploding cost of public education. Some believe the current system should continue to be subsidized no matter what the expense; others argue that public money ought to be used to send students to more cost-efficient private and religious secondary schools.

In the midst of all the debate and political posturing, two facts stand out. First, there are intelligent, caring people on both sides of the debate. Second, some of the most articulate spokespeople for both points of view enthusiastically support the idea of early graduation.

Certainly a cost-saving incentive to promote a reform that appeals to good people from all factions is worthy of serious consideration.

Connecticut Taxpayer Savings from Early Graduation of Seniors *

Town / District	High School Census	Per Pupil Cost	Savings from 10% Early Grad.	Savings from 25% Early Grad.	Savings from 50% Early Grad.
Ansonia	647	\$9,059	\$146,524	\$366,310	\$732,620
Avon	805	\$9,255	\$186,258	\$465,644	\$931,288
Berlin	1039	\$9,873	\$256,453	\$641,133	\$1,282,266
Bethel	919	\$11,286	\$259,301	\$648,253	\$1,296,506
Bloomfield	1775	\$12,413	\$550,827	\$1,377,067	\$2,754,134
Bolton	314	\$12,081	\$94,836	\$237,090	\$474,181
Branford	1141	\$9,359	\$266,978	\$667,444	\$1,334,889
Bridgeport	4908	\$9,635	\$1,182,167	\$2,955,417	\$5,910,833
Bristol	2749	\$8,311	\$571,190	\$1,427,975	\$2,855,950
Brookfield	859	\$11,826	\$253,954	\$634,885	\$1,269,770
Canton	736	\$10,311	\$189,721	\$474,304	\$948,607
Cheshire	1523	\$9,501	\$361,743	\$904,356	\$1,808,713
Clinton	633	\$8,866	\$140,310	\$350,774	\$701,548
Colchester	878	\$9,667	\$212,196	\$530,489	\$1,060,978
Coventry	563	\$8,217	\$115,658	\$289,144	\$578,288
Cromwell	444	\$12,162	\$134,994	\$337,486	\$674,971
Danbury	2848	\$8,726	\$621,290	\$1,553,226	\$3,106,452
Darien	911	\$11,314	\$257,680	\$644,200	\$1,288,400
Derby	407	\$12,956	\$131,829	\$329,573	\$659,147
East Granby	235	\$12,621	\$74,145	\$185,364	\$370,727
East Haddam	332	\$9,987	\$82,892	\$207,229	\$414,458
East Hampton	490	\$10,037	\$122,955	\$307,388	\$614,776
East Hartford	2413	\$9,990	\$602,632	\$1,506,581	\$3,013,161
East Haven	1142	\$7,059	\$201,530	\$503,825	\$1,007,651
East Lyme	1197	\$8,366	\$250,360	\$625,901	\$1,251,802
East Windsor	429	\$8,544	\$91,636	\$229,091	\$458,181
Ellington	670	\$9,755	\$163,404	\$408,510	\$817,020
Enfield	2170	\$9,461	\$513,285	\$1,283,213	\$2,566,426
Fairfield	2160	\$12,368	\$667,882	\$1,669,706	\$3,339,411
Farmington	1276	\$11,011	\$351,241	\$878,103	\$1,756,207
Glastonbury	1817	\$9,726	\$441,781	\$1,104,452	\$2,208,904
Granby	590	\$10,568	\$155,883	\$389,709	\$779,417
Greenwich	2410	\$14,235	\$857,630	\$2,144,075	\$4,288,149
Griswold	697	\$9,110	\$158,745	\$396,861	\$793,723
Groton	1379	\$10,362	\$357,233	\$893,082	\$1,786,164
Guilford	1160	\$11,149	\$323,328	\$808,321	\$1,616,641
Hamden	2091	\$10,368	\$541,989	\$1,354,973	\$2,709,946
Hartford	5030	\$11,928	\$1,499,940	\$3,749,849	\$7,499,699
Killingly	1015	\$9,137	\$231,854	\$579,635	\$1,159,271
Lebanon	570	\$9,412	\$134,118	\$335,295	\$670,590
Ledyard	1053	\$8,716	\$229,440	\$573,599	\$1,147,199
Madison	992	\$10,435	\$258,777	\$646,943	\$1,293,885
Litchfield	661	\$9,470	\$156,499	\$391,247	\$782,494
Manchester	2240	\$9,503	\$532,161	\$1,330,402	\$2,660,804
Meriden	2331	\$10,350	\$603,164	\$1,507,911	\$3,015,822
Middletown	1188	\$9,952	\$295,585	\$738,962	\$1,477,924
Milford	2116	\$11,344	\$600,113	\$1,500,282	\$3,000,565
Monroe	1218	\$10,250	\$312,126	\$780,315	\$1,560,629

* 2002-03 census and per pupil expenditure data from Connecticut Dept. of Education. Does not include reserve for fixed costs.

Connecticut Taxpayer Savings from Early Graduation of Seniors *

Town / District	High School Census	Per Pupil Cost	Savings from 10% Early Grad.	Savings from 25% Early Grad.	Savings from 50% Early Grad.
Montville	831	\$10,952	\$227,538	\$568,844	\$1,137,688
Naugatuck	1611	\$8,161	\$328,671	\$821,676	\$1,643,353
New Britain	2710	\$10,479	\$709,984	\$1,774,960	\$3,549,920
New Canaan	999	\$12,531	\$312,974	\$782,435	\$1,564,870
New Fairfield	900	\$11,679	\$262,770	\$656,925	\$1,313,850
New Haven	5084	\$10,694	\$1,359,263	\$3,398,158	\$6,796,317
Newington	1403	\$9,087	\$318,734	\$796,835	\$1,593,669
New London	706	\$13,468	\$237,702	\$594,254	\$1,188,509
New Milford	1522	\$8,023	\$305,282	\$763,205	\$1,526,410
Newtown	1427	\$10,188	\$363,451	\$908,628	\$1,817,256
North Branford	677	\$10,155	\$171,867	\$429,667	\$859,333
North Haven	1053	\$9,418	\$247,927	\$619,818	\$1,239,636
North Stonington	271	\$11,516	\$78,018	\$195,044	\$390,088
Norwalk	3104	\$11,871	\$921,166	\$2,302,916	\$4,605,832
Old Saybrook	469	\$11,033	\$129,360	\$323,400	\$646,799
Plainfield	734	\$8,186	\$150,205	\$375,512	\$751,024
Plainville	825	\$9,570	\$197,373	\$493,431	\$986,863
Plymouth	505	\$10,095	\$127,444	\$318,609	\$637,218
Portland	288	\$14,492	\$104,343	\$260,858	\$521,716
Putnam	417	\$10,520	\$109,673	\$274,182	\$548,364
Ridgefield	1424	\$11,778	\$419,288	\$1,048,221	\$2,096,441
Rocky Hill	693	\$8,112	\$140,545	\$351,363	\$702,726
Seymour	1029	\$8,047	\$207,018	\$517,545	\$1,035,089
Shelton	1671	\$12,121	\$506,338	\$1,265,844	\$2,531,688
Simsbury	1463	\$10,796	\$394,859	\$987,146	\$1,974,293
Somers	523	\$9,149	\$119,629	\$299,073	\$598,146
Southington	2064	\$8,431	\$435,051	\$1,087,627	\$2,175,255
South Windsor	1440	\$9,029	\$325,041	\$812,602	\$1,625,204
Stafford	582	\$10,173	\$148,016	\$370,040	\$740,081
Stamford	4187	\$10,819	\$1,132,487	\$2,831,218	\$5,662,436
Stonington	705	\$11,259	\$198,434	\$496,084	\$992,169
Stratford	2252	\$8,466	\$476,654	\$1,191,636	\$2,383,272
Suffield	696	\$9,535	\$165,916	\$414,790	\$829,580
Thomaston	574	\$10,035	\$144,002	\$360,004	\$720,008
Thompson	361	\$10,149	\$91,594	\$228,986	\$457,972
Tolland	820	\$8,530	\$174,859	\$437,147	\$874,294
Torrington	1364	\$9,050	\$308,609	\$771,524	\$1,543,047
Trumbull	1788	\$10,715	\$478,940	\$1,197,351	\$2,394,702
Vernon	1229	\$8,071	\$247,976	\$619,941	\$1,239,881
Wallingford	2190	\$8,447	\$462,479	\$1,156,197	\$2,312,394
Waterbury	3825	\$11,422	\$1,092,252	\$2,730,629	\$5,461,259
Waterford	905	\$11,375	\$257,352	\$643,380	\$1,286,760
Watertown	937	\$9,144	\$214,190	\$535,474	\$1,070,948
Westbrook	294	\$11,621	\$85,416	\$213,539	\$427,078
West Hartford	2868	\$10,671	\$765,134	\$1,912,834	\$3,825,668
West Haven	1778	\$9,312	\$413,938	\$1,034,845	\$2,069,690
Weston	623	\$15,004	\$233,682	\$584,204	\$1,168,408
Westport	1279	\$12,453	\$398,178	\$995,444	\$1,990,888

* 2002-03 census and per pupil expenditure data from Connecticut Dept. of Education. Does not include reserve for fixed costs.

Connecticut Taxpayer Savings from Early Graduation of Seniors *

Town / District	High School Census	Per Pupil Cost	Savings from 10% Early Grad.	Savings from 25% Early Grad.	Savings from 50% Early Grad.
Wethersfield	1121	\$11,059	\$309,920	\$774,800	\$1,549,600
Wilton	1079	\$13,248	\$357,370	\$893,425	\$1,786,851
Windham	1008	\$11,783	\$296,938	\$742,345	\$1,484,691
Windsor	1456	\$10,024	\$364,858	\$912,144	\$1,824,288
Windsor Locks	593	\$11,089	\$164,402	\$411,004	\$822,008
Wolcott	858	\$9,063	\$194,394	\$485,984	\$971,968
Region 1	586	\$10,754	\$157,541	\$393,852	\$787,704
Region 4	531	\$10,973	\$145,660	\$364,150	\$728,300
Region 5	1133	\$14,951	\$423,491	\$1,058,728	\$2,117,457
Region 6	550	\$11,315	\$155,577	\$388,943	\$777,886
Region 7	721	\$11,756	\$211,907	\$529,769	\$1,059,537
Region 8	1000	\$8,722	\$218,050	\$545,126	\$1,090,251
Region 9	891	\$13,904	\$309,716	\$774,290	\$1,548,580
Region 10	706	\$10,504	\$185,397	\$463,492	\$926,984
Region 11	362	\$13,782	\$124,725	\$311,813	\$623,625
Region 12	386	\$13,233	\$127,702	\$319,256	\$638,512
Region 13	572	\$10,212	\$146,038	\$365,095	\$730,190
Region 14	803	\$9,373	\$188,159	\$470,398	\$940,797
Region 15	1192	\$10,778	\$321,184	\$802,960	\$1,605,919
Region 16	508	\$12,345	\$156,785	\$391,964	\$783,927
Region 17	612	\$11,879	\$181,747	\$454,367	\$908,734
Region 18	460	\$13,142	\$151,128	\$377,820	\$755,640
Region 19	1263	\$10,013	\$316,146	\$790,365	\$1,580,730
Total Annual Savings Statewide			\$38,656,692	\$96,641,729	\$193,283,459

* 2002-03 census and per pupil expenditure data from Connecticut Dept. of Education. Does not include reserve for fixed costs.