

SCHOOL + STATE  
FINANCE PROJECT

[www.schoolstatefinance.org](http://www.schoolstatefinance.org)

# THE SYSTEM IS BROKEN

How Connecticut Funds  
Education and What  
Needs to Change

# Past Progress

## Legislative accomplishments in 2021 that will increase equity in education funding

ECS phase-in schedule maintained

---

ECS need-based weights increased and enhanced resulting in more funding for English Learners and students residing in concentrated poverty

---

Provided a portion of full student-centered funding for public charter school students

---

Requires a study of the student-centered funding proposal by OFA

# What towns are impacted by the change in the concentrated poverty threshold?

Previously Eligible Towns	Newly Eligible Towns
Hartford	<b>Ansonia</b>
Meriden	<b>Bridgeport</b>
New London	<b>East Hartford</b>
Waterbury	Hartford
Windham	<b>Manchester</b>
	Meriden
	<b>Naugatuck</b>
	<b>New Britain</b>
	<b>New Haven</b>
	New London
	<b>Norwich</b>
	<b>Torrington</b>
	Waterbury
	<b>West Haven</b>
	Windham

The background of the slide is a dark blue-tinted photograph of several young students sitting at a desk in a classroom, focused on their work. The text is overlaid on this image.

# **We need to do more**

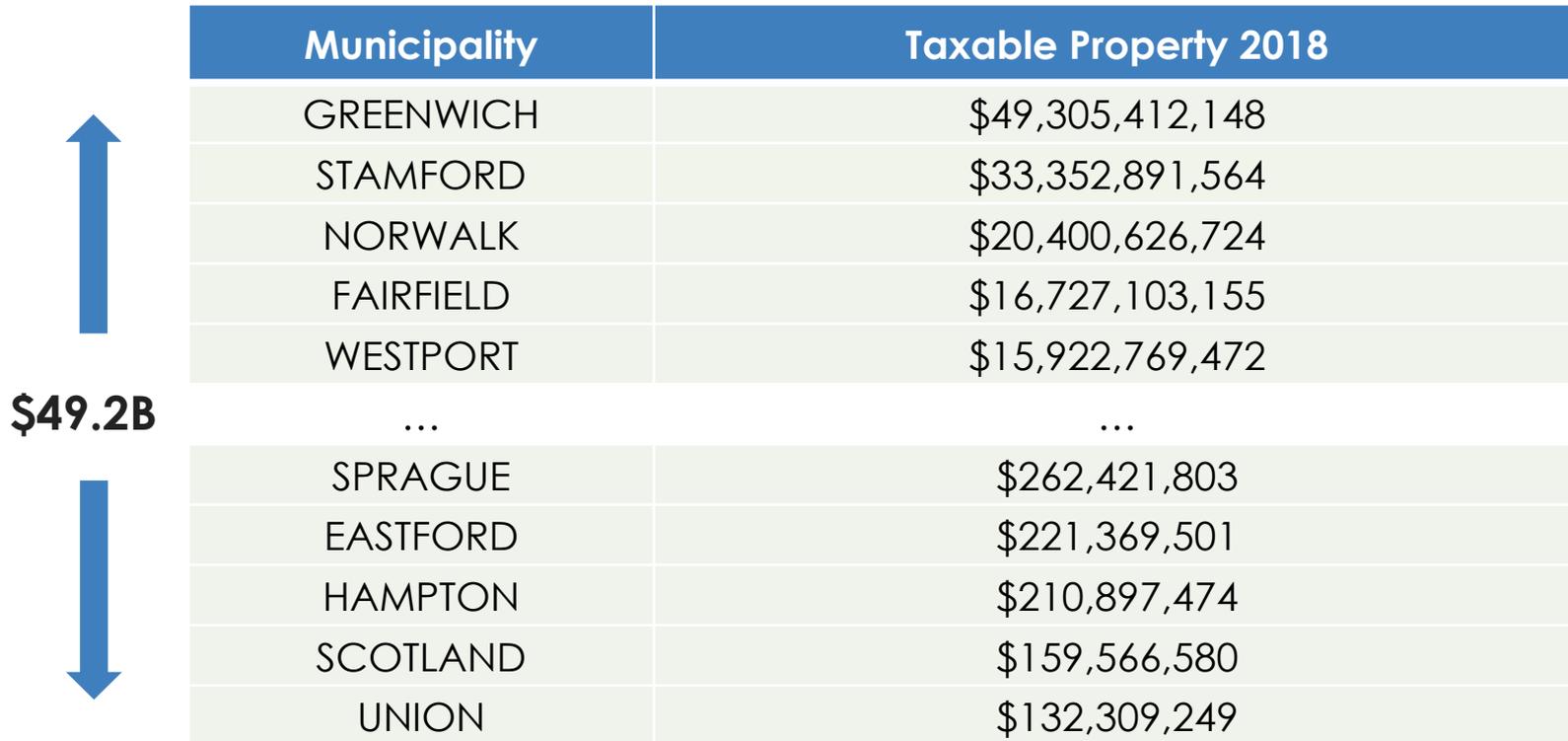
Why do we continue to  
push for more changes in  
education funding?

A background image showing a woman with dark hair reading a book to a young child. The scene is dimly lit, with the woman's face and the book being the primary light sources. The overall tone is educational and intimate.

One of the most ***fundamentally flawed*** parts of education funding is its **reliance on local property taxes.**

It enables an ***inequitable*** system where affluent, predominantly white communities are able to **fund their schools at higher levels.**

## A majority (about 60%) of education funding in Connecticut is generated from local property taxes

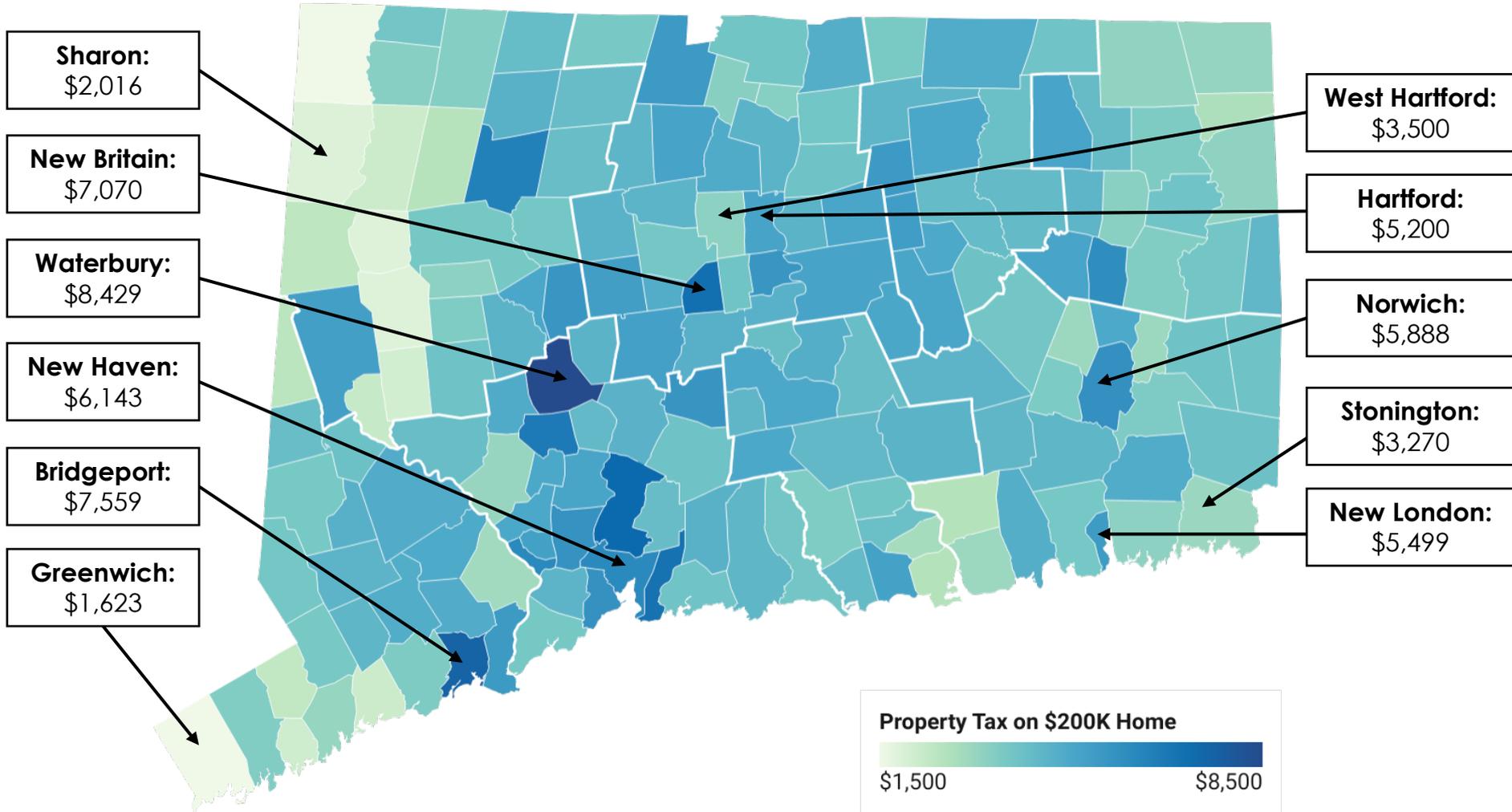


Municipality	Taxable Property 2018
GREENWICH	\$49,305,412,148
STAMFORD	\$33,352,891,564
NORWALK	\$20,400,626,724
FAIRFIELD	\$16,727,103,155
WESTPORT	\$15,922,769,472
...	...
SPRAGUE	\$262,421,803
EASTFORD	\$221,369,501
HAMPTON	\$210,897,474
SCOTLAND	\$159,566,580
UNION	\$132,309,249

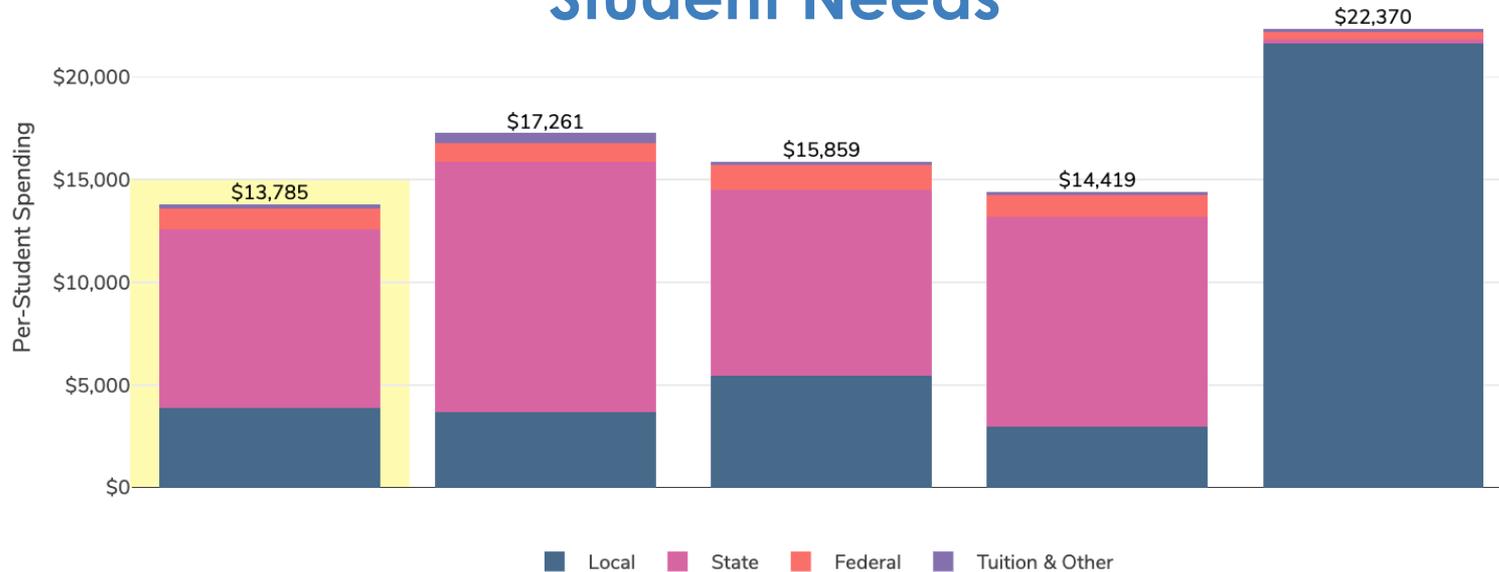
**\$49.2B**

Source: State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management. (2021). *Municipal Fiscal Indicators, Fiscal Years Ended 2015-2019*. Hartford, CT: Author. Retrieved from <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/OPM/IGP/munfinsr/Municipal-Fiscal-Indicators/FI-2015-19-Final-AsOf-4-30-21.pdf>.

# Property Taxes on a \$200,000 House



# Per-student Spending Often Doesn't Match Student Needs

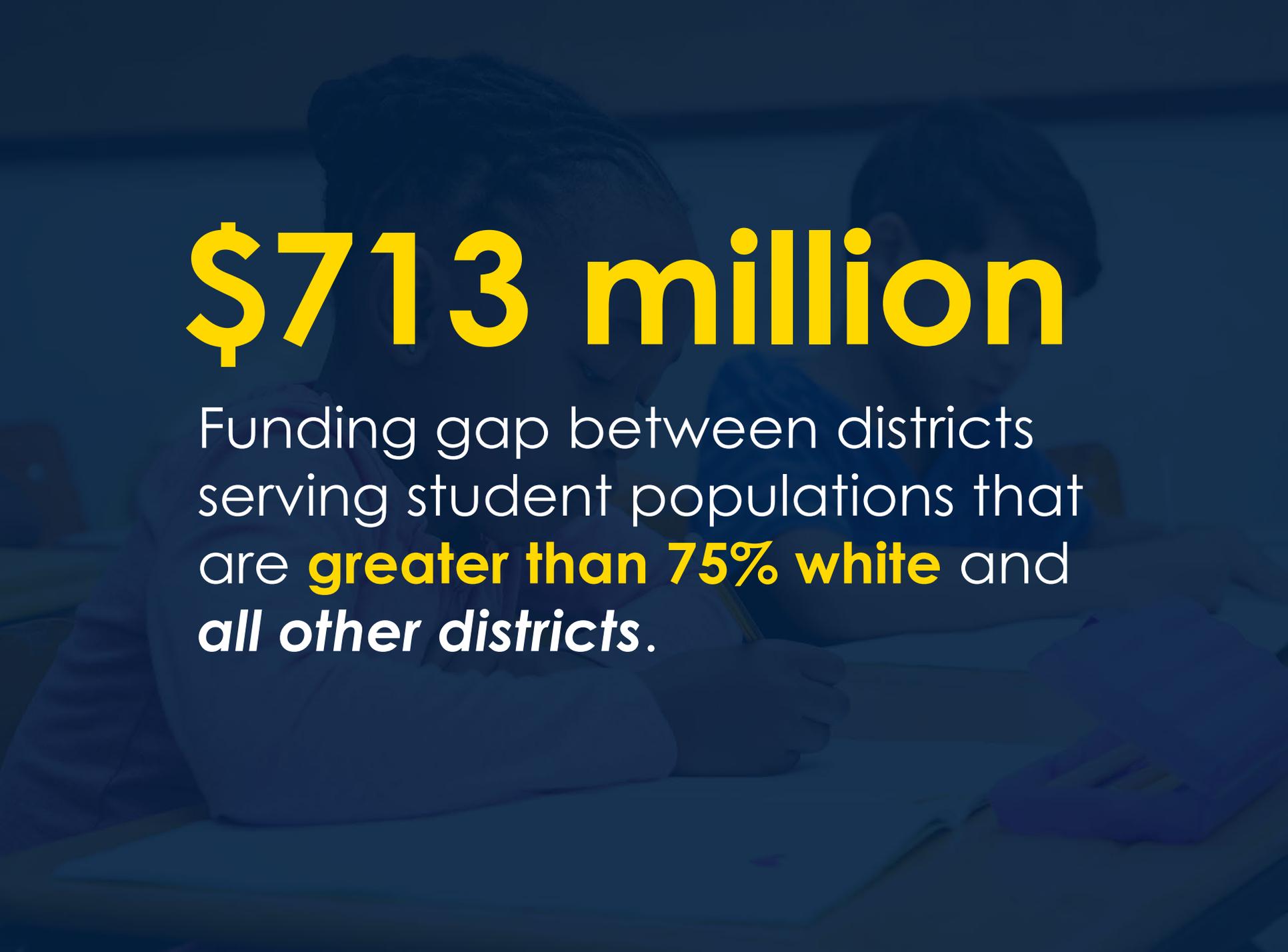


	New Britain	Hartford	Waterbury	Bridgeport	Greenwich
Low-Income	73.6%	79.3%	80.8%	71.5%	20.5%
English Learners	17.0%	21.2%	15.5%	20.3%	4.6%
Students w/ Disabilities	21.7%	19.7%	19.3%	18.7%	12.4%
BIPOC Students	83.6%	90.8%	84.7%	88.0%	38.6%

# Challenges and Potential Support for Different Types of Learning Needs

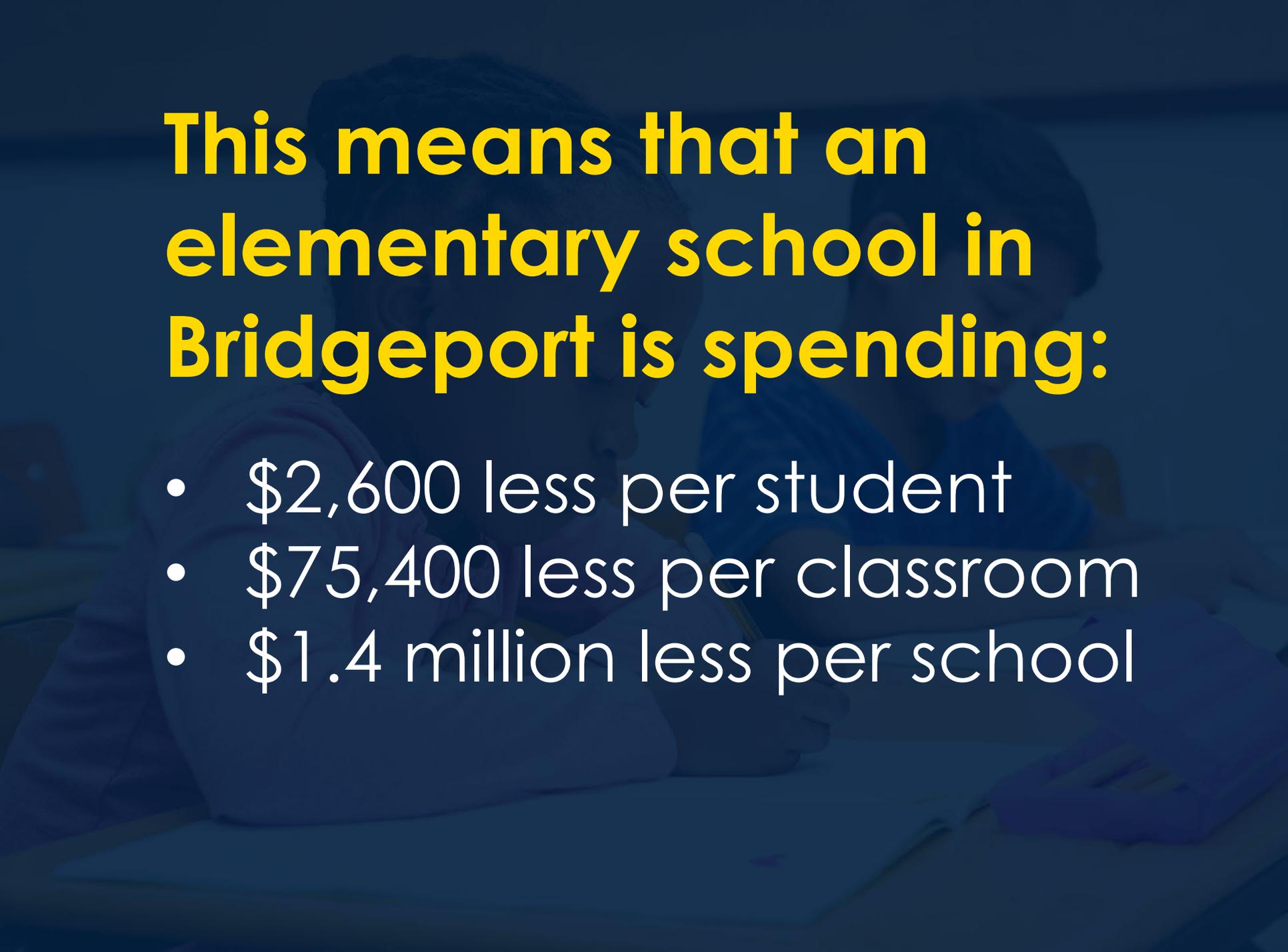
Learning Need	Potential Challenges Impacting Student's Education	Examples of Potential Support
Student with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each student's learning needs will be unique and can vary significant from student-to-student</li> <li>• Students may have physical, learning, or social-emotional changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special education teacher</li> <li>• Physical or occupational therapist</li> <li>• Adaptive technology</li> </ul>
English Learner student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be only English speaker in household</li> <li>• Cultural differences</li> <li>• Emigrated from possible violence/warfare</li> <li>• Unfamiliar with US education system – or any education system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESL/bilingual teacher</li> <li>• Software to assist in learning English</li> <li>• Books and other materials in first language</li> </ul>
Student from a low-income family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unstable housing situation (may move frequently or be homeless)</li> <li>• Food insecure or lack access to healthy foods</li> <li>• Parents may be less able to dedicate time and resources to education</li> <li>• Exposure to traumatic or unsafe situations</li> <li>• More likely to be absent from school</li> <li>• May have limited language capability (by the age of 3, children from low-income households hear – on average – 30 million less words than those from affluent households)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading interventionist</li> <li>• Software to help build vocabulary and develop language</li> <li>• Social worker</li> </ul>

Sources: Jenson, E. (2009). How Poverty Affects Behavior and Academic Performance. *Teaching with Poverty in Mind*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/109074/chapters/How-Poverty-Affects-Behavior-and-Academic-Performance.aspx>. Hart, B. & Risley, T. R. (2003). The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3. *American Educator*, 4-9. Retrieved from <http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/periodicals/TheEarlyCatastrophe.pdf>.



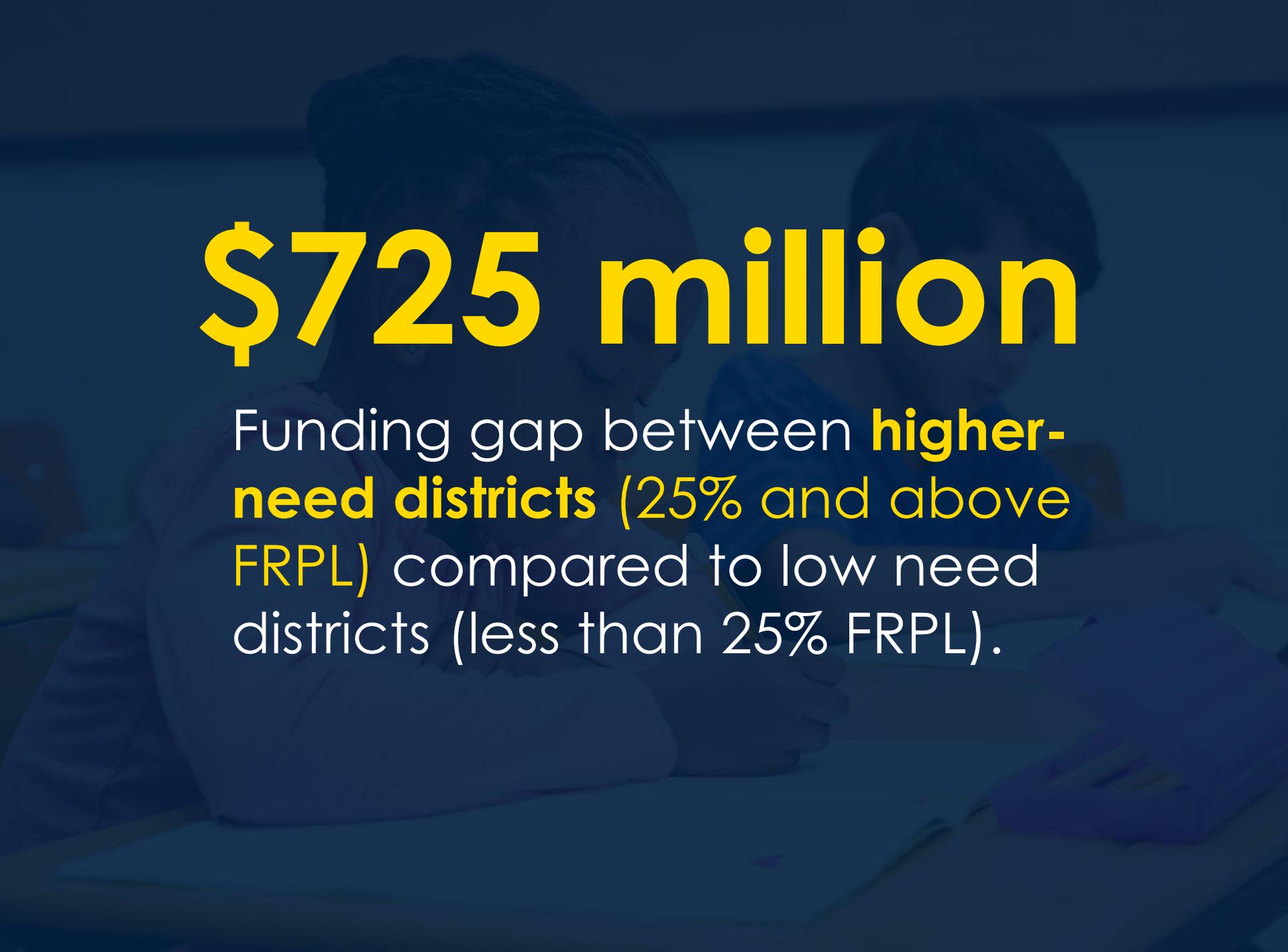
# \$713 million

Funding gap between districts serving student populations that are **greater than 75% white** and *all other districts.*

The background of the slide is a dark blue, semi-transparent image of a classroom. Several young students are visible, some sitting at desks and others standing, engaged in learning activities. The overall tone is educational and professional.

# This means that an elementary school in Bridgeport is spending:

- \$2,600 less per student
- \$75,400 less per classroom
- \$1.4 million less per school

The background of the slide features a dark blue, semi-transparent overlay over a photograph of two young students, a girl and a boy, sitting at a desk and looking at a tablet computer together. The text is overlaid on this background.

# \$725 million

Funding gap between **higher-need districts** (25% and above FRPL) compared to low need districts (less than 25% FRPL).

# Immediate Steps to make the System more Equitable

***Fully fund the ECS grant*** when the federal dollars expire to reduce the impact of the ***fiscal cliff***. This allows districts to plan for **long-term uses**, such as **hiring teachers and school social workers**.

---

Fund ***ALL*** public school students in the state according to their **individual learning needs**.