

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
PUBLIC HEARING ON  
BOARD OF EDUCATION FY24 BUDGET  
March 27, 2023  
7:00 P.M.  
MIDDLEBROOK SCHOOL AUDITORIUM & via ZOOM**

**PRESENT**

**Board of Finance:** Michael Kaelin, Stewart Koenigsberg, Sandra Arkell, Matthew Raimondi, Richard Santosky (via zoom), Chris Stroup

**Board of Education:** Ruth DeLuca, Jennifer Lalor, Nicola Davis, Pam Ely, Laura Schwemm, Superintendent of Schools-Dr. Kevin Smith, **ABSENT:** Mandi Schmauch

**ALSO PRESENT:** Dawn Norton (Wilton and BoE CFO) and members of the public

Board of Finance Chairman Michael Kaelin called the Public Hearing to order at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Kaelin provided a disclaimer to the public in attendance that the meeting is being recorded live for those who wish to make comment on the budget.

Mr. Kaelin introduced the Board of Finance. After the introductions, he began reviewing the attached BOF presentation which reviews the FY2024 budget for the BOE and the BOS and reviewed the role of the BOF in the process. He noted that the BOE budget request is \$90,581,692 which represents a 4.50% increase over the FY2023 budget and that the BOS operating and capital budget request is for a total of \$34,673,595 which represents a 2.15% increase over the FY2023 budget.

Before the conclusion of Mr. Kaelin's review, he noted that the BOF will begin budget deliberations on April 3-4, 2023 with the conclusion of budget deliberations at the April 11<sup>th</sup> BOF meeting. The Annual Town Meeting is on May 2, 2023 with an adjourned vote taking place on May 6, 2023. At the conclusion of his review, Mr. Kaelin introduced Ruth DeLuca, Board of Education Chair.

Ms. DeLuca introduced the members of the Board of Education and began reviewing the attached BoE presentation. She noted that Wilton Schools is a big draw for those looking to move into Wilton and thanked superintendent Smith and his staff for their expertise and care in building the proposed budget with special thanks to CFO Dawn Norton, MaryAnn Salvato (BoE Business Office) and Lucille DeNovio (Administrative Asst to the Superintendent) for their efforts. She noted that the budget that had been set and approved by the BOE is in the amount of \$90,581,692 which represents a 5.40% increase over the FY2023 budget and submitted to the BOF.

After Ms. DeLuca's presentation Mr. Kaelin then opened the floor to public comment. Thirty-three citizens spoke (a few members spoke twice) and expressed their views on the BOE budget, most in support of approving the BOE with a few opposed:

1. Tubtim Tangney of Wolfpit Road
2. Liz Alleva of Cherry Lane
3. Sara Sciafani of Wilton Hunt
4. Dr. Daniel Ebbs of McFadden Drive
5. Meaghan Newton of Scarlett Oak Drive
6. David Tatkow of Wolfpit Rd
7. Michael Powers of Glen Hill Road
8. Andrew Maria of Belden Hill Rd
9. Lindsey Mackay of Old Kings Highway
10. Maureen Brown of Cherry Lane
11. David Mantilla Canterbury Lane
12. Susanna Giboni of 29 Kensett Ave
13. Warren Serenbetz of Signal Hill Rd
14. Kara Berghaus of Langner Lane
15. Carolyn Lyon of Spruce Drive
16. John Wooten of Cannon Rd
17. Lara Paschalidis of Chestnut Hill Rd
18. Virginia Benin of Bald Hill Rd
19. Stacey Sapper of Deforest Rd
20. Michelle Haggerty of Huckleberry Rd
21. Neill Alleva of Cherry Lane
22. Nick Kugler of Old Kings Highway
23. Olga Zargos Traub of Wicks End Lane
24. Steve Hudspeth of Glenn Hill Rd
25. Meghan Baron of Cheesespring Rd
26. Maria Espinal of Danbury Rd
27. Heather Christopher of Wolfpit Rd
28. Kim Hall of Thayer Pond Rd
29. Julie Corbett of Quail Ridge Road
30. Aimee Calandria of Belden Hill Rd
31. Patrick Pearson of Cobbs Mill Rd
32. Michael Salit of Bristol Place

Mr. Kaelin thanked all in attendance at the meeting and those that participated via zoom and the entire crew that assisted with the set-up for the meeting.

There being no further comments, the BOF Public Hearing on the BOE Budget adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Rochester  
(from video recording)

Att: Board of Finance presentation  
Board of Education presentation

# BOARD OF FINANCE

## FY 24 BUDGET PRESENTATION

- FY24 Budget Highlights
- Role of BOF in Town Budget
- BOF Budget Approval Process for FY24

# FY 24 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- BOE budget request increased by \$3,903,830 to \$90,581,692 (4.50% increase)
- BOS operating and capital budget request increased a total of \$730,231 to \$34,673,595 (2.15% increase)
- Debt Service is up \$1,329,750 (14.73% increase)
- Tax Relief for Elderly/Disabled is down \$110,000 (9.09% decrease)
- Other Revenues decreased by \$181,092 (3.24% decrease)

# FY 24 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

## (CONTINUED)

- Total Funds Required increased by \$6,023,449 to \$136,966,349 (4.6% increase)
- Net Taxable Grand List (Collectable) increased by \$44,826,930 to \$4,402,822,211 (1.03% increase)
- Mill Rate increased by 1.6049 to 29.8338 (5.69% increase)
- FY24 General Fund balance is set at 10.0% of Town Operating Budget

# THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF FINANCE IN THE TOWN BUDGET

- The BOF is required to hold hearings on both the BOE and BOS budget requests
- The BOF considers the following when developing the Mill Rate:
  1. The views of the Town's citizens
  2. The financial resources of the Town
  3. The extent to which, in the Board of Finance's collective judgment, the Board of Education and Board of Selectmen can find savings within their respective budget requests
  4. The appropriateness of revenue, debt service and General Fund balance amounts

## BOARD OF FINANCE FY24 BUDGET APPROVAL PROCESS

April 3, 4 and 10	Board of Finance Meetings to Discuss & Recommend FY24 Budget
May 2	Annual Town Meeting 7:00 PM Clune Center at the High School
May 6	Continued voting at the Clune Center from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM



# **Wilton Board of Education 2023-2024 Proposed Budget**

*Presented March 27, 2023*

*Wilton Board of Education*

**Ruth DeLuca, Jennifer Lalor, Nicola Davies  
Mandi Schmauch, Pam Ely, Laura Schwemm**

*Superintendent*

**Kevin J. Smith, Ph.D.**





### ***Our Mission***

*Wilton Public Schools inspire and prepare all students to contribute meaningfully to a globally interdependent society.*

### ***Our Values***

- *Safety and wellness of our students*
- *Bringing joy to teaching and learning*
- *Strengthening community*
- *Stewarding the environment*
- *Personalizing instruction to meet the needs of each learner*
- *Cultivating productive partnerships with students and families*
- *Our learning experiences are challenging, authentic, relevant and meaningful*

CONNECTICUT



STATE DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION

2022  
Cider Mill  
School of Distinction

Middlebrook was the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
highest performing middle  
school in CT

Wilton High School was the 4<sup>th</sup>  
highest performing high school  
in CT



Wilton  
Public Schools  
2021-2022

**Top Performing School District**

State of Connecticut's  
Next Generation Accountability System



Wilton Girls Ski 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year  
Class S State Champion

Wilton Girls Field Hockey  
Class L State Runner-up

EXCEPTIONAL  
RESULTS

2023  
CT Debate  
State  
Champions



2022:  
10 Division I  
3 Division II  
17 Division III  
2023:  
14 Division I



Wilton High  
School is  
ranked in the  
top 1% of high  
schools in the  
United States



Wilton Public  
Schools  
#5 of 117 school  
districts in CT  
Wilton High  
School #5



3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive  
year NAMM  
Best Community  
for Music  
Education



17 Medals 2023  
Scholastics Art &  
Writing Awards  
#2 Most Medals  
won from one  
town



12  
National Merit  
Finalists  
29  
Commended  
Scholars

★ Speech/Language Therapists ★ Occupational Therapists ★ Physical Therapists ★ Social Workers ★ Secretaries ★

# OUR PROGRAM: IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

★ Custodians ★ Maintenance ★ Food Service ★ Transportation ★

Cider Mill  
2022  
School of  
Distinction

*The proposed  
budget is a  
reflection of  
our mission,  
values and  
expectations.*



*Fulfill our  
mission for  
each and every  
student.*



*Making  
changes to  
along the way  
to balance the  
system.*

73%  
of Miller-Driscoll  
students met  
benchmark in  
foundational literacy  
skills: 13%  
increase over 2022

**PORTRAIT OF A WPS  
GRADUATE**

170 students:  
1 or more ECE  
courses

**ONE CHANCE AT  
EACH GRADE**

**ADAPT, ADJUST AND  
RESTRUCTURE**

SAT Math  
#7 in CT  
SAT EBRW  
#5 in CT

57 AP Scholars  
w/Distinction  
29 AP Scholars  
w/Honor

2022  
Smarter Balanced  
Assessment  
#1 Growth in DRG  
ELA/Math

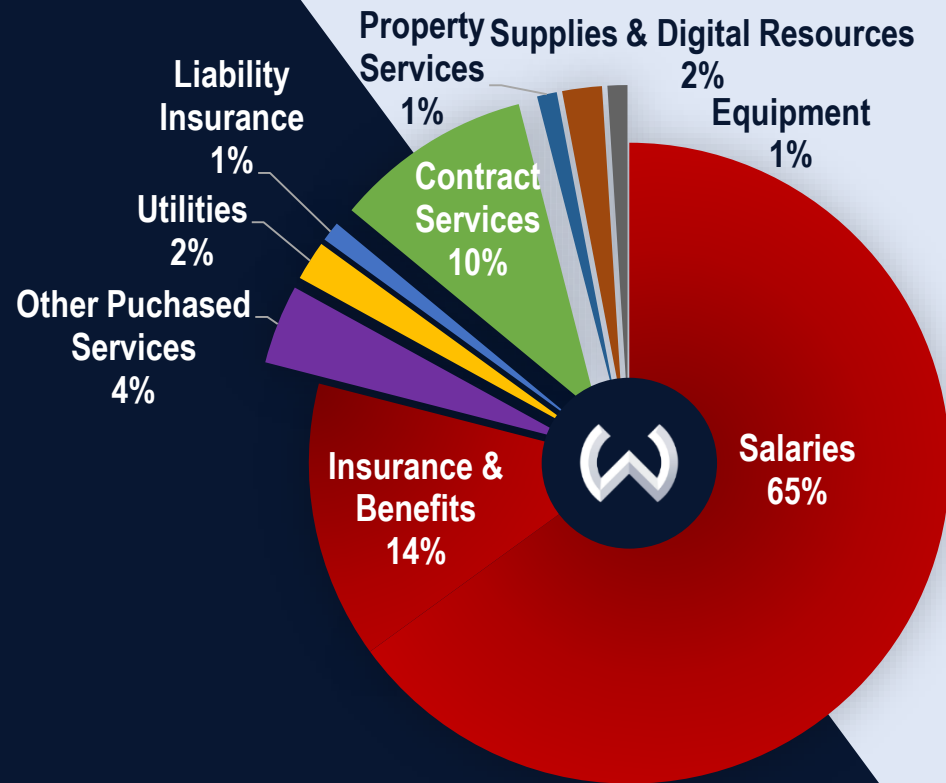
#1  
in DRG A  
Grade 6 Math  
Grade 6 ELA  
Grade 8 Science

#2  
in DRG A  
Grade 7 and  
Grade 8 ELA  
Grade 7 and  
Grade 8 Math

★ Interventionists ★ School Counselors ★ Administrators ★

★ Teachers ★ Special Educators ★ Paraprofessionals ★ Instructional Coaches ★ Curriculum Coordinators ★ Psychologists ★

# THE COST OF MAINTAINING EXCELLENCE



4.5%

2023-2024 Budget Request

\$90,581,692

## Primary areas of cost increases:

- **Salaries and benefits up 4.55%**
- **Diesel for vehicle fuel up 70% (budget to budget)**
- **Outplacement costs up 15%**
- **Transportation for athletic events and field trips up 17%**
- **Natural gas up 20% for delivery fees**
- **Building repairs, separate from long range planning, up 26%**



# BUDGET DETAIL

## HOW THE PIE IS SPLIT



<b>Salaries</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>\$58,907,956</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Salary estimates based on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Custodian 2.5%</i></li> <li>• <i>UPSEU 2.25%</i></li> <li>• <i>WASA 2.6%</i></li> <li>• <i>WEA 4%</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Benefits</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>\$12,921,643</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Includes Medical Insurance: increase of 12%</i></li> <li>• <i>Unemployment: increase of 11%</i></li> </ul>
<b>Contracted Services</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>\$8,814,543</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Transportation in and out of district</i></li> <li>• <i>Contracted Special Education Services</i></li> <li>• <i>Technology Services</i></li> <li>• <i>Legal fees</i></li> <li>• <i>Financial and Human Resources Software licenses</i></li> </ul>
<b>Other Purchased Services</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>\$3,433,686</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Out of District Tuition: increase of 15%</i></li> <li>• <i>Field trips for Athletics &amp; Other Events: increase of 17%</i></li> <li>• <i>Dues and Memberships</i></li> </ul>
<b>Supplies &amp; Digital Resources</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>\$2,146,126</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Diesel Fuel</i></li> <li>• <i>Digital Resources</i></li> <li>• <i>Textbooks</i></li> <li>• <i>General Office Supplies, Classroom Supplies</i></li> <li>• <i>Maintenance Supplies</i></li> </ul>
<b>Utilities</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>\$1,704,342</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Water, Sewer, Phone</i></li> <li>• <i>Natural Gas: increase of 20%</i></li> <li>• <i>Electric: increase of 4%</i></li> </ul>
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>\$1,055,247</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Technology, due to lease not renewed: increase of 41%</i></li> <li>• <i>E-Rate projects: increase of 3%</i></li> <li>• <i>Music Instruments, Athletic Equipment, Art Equipment</i></li> <li>• <i>Facilities Maintenance Equipment</i></li> </ul>
<b>Property Services</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>\$895,957</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Rental Agreements (Genesis, Ice Rink, Pool)</i></li> <li>• <i>Building Repairs: increase of 26%</i></li> <li>• <i>Boiler and Air Conditioner Repairs: increase of 43%</i></li> </ul>
<b>Liability Insurance</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>\$702,192</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Based on 5% general Increase</i></li> </ul>

# FTE: STAFFING TO OUR NEEDS AND PRIORITIES



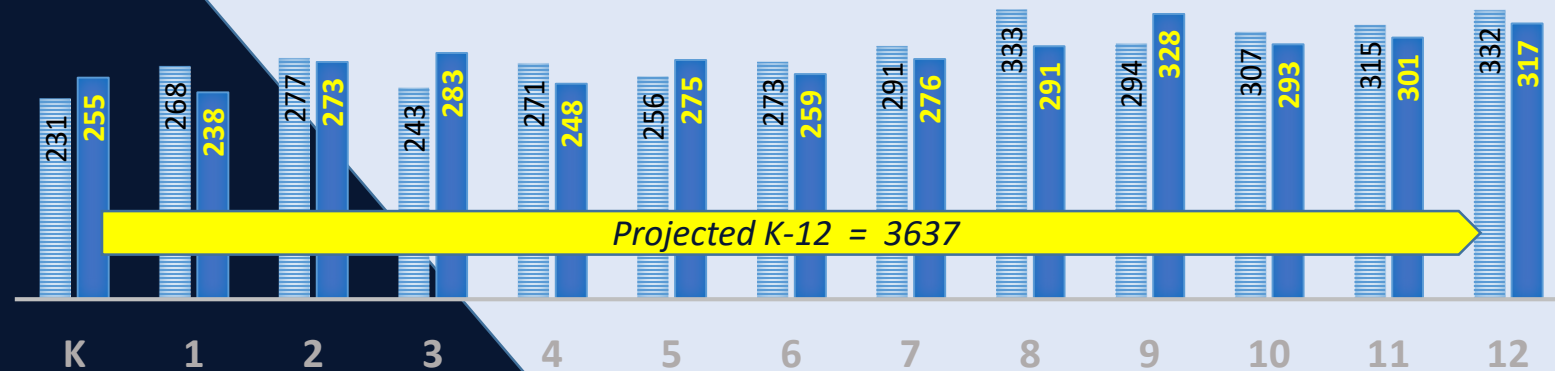
Grade	Class Size 2022-23	Projected 2023-24
K	19.2	19.6
1	19.1	19.8
2	21.3	19.5
3	20.2	20.2
4	20.8	20.6
5	21.3	21.1

**Adapting, Adjusting, Restructuring**  
Includes absorbing ESSER Grant Funded positions...

- 1.45 FTE Interventionist
- 2.0 FTE Miller-Driscoll Classroom Teachers
- 1.0 FTE Mental Health Professional
- 1.0 STEM Teacher
- 1.0 Pre K Teacher
- 1.0 Pre K Paraprofessional
- 2.0 Cider Mill Classroom Teachers



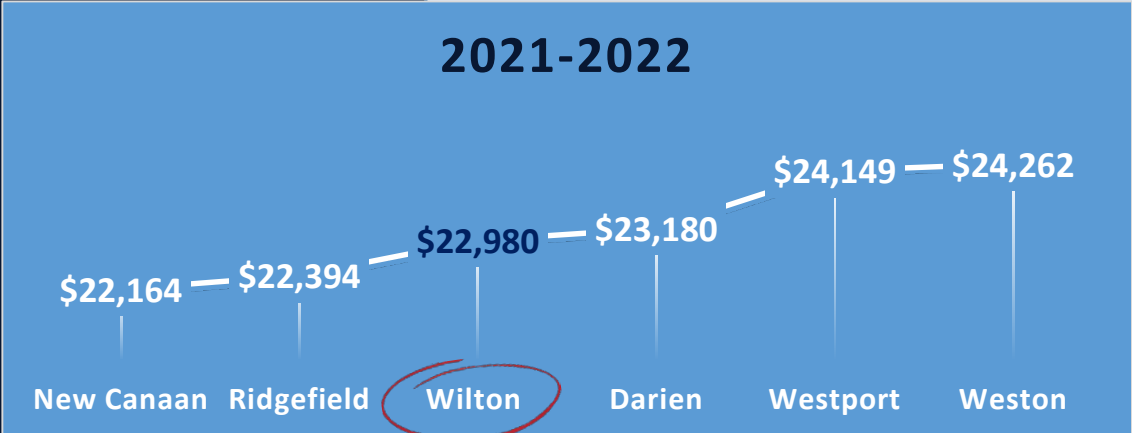
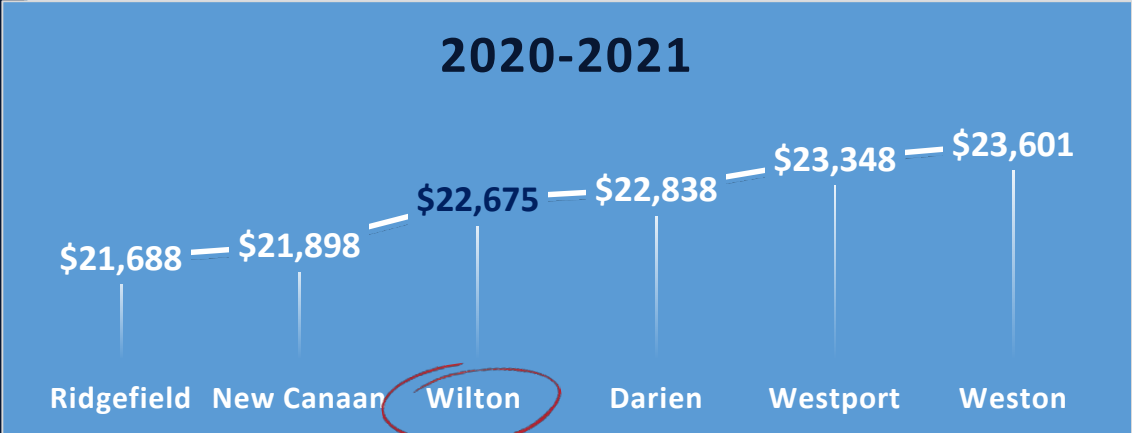
October 2022 (actual) Projected 2023-24



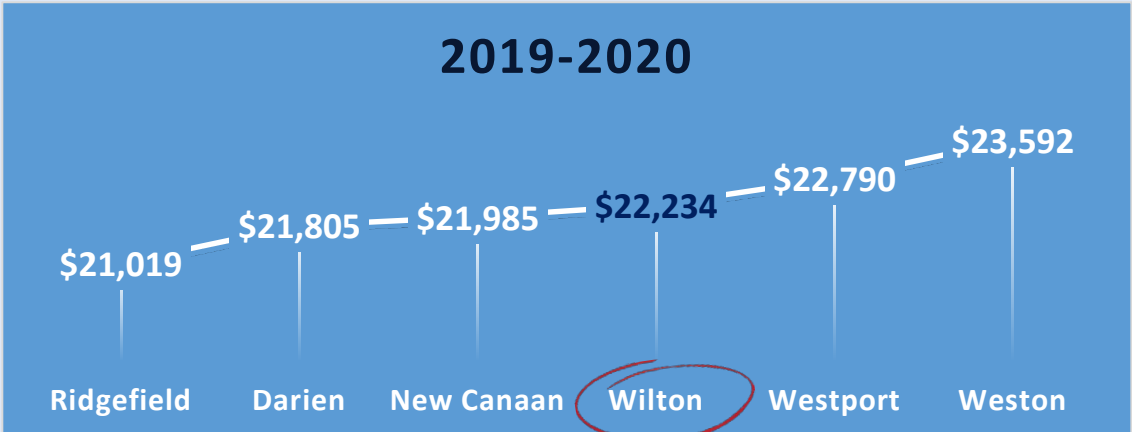
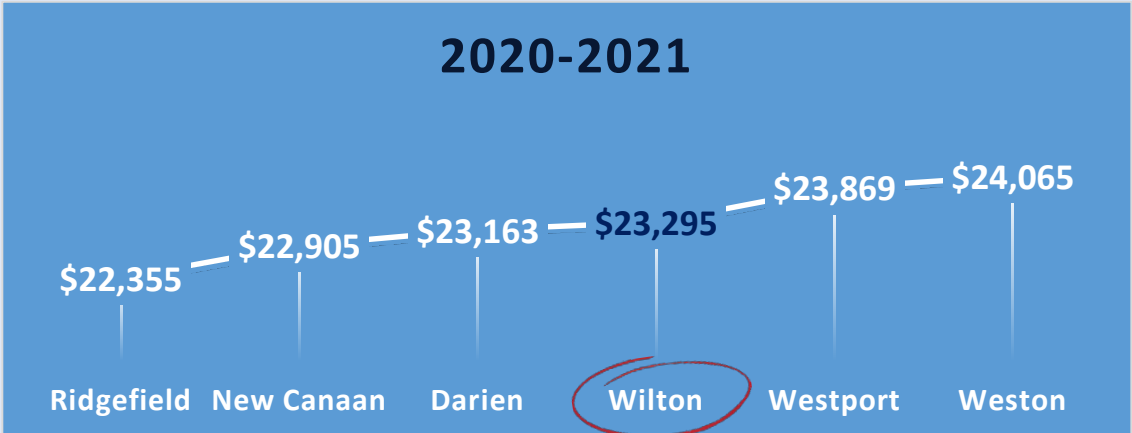
PROJECTED ENROLLMENT



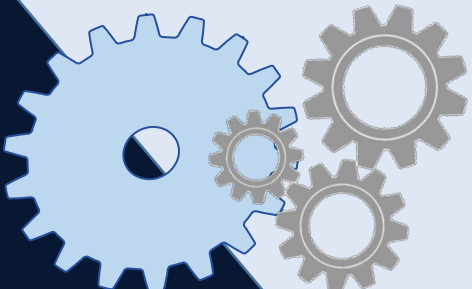
Source: Bureau of Grants Management



Source: Edsight



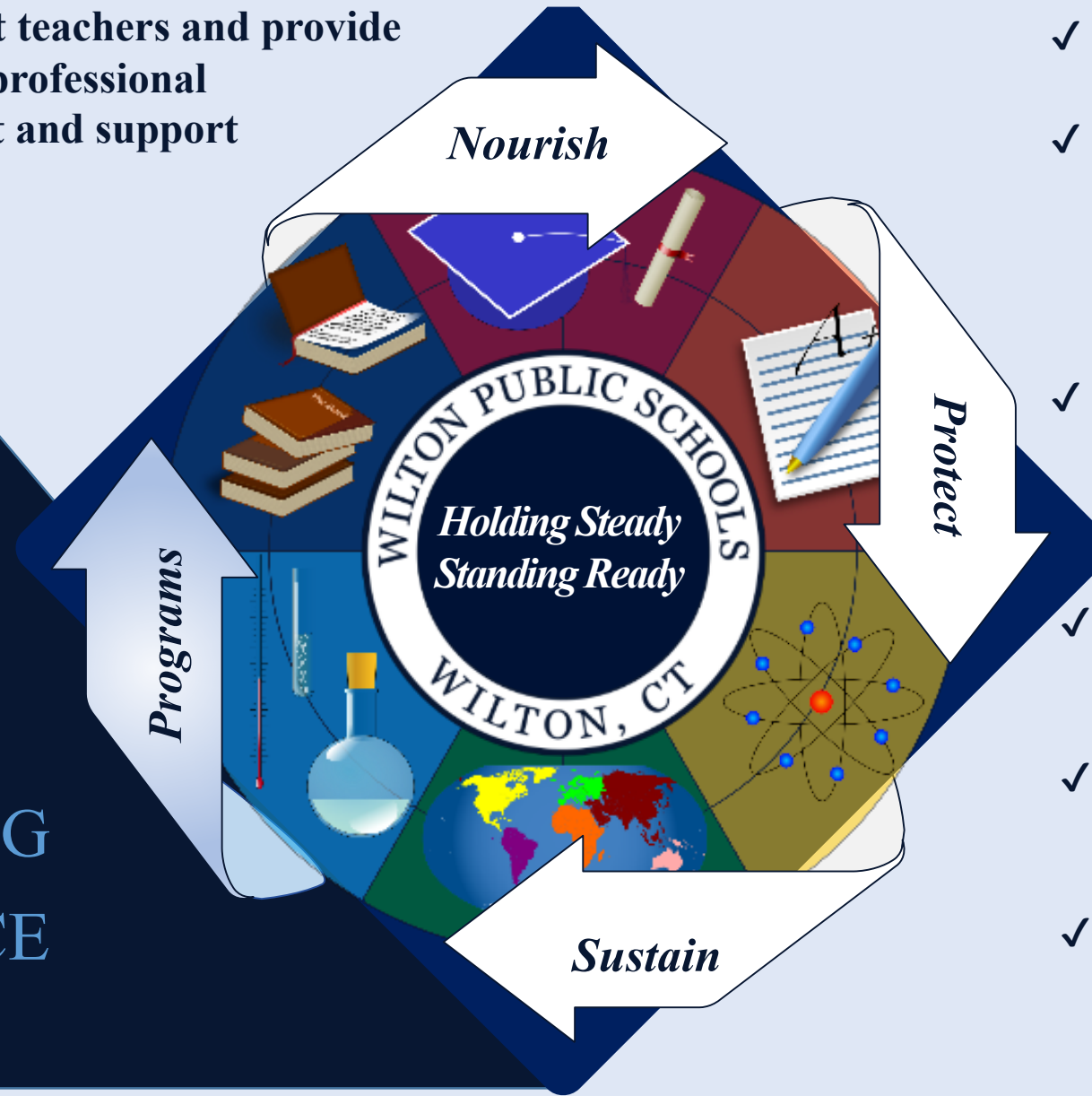
PER PUPIL  
EXPENDITURE



- ✓ Improve implementation of accelerated learning and data informed instruction
- ✓ Hire the best teachers and provide world class professional development and support

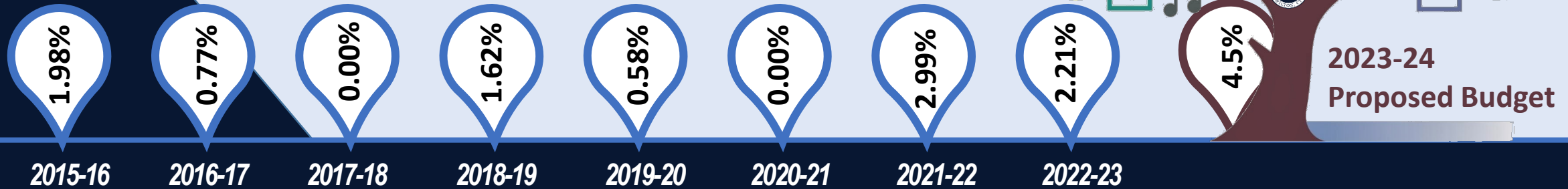
- ✓ Raise overall growth and achievement

- ✓ Narrow unfinished learning gaps
- ✓ Hold current class sizes
- ✓ Match staffing to student and programs needs: Reallocate staff positions and absorb staff moving off grants
- ✓ Meet the demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning
- ✓ Support our students with special needs
- ✓ Focus on social and emotional learning and mental health
- ✓ Provide a safe, positive, inclusive, safe school climate in all of our schools



MAINTAINING  
EXCELLENCE





District (DRG A)	FY 13/14	FY 22/23	9 Yr. Growth	FY23 CAGR	FY24 CAGR
Wilton Public Schools	\$76,457,070	\$86,677,862	13%	1.40%	1.71%
Weston Public Schools	\$45,575,418	\$56,391,182	24%	2.39%	2.45%
Darien Public Schools	\$87,714,338	\$110,607,016	26%	2.61%	2.71%
Westport Public Schools	\$104,177,609	\$129,500,575	24%	2.45%	2.72%
New Canaan Public Schools	\$77,671,886	\$99,052,999	28%	2.74%	2.95%
Ridgefield Public Schools	\$82,029,557	\$106,600,490	30%	2.95%	3.04%
			Median:	2.53%	2.72%

**1.27%**  
**Average**  
**Increase**  
**over 8**  
**years**

# DRG A BUDGET REQUESTS



**Westport**  
**5.24%**



**New Canaan**  
**4.8%**



**Darien**  
**3.56%**



**Wilton**  
**4.5%**



**Ridgefield**  
**3.79%**



**Weston**  
**2.94%**



# EXCELLENCE AT GREAT VALUE

