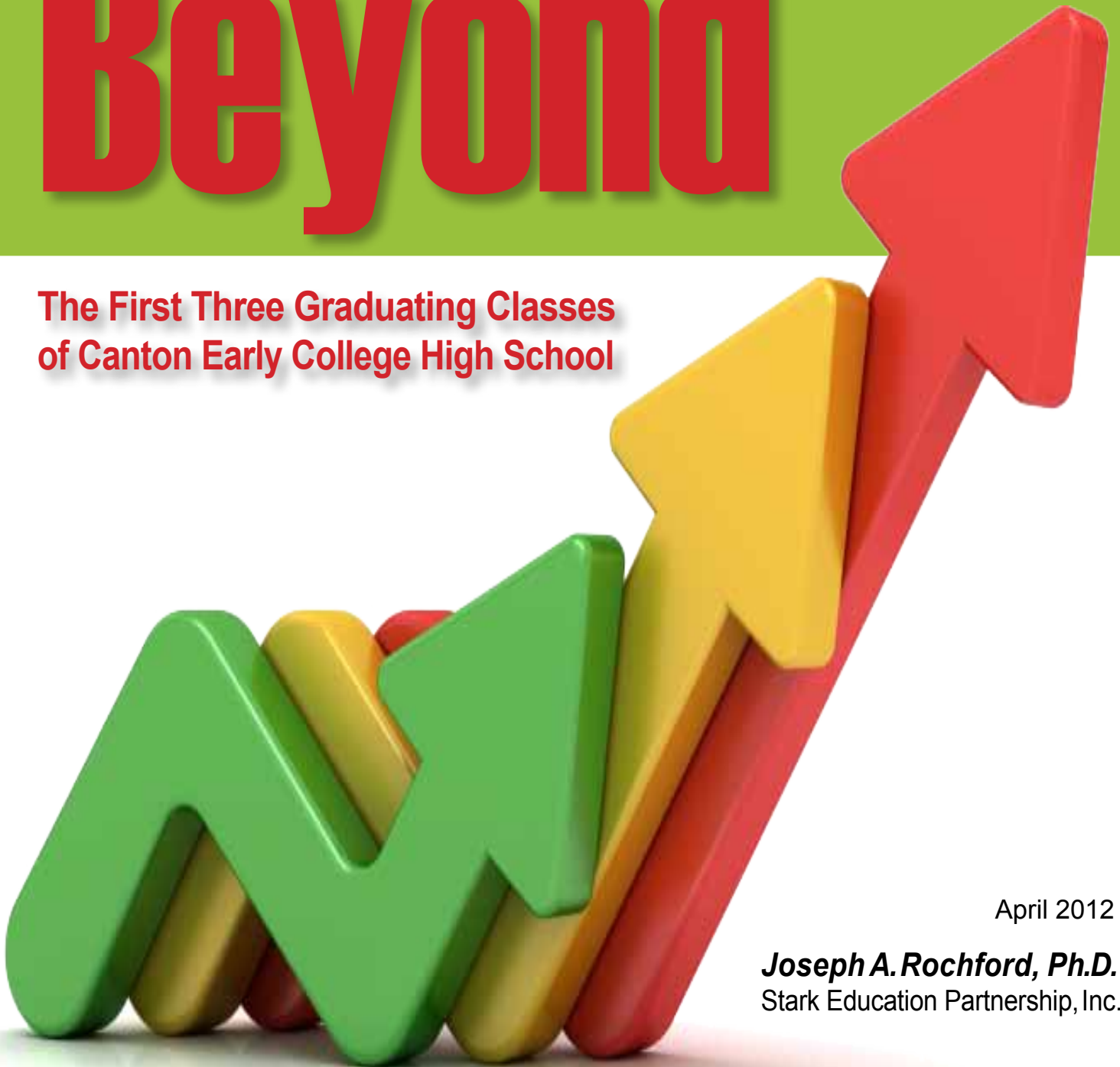


# Proof and Beyond

The First Three Graduating Classes  
of Canton Early College High School



April 2012

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# Canton's Early College High School

In 2005, the Canton City Schools (CCS), Stark State College (SSC), the Canton Professional Educators Association (CPEA) and the Stark Education Partnership (SEP) came together to establish Canton's Early College High School (CECHS). Start up funding was provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation through KnowledgeWorks and the state of Ohio.

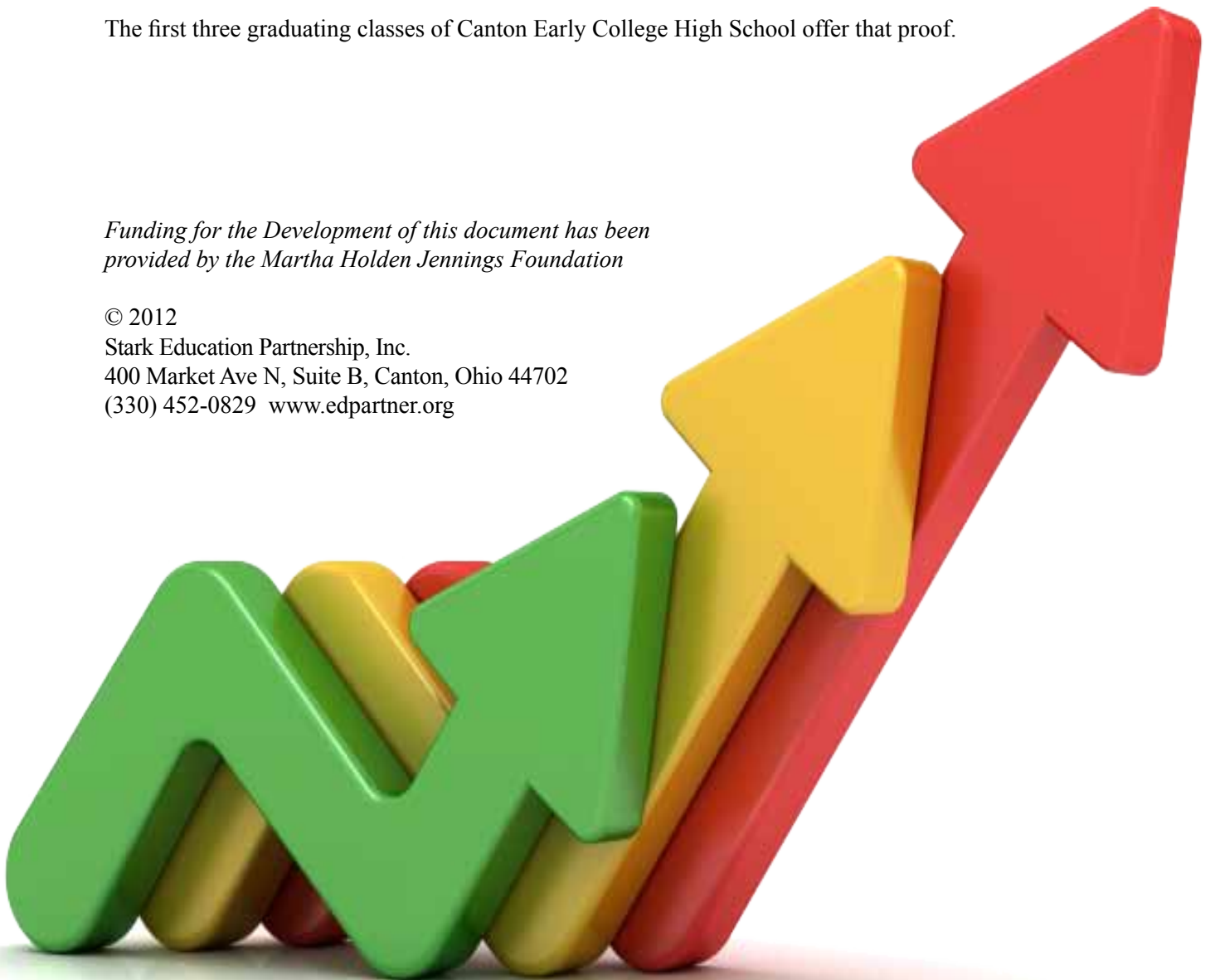
The goal of CECHS was to allow students an opportunity to earn both a diploma and an Associate Degree during their high school career.

With only 12.5% of its adults in 2005 (today it's 13.2%) with a Bachelor's Degree or higher and 78% of its students in poverty, Canton, Ohio's poorest neighborhoods needed a compelling example that college is possible. From the onset, CECHS was envisioned not just as a school, but as a culture-shifting "proof-point" for the community that impoverished inner city students can be successful with college-level work.

The first three graduating classes of Canton Early College High School offer that proof.

*Funding for the Development of this document has been provided by the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation*

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# Executive Summary



There were 168 students in the first three graduating classes of Canton Early College High School (CECHS). All students graduated high school on-time and 84 students, or 50%, graduated with an Associate Degree from Stark State College (SSC).

- Performance on EXPLORE, the pre-ACT Test administered in the 8th grade indicates that students enter CECHS with varying degrees of ability. CECHS is not a gifted program.
- All graduates of CECHS have earned college credit. The national average is 88%.
- The minimum number of college credits earned by students in all three classes who persisted in CECHS, but did not graduate with an Associate Degree, is 15 hours. Sixty-eight students (81%) earned over a full year of college credit. The national average is 44%.
- The on-time graduation rate for all students who originally enrolled in CECHS, regardless of persistence, remains high. Nearly all students returning to regular high school have already earned college credit.
- In CECHS, college becomes a reality for underrepresented students. For three years, the most successful sub-group has been impoverished minority females who are the first in their families to go on to college.
- Seventy-six percent of all CECHS graduates are continuing their higher education. The national average is 73%. Eighty percent of those who graduated with Associate Degrees are working on a Baccalaureate Degree.
- CECHS graduates are attending colleges in 12 different states, including Ohio.
- Stark State College is the major institution of choice to continue education for 37 CECHS graduates who have elected to complete their Associate Degree. Kent State University is the second major choice with 22 students, The Ohio State University is third with 15 and the University of Akron is fourth, with 12.
- CECHS graduates have the potential to produce a return of close to \$50 million to themselves and their communities based on additional lifetime earnings and taxes paid. This amount will only grow as students gain even more education.

# Introduction



Canton Early College High School (CECHS) graduated its first class in 2009. Since that time, the school has graduated two additional classes for a total of 168 students. Every student has graduated high school on-time and 84 (50%) have graduated with earned Associate Degrees.

That rate, in itself, is a notable distinction. The latest national figures show only about 24% of all early college students graduate with an Associate Degree or up to two years of college.<sup>1</sup>

The original goal of Canton Early College High School (CECHS) in 2005 was to create an opportunity for urban students to earn both a diploma and an Associate Degree while in high school.

In 2011, the goal was restated in a new and powerful way by CECHS Principal Chet Lenartowicz. In a January 19th interview<sup>2</sup> on Cleveland's WEWS, Channel 5, he said, "From here students can go on to get their Bachelor's Degree. That is our goal."

Seventy-two, or 86%, of CECHS graduates with Associate Degrees are working towards additional

credentials. In total, 127, or 76%, of all graduates are known to be continuing, either at two, less than two, or four year institutions. The national average is 73%.

While these figures are impressive, particularly for an urban population, no study has tracked early college students through what might be thought of as a new "gold-standard" of success for early college high schools, completion of a Baccalaureate Degree.

This, the third in a series of yearly reports on CECHS outcomes by the Stark Education Partnership, begins that process. Trend data is beginning to emerge. For the first time, this report includes a review of continuing college outcomes for all three graduating classes to date. While it is still too early to track completion in four-year programs, continuing enrollment can be verified for most students.

This is possible as the Canton City Schools subscribes to the National Student Clearinghouse *Student Tracker System*<sup>3</sup> that enables verification of student enrollment and graduation at over 95% of all higher education institutions in the nation.

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<sup>1</sup> All national data in this section is from Webb, M. & Mayka, L. (2011). *Unconventional Wisdom: A Profile of the Graduates of Early College High School*. Boston: Jobs for the Future. Jobs for the Future manages the Early College High School Initiative.

<sup>2</sup> *Canton eighth graders must choose high school at:* [http://www.newsnet5.com/dpp/news/local\\_news/akron\\_canton\\_news/Canton-eighth-graders-must-choose-high-school](http://www.newsnet5.com/dpp/news/local_news/akron_canton_news/Canton-eighth-graders-must-choose-high-school)

<sup>3</sup> See Student Tracker for High Schools at: [http://www.studentclearinghouse.org/high\\_schools/studenttracker/](http://www.studentclearinghouse.org/high_schools/studenttracker/)

# Proof and Beyond: Results from Canton Early College High School



CECHS's first graduating class in 2009 demonstrated that low income, minority, and first generation college-going students could succeed in a rigorous program that gave them the opportunity to earn both a diploma and an Associate Degree upon their graduation from high school.

The second Class in 2010 offered further proof and results are substantiated by the class of 2011.

CECHS students continue to outperform averages for other early college high schools according to the latest figures available.

## ***Graduating with College Credit: CECHS Comparison to State and National Early Colleges<sup>4</sup>***

	Canton			Ohio	US
	2009	2010	2011		
Graduates Earning College Credit	100%	100%	100%	N/A	88%
Earned at Least a Semester of College Credit	100%	100%	100%	80%	<39%
Earning Associate Degree or 2 Years of College	53%	52%	44%	33%	24%

<sup>4</sup> Data Sources: CECHS records and *Ohio's Innovative High Schools Facing Closure due to Budget Cuts*. June 26, 2009 Press Release by Jobs for the Future, ECHSI 2011 Portrait in Numbers and CECHS records.

# Readiness for CECHS: What EXPLORE and Other Indicators Tell Us



Early college high schools are not gifted programs. A core value is to admit students regardless of prior academic performance. Yet, there are trends that may be helpful in indicating which students need the most support.

Results on EXPLORE, the pre-ACT Test administered in the 8th grade, indicates that

students continue to enter CECHS with varying degrees of ability.

However, students with Explore Composite (all subjects) Scores between 14 and 19 have earned the largest number of Associate Degrees; the lowest persistence rate (graduating CECHS) is by students with scores between 10 and 13.

## Results on the Basis of EXPLORE Composite Scores: A Two Year Perspective<sup>6</sup>

EXPLORE Composite Score	Number		Persisted CECHS		Graduated w/Associate Degree		Returned to Regular High School or Left District	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
10-13	16	11	3	7	1	0	13	4
14-15	22	25	18	10	9	4	4	11
16-17	25	18	21	6	11	5	4	7
18-19	12	14	6	2	5	7	6	5
20-21	7	3	5	1	2	1	2	1
22	3	3	3	0	2	2	0	1
N/A	4	9	4	2	1	1	0	6
Total	89	83	60	28	31	20	29	35

An EXPLORE Math Score of 17 roughly corresponds to a score of 23 on the ACT Test, slightly higher than the minimum cut-off of 22 for college Algebra in the Ohio Statewide Placement Policy recommendations.<sup>5</sup> The greatest number of Associate Degrees was earned by students with math scores greater than 17.

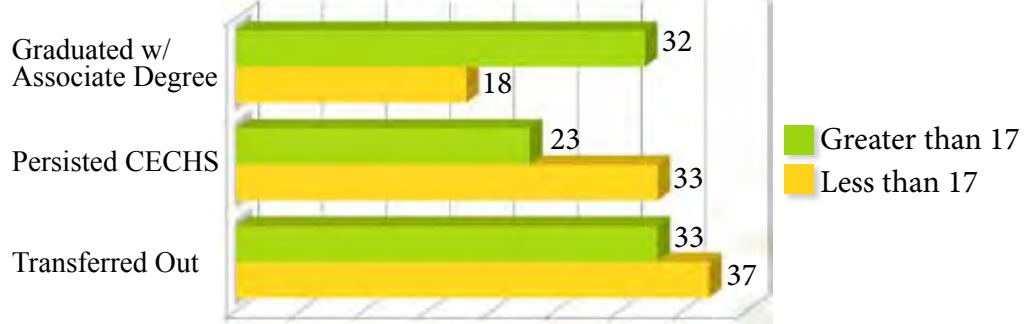
<sup>5</sup> Ohio Board of Regents (2008). *Statewide Placement Policy Recommendations*. Secondary to College Articulation Committee. Columbus. Recommendations will be reviewed on a five-year basis.

<sup>6</sup> Source for all data: Canton City Schools and Stark State College

When looking at those who remain at CECHS (persist) without earning an Associate Degree and those who transfer out, the numbers are

virtually the same, attesting to successful CECHS strategies in working with students with lower math abilities.

**Results on the Basis of EXPLORE Math Scores: A Two Year Perspective**



For the Class of 2011, two new indicators were charted. The first was 8th grade performance in reading on the Ohio Achievement Test. The

majority of students scored at the Proficient and Accelerated levels. These were the most successful students.

**Results on the Basis of 8th Grade Reading as Measured By the Ohio Achievement Test**

	Graduated w/ Associate Degree	Persisted CECHS	Returned to Regular High School or Left District
Advanced	4	2	1
Accelerated	10	7	11
Proficient	6	11	16
Basic	0	6	4
Limited	0	0	0

The relationship between 8th grade absences and success in early college high school may

be emerging as the single the most powerful indicator of readiness for early college high school.

**Results on the Basis of 8th Grade Absences in Days**

	Graduated w/ Associate		Persisted		Withdrew to Regular High School or Left District	
21 and Above (4)	0	0%	1	25%	3	75%
11-20 (9)	0	0%	2	22%	7	78%
1-10 (57)	14	25%	20	35%	23	40%
None (12)	6	50%	4	33%	2	17%



# Persistence in CECHS



The Class of 2011 started with 84 students, the smallest cohort yet admitted to CECHS, compared to 99 for the entering Class of 2009 and 89

students for 2010. The three year average for graduates earning an Associate Degree is 50%.

## *Results for Graduating Students Classes of 2009, 2010 and 2011<sup>7</sup>*

Class	Students Persisting	AA Degrees Earned	% Earning AA	High School Grad	% On-time High School Grad
2009	60	32	53%	60	100%
2010	60	31	52%	60	100%
2011	48	21	44%	48	100%

The minimum number of college credits earned by students in all three classes who persisted in CECHS, but did not graduate with an Associate

Degree is 15 hours. Sixty-eight students (81%) earned over a full year of college credit. The national average is 44%.

<sup>7</sup> Note: Data on race is missing for 5 students.



# Continuing to Counter Graduation Risks



The on-time graduation rate for all remaining students who started in CECHS in the first three classes, regardless of persistence, remains high at 95%. Six of the 272 students who started are known to have dropped out. Twenty-eight moved out of the district.

Nearly all students who returned to regular high school had earned college credit.

National figures<sup>8</sup> estimate that 34% of those who start early college high school transfer to other high schools or drop out. How many of these students graduate those high schools on-time or have earned college credit is unknown.

## *Outcomes for All Enrolling Freshmen Comparison of Classes of 2009, 2010, 2011*

Student Status	2009		2010		2011	
	Number	% of Students	Number	% of Students	Number	% of Students
Graduated CECHS w/ Associate Degree	32	32%	31	35%	21	25%
Graduated CECHS w/ College Credit	28	28%	29	33%	27	32%
Graduated District High School <sup>15</sup> w/College Credit	21	21%	19	21%	17	20%
Graduated High School w/o College Credit	2	2%	1	1%	1	1%
Did not Graduate on Time	6	6%	2	2%	3	4%
Dropped Out	2	2%	0	0%	4	5%
Left District	8	8%	8	9%	12	14%
Students Remaining in District (All four years)	89	90%	82	91%	69	82%
On-Time HS Graduation Rate (All Students Remaining in District)		91%		98%		96%

<sup>8</sup> Six Years and Counting: The ECHSI Matures A Summary of the Early College High School Initiative Evaluation Report (AIR & SRI, August 2009)

# Conquering Underrepresentation



A Core Principle of early college high schools is to serve students who are underrepresented in higher education. The national Early College High School Initiative describes these students as being low income, minority, or the first in their families to go to college.<sup>9</sup>

In CECHS, college becomes a reality for underrepresented students. For three years, the most successful sub-group has been impoverished minority females who are the first in their families to go to college.

## *CECHS Graduates by Sex on the Basis of Race, Poverty and First Generation Three Year Comparison*

		Graduated w/ Associate		Graduated w/ College Hours	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
Number of Students	2009	17	15	12	16
	2010	11	20	14	15
	2011	5	16	10	17
Percentage Minority	2009	35%	40%	50%	81%
	2010	18%	70%	21%	50%
	2011	40%	33%	70%	82%
Free or Reduced Lunch	2009	59%	67%	50%	94%
	2010	45%	87%	36%	60%
	2011	80%	60%	43%	76%
First in Family to College	2009	82%	67%	100%	81%
	2010	91%	75%	93%	80%
	2011	80%	80%	100%	82%

<sup>9</sup> See ECHSI Core Principles at: <http://www.earlycolleges.org/>

# Beyond Early College High School



Seventy-six percent of all CECHS graduates are continuing higher education. The national average is 73%. Eighty percent of those who graduated with Associate Degrees are working on a Baccalaureate Degree.

While the majority of CECHS graduates elect to continue their studies in Ohio, students are also attending colleges and universities in eleven other states at institutions as varied as Lyndon

State, Washington and Lee, the University of Mississippi, and Valparaiso.

Stark State College is the institution of choice for students staying in Ohio. Thirty-seven have elected to complete their Associate Degree.

Kent State University is the second major college destination with 22 students, The Ohio State University is third with 15 and the University of Akron is fourth, with 12.

## *Continuing College Outcomes CECHS Graduating Classes of 2009, 2010, 2011 As of Fall 2011*

	Less than 2 Year Institution	Two Year Institution	Four Year Institution	% Known Continuing Studies	% Continuing in Four Year
Graduated w/ Associate (84)	0	5	67	86%	80%
Graduated w/ College Hours (84)	1	27	27	65%	32%
Classes Total (168)	1	32	94	76%	56%

# Conclusion: A \$50 Million Return on Investment



What is the value of CECHS?

Assume for a moment that the graduates of the first three classes do not progress any further in their education. They stop and do not take any further college courses or work on any additional degrees.

As of today, they have the potential to produce an additional return of close to \$50 million to themselves and their communities in added lifetime earnings and taxes paid based on the education they have already received.

But 76% are continuing their education. This projected amount will only continue to grow as these students earn more degrees.

Of course, this calculation assumes that these urban students would not have gone to college on their own. The reality is that the college going rate is accelerating in the Canton City Schools (CCS). In part, this has been due to CECHS, but it is also the result of multiple other efforts by teachers, counselors, staff and community.

Consequently, three out of every five CCS students now go on to college within two years

of graduating high school, but going is not completing. In Canton, and elsewhere, the odds of not completing, or not completing in a timely fashion, remain high.

For every 49 students who enroll in an Associate Degree program in Ohio, only eight graduate within four years. At the Baccalaureate level, only 32 out of 51 students graduate within eight years.<sup>10</sup>

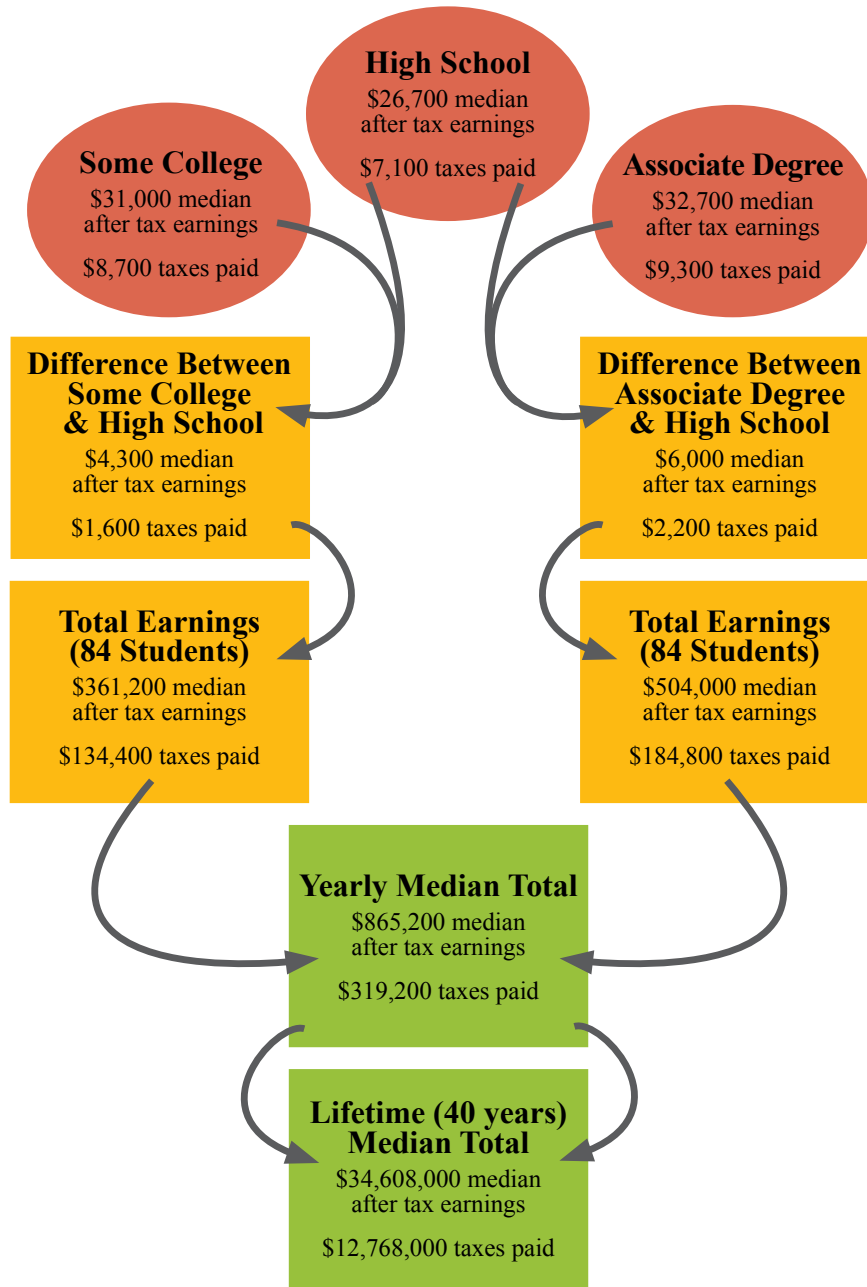
For underrepresented students, the odds are even longer. For instance, low wealth students going part-time have less than a one in ten chance of earning an Associate or Bachelor's Degree in the same time period. Most students in CECHS are not just in one, but in multiple underrepresented categories.

For these students, CECHS functions as a sort of "insurance policy". Whether they elect to continue their studies immediately, at a later time, or directly enter the workforce, CECHS graduates already have degrees or a substantial number of college hours-an enduring base from which to proceed with their lives and fortunes. Further, this base has come without the attendant student loans, which so often hinder the quality of a young adult's life until such debts are retired.

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<sup>10</sup> Complete College America, State Data for Ohio based on IPEDS at: [http://www.completecollege.org/state\\_data/](http://www.completecollege.org/state_data/)

**Median Additional Economic Value – CECHS Graduating Classes of 2009, 2010 and 2011<sup>11</sup>**



<sup>11</sup> Source: Based on calculations used by the authors of College Board Education Pays 2010 based on US Census, IRS and tax analysis by Davis, Carl et al. (2009). *Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All 50 States*, 3rd Edition. Washington, DC: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.

