

# Half Decade of Proof

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**The First Five Graduating Classes  
of Canton Early College High School**

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## Canton's Early College High School

In 2005, when 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), the percentage of the city's young adults<sup>1</sup> with some college or an Associate Degree was 33%. Start up funding for the school 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.

In 2005 with only 12.5% of its adults (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 community "proof-point" that impoverished inner city students can be successful with college-level work.

By CECHS's sixth year of operation in 2011 (the latest figure available) the percentage of young adults with some college or an Associate Degree had increased to 51.9%.



<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census designation of young adult as 18 to 24 years. Percentages are from the 2005 and 2011 American Community Survey.



## **Prelude: The Class of 2013**

Two hundred and fifty-six students have graduated Canton Early College High School (CECHS) since 2009.

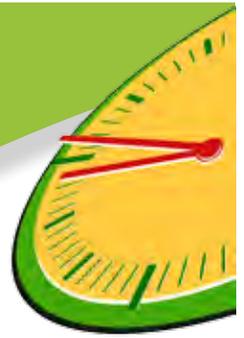
Explore (8th grade pre-ACT Test) scores show that 24 of the 29 Associate Degrees in 2013 went to students who had scored 15 (the district average) or above on the test. This matches results for previous classes. While those who had better Explore scores tended to earn Associate Degrees, a low score was not necessarily a barrier. Five degrees were awarded to students with scores between 12 and 14, once again, similar to previous years.

All but three members of the class were either low-income or first in their families to go on to college. Seventy-four percent were low income. Twenty students were both.

With the addition of the Class of 2013, CECHS's five graduating classes have demonstrated that **urban students can succeed in a rigorous academic program** to earn both a diploma and an Associate Degree upon their graduation from high school.

Success is not just local. CECHS students continue to outperform the averages of other early college high schools across the state and nation on key indicators – graduating high school on-time, graduating with college credit, and graduating with an Associate Degree.

Since 2009 **256** **Canton Early College High School** **STUDENTS**



## Key Indicators of Success

### Graduating High School On-Time

All students who have graduated CECHS have done so on-time. This compares to 86% for other early college high schools across the nation. In Canton, and elsewhere, on-time graduation is viewed as a function of who has remained, or persisted, in early college high school.

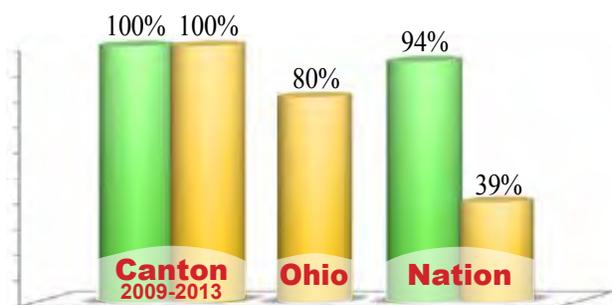
What happens to those who don't remain? One hypothesis posits that any early college experience is beneficial. Of the 46 students from the class of 2013 who did not persist in CECHS, 24 left the district, and 22 returned to the district's McKinley and Timken High Schools. Of those remaining in the district, 21 or 95% graduated on time from Canton City Schools.

**Canton ECHS 100%** -vs- **Other ECHS 86%**

### Graduating with College Credit

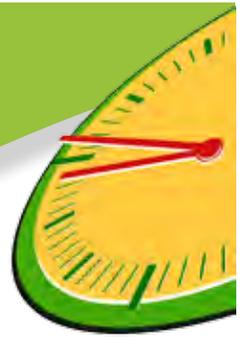
All – 100% – of CECHS graduates over the five years earned college credit. The national average is 94%. Similarly, 100% of CECHS graduates have earned at least a semester of credit compared to the national average of 39% and the Ohio average of 80%. The average number of college hours earned by early college graduates across the nation is 36.<sup>2</sup> In CECHS, the average is 57 hours.<sup>3</sup>

■ Graduates earning college credit  
■ Earned at least a semester of college credit



<sup>2</sup> National data from Jobs for the Future: Early College High School Design Services publication, *Early College High Schools Get Results With Students Who Have Been Underrepresented In Higher Education* and Berger, A., Project Manager (2013). *Early College, Early Success: Early College High School Initiative Impact Study*. Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research.

<sup>3</sup> Based on results for the Class of 2013.



## Graduating with an Associate Degree

One hundred and forty-four of the 256 graduates of CECHS since 2009 have earned Associate Degrees. This 56% success rate is over twice the national average.



<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.



## Beyond Early College High School – Through the Class of 2012

National agencies monitoring early college high school programs have begun using the National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker System to look at further college enrollment on the part of graduates. Graduates of the Canton City Schools, including CECHS, are entered into this unique system, the only integrated national K-12 to college data base.

American Institute for Research notes that 77% of early college high school graduates enroll in higher education following graduation.<sup>5</sup> In CECHS, the percentage is 72%. Yet, such a measurement is hardly objective

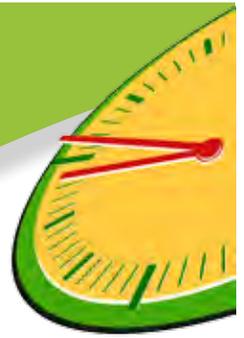
in a school where 56% already have a college degree, before graduation. Adjusting to include those with a degree who have not gone on, the CECHS percentage is 82%.

**82%** Enroll in higher education after graduation  
**CECHS Grads**

As of spring 2012, ten graduates from the CECHS Class of 2009 who elected to go on (23%) have earned additional college degrees.

Class of 2009-2012	Less than Two Year Institution	Two Year Institution	Four Year Institution	% Known Continuing Studies	% Continuing in Four Year
Graduated w/ Associate (113)	0	5	85	80%	75%
Graduated w/College Hours (96)	1	27	32	61%	33%
Classes Total (209)	1	32	117	72%	56%

<sup>5</sup> Op. cit., *Early College, Early Success*



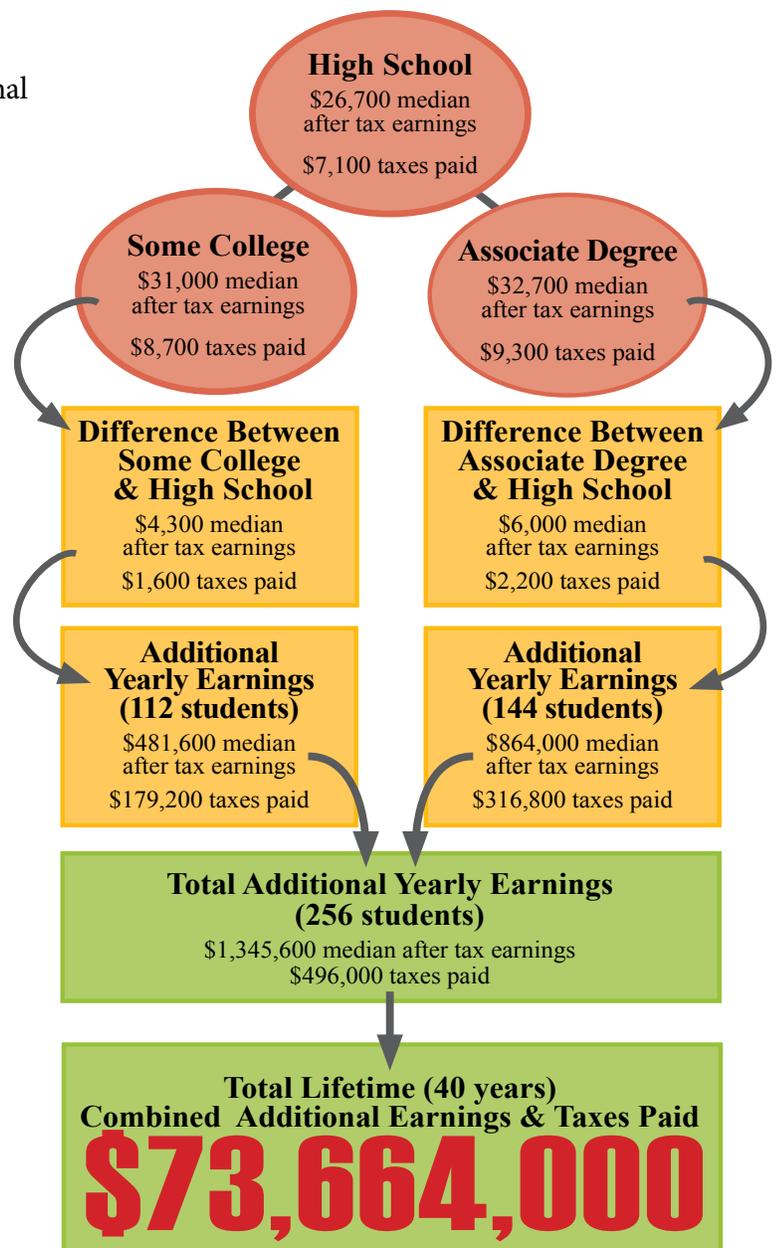
## A Half Decade: What Value?

### What is the Value of CECHS?

Assume for a moment that the graduates of the first five 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 exceeding \$73 million to themselves and their communities in added lifetime earnings and taxes.

This calculation assumes that these urban students would not have gone on to college on their own. But, 72% don't stop and choose instead to continue their education. The potential economic value will only increase as these students earn more degrees.

### Median Additional Economic Value CECHS Graduation Classes of 2009-2013<sup>6</sup>



<sup>6</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. 2008 Dollars unadjusted for inflation



## **CECHS is About Completion**

While the college going rate is accelerating in the Canton City Schools (CCS) partly due to CECHS, it is also the result of multiple other efforts by teachers, counselors, staff and community.

More than three out of every five CCS students now go on to college within two years of graduating high school. However, going is not completing. In Canton, and elsewhere, the odds of not completing a degree, or completing in a timely fashion, remain high.

For every 49 students who enroll in an Associate Degree program in Ohio, only eight (16%) will graduate within four years. At the Baccalaureate level, only 32 out of 51 students (63%) graduate within eight years.<sup>7</sup>

**CECHS is about completion –  
where **one out of two**  
(compared to Ohio’s one out of six)  
**complete an Associate  
Degree in four years.****

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<sup>7</sup> Complete College America, State Data for Ohio based on IPEDS at: [http://www.completecollege.org/state\\_data/](http://www.completecollege.org/state_data/)

# Acknowledgements

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