

# AYPF Study Tour to Connecticut Cross-System Collaboration to Create Postsecondary Opportunities for All Students

March 12-13, 2015

In today's economy the need for a postsecondary education has never been greater. Despite this need, many young people do not have access to a postsecondary education due to the cost, lack of credits, and lack of cross-system pathways to postsecondary opportunities.

Since 2010, Connecticut has taken strides to help at-risk youth prepare for and access a postsecondary education. Connecticut has created an on-line credit recovery program for K-12 schools, a task force to address the achievement gap, an apprenticeship program, and more to help those most in need.

## Connecticut Demographics<sup>1</sup>

Total population: 3,599,341  
People under 18: 21.8%  
White: 69.6%  
Black or African American: 11.3%  
Hispanic or Latino: 14.7%  
People below poverty line: 10.2%

**Number of School Districts<sup>3</sup>: 169**  
**Number of Schools: 1,174**

**Connecticut 4-Year Graduation  
Rate<sup>2</sup>: 85%**

**On average CT spends \$134,000 per  
year to incarcerate one child<sup>5</sup>**

**12.2 days is the average amount of  
days spent in a Juvenile Detention  
Facility<sup>9</sup>**

**Percent Title 1 Schools  
in Connecticut<sup>4</sup>**  
**48.3%**

**10,200 Juveniles arrested in CT in 2013<sup>9</sup>**  
**2,497 juveniles in 2013 in the Bridgeport  
and Hartford Juvenile Detention Centers<sup>9</sup>**

## Federal Funding

**Title 1<sup>6</sup>: \$107,665,107 FY13**  
**Perkins<sup>7</sup>: \$9,461,065 FY14**  
**Workforce Investment<sup>8</sup>: \$5,199,770 FY14**

<sup>1</sup> ["State & County QuickFacts: Connecticut." US Census Bureau. 2013.](#)

<sup>2</sup> ["Connecticut." Alliance for Excellent Education.](#)

<sup>3</sup> ["Performance Office." Connecticut State Department of Education.](#)

<sup>4</sup> ["NAEP State Profiles: Connecticut." National Center for Education Statistics. 2013.](#)

<sup>5</sup> ["To Help Reduce Youth Incarceration, Murphy, Booker Introduce Bill to Encourage State Policies that Lead to Better Youth Outcomes." Chris Murphy Press Releases. June 2014.](#)

<sup>6</sup> ["ESEA Title I LEA Allocations: FY 2013." US Department of Education.](#)

<sup>7</sup> ["Program Memorandum: Revised Estimated Federal Fiscal Year 2014 State Allocations under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006." US Department of Education: Office of Career Technical, and Adult Education. October 2014.](#)

<sup>8</sup> ["Program Memorandum: Estimated Adult Education State Award Allocations for Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2014." US Department of Education: Office of Vocational and Adult Education. March 2014.](#)

<sup>9</sup> ["Facts and Figures on Connecticut's Juvenile Justice System." CT Office of Policy and Management. 2013.](#)

## Opportunity High School and Our Piece of the Pie

In Hartford, Opportunity High School (OHS), a partnership between the Hartford Public Schools and Our Piece of the Pie, prepares students for a postsecondary education through an accelerated credit program. Opportunity High School offers a year-round schedule and extended day which allows students to earn up to eleven credits per year. OHS uses a Pathway to Success System to help prepare their students for life after high school. With this system each student is assigned to a Youth Development Specialist who helps students develop their employment and personal skills. In addition to working with the students, Youth Development Specialists work closely with teachers, parents, students, and the community. OHS has proven to be a successful model and has Our Piece of the Pie has developed similar partnerships with other schools and districts.

### Our Piece of the Pie Hartford, CT<sup>1</sup>

African American: 42%  
Hispanic: 35%  
Age 16-20: 61%  
Age 21-24: 31%  
Graduation rate: 81%  
77% enroll in an Associates, bachelors or vocational program  
Over 78% youth retain employment for 12 months or more

**Hartford Per pupil expenditure<sup>3</sup>:**  
\$18,734 (2013-2014)

## Asnuntuck Community College

In Enfield, Asnuntuck Community College provides students with the opportunity to earn affordable certificates and associate degrees. Asnuntuck Community College was established in 1969 by the Connecticut state government and was the twelfth state college established in Connecticut. When classes began in 1972, there were only 251 students enrolled, since then Asnuntuck has grown to over 1600 students. Asnuntuck creates partnerships with local businesses to assist in career preparation for their students. Asnuntuck also provides opportunities for high school students to earn college credit. Asnuntuck prides themselves on providing individualized support services in order for students to develop their critical thinking skills and strengthen their confidence. Their student services provides students with academic advising, career and transfer counseling, disability counseling, and access to free childcare. The majority of Asnuntuck students transfer after graduation to a four year college or university while another large percentage of the student body takes courses related to workforce development.

### Asnuntuck Community College Enfield, CT<sup>2</sup>

Enrollment: 1,603 Fall 2014  
Average age of students: 26  
Cost: \$1,933 per semester (12 credits)  
24 Certificate Programs  
19 Associate Degrees

**Hartford School District High School  
graduation rate<sup>4</sup>: 71.2%**

<sup>1</sup>["Our Results: Evaluation and Outcomes." Our Piece of the Pie. 2011.](#)

<sup>2</sup>["Asnuntuck Community College at a Glance." Asnuntuck Community College. November 2014.](#)

<sup>3</sup>["2013-14 Net Current Expenditures \(NCE\) per Pupil \(NCEP\) and 2014-15 Special Education Excess Cost Grant Basic Contributions for the May Payment." Connecticut State Department of Education Bureau of Grants Management. February 2015.](#)

<sup>4</sup>["City of Hartford Schools Post Landmark Graduation Rate." Hartford Has It. May 2014.](#)

# History and Relevant Legislation

- 2009** — Funding for non-residential family focused treatment programs grew from \$300,000 to \$39 million in 2009.
- Connecticut Juvenile Training School earned accreditation from the ACA.<sup>1</sup>
- 2010** — **S.B. 438:** Requires schools with a dropout rate of 8% or higher to establish an online credit recovery program to help students earn needed credits.
- After the law was passed in 2007, 16 year olds were are officially part of the juvenile justice system.<sup>1</sup>
- 2011** — **S.B. 929:** Establishes a task force to address the academic achievement gaps in Connecticut by considering effective approaches to closing the achievement gaps in elementary, middle and high schools.
- Connecticut juvenile courts began rejecting referrals involving youth arrest for minor misbehavior, including school arrests.<sup>1</sup>
- Connecticut closed one of its three state-operated detention centers due to lower populations.<sup>1</sup>
- 2012** — **S.B. 40:** Requires each public high school and public institution of higher education complete curricular alignment to enable the successful completion of high school mathematics and language art curricula, to be the indicator of readiness for college level work.
- Seventeen-year-olds came under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system.<sup>1</sup>
- 2013** — **H.B. 6562:** Allows students who need additional preparation for a college program to enroll in an adult education program as a lower-cost alternative.
- H.B. 6562:** Allows local or regional boards of education to establish community schools or schools that provide various educational and social services to students, families, and community members. This law outlines the steps to create a community school.
- S.B. 868:** Directs The Office of Higher Education to develop a list of non-degree certificate programs and technical training course offered by regional community/technical colleges that directly correlate with workforce shortage areas in Connecticut.
- H.B. 6703:** This law requires the Judicial Branch’s Court Support Services division to conduct a pilot program in Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven designed to reduce the number of youth who come in contact with the juvenile justice system.<sup>2</sup>
- 2014** — **E.O. 41:** Established the Common Core Implementation Task Force to make recommendations for improving the quality of state-wide consistency of common core implementation and state-wide professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators, and to identify common core implementation best practices.
- H.B. 5434:** Requires the technical high school system, by January 1, 2015, to develop a plan to use the manufacturing centers at the technical high schools after hours and on weekends for career-readiness programs for students of Connecticut high schools or institutions of higher education. They are also required to offer instruction to teach the skills necessary for a person to succeed in a manufacturing apprenticeship program.
- H.B. 5559:** Creates a new apprenticeship grant program to provide grants for small businesses and manufacturers to hire high school and college students.
- The Future** — Full of opportunities

<sup>1</sup>“Juvenile Justice Reform in Connecticut: How Collaboration and Commitment Have Improved Public Safety and Outcomes for Youth.” Justice Policy Institute. February 2013.

<sup>2</sup>“Office of Legislative Research: Children.” Connecticut General Assembly. July 2013.

# Relevant Research and Articles

## [Closing the Achievement Gap: Four States Efforts](#)

Micha Ann Wixom

*Education Commission of the States*

*January 2015*

This document highlights the steps Connecticut, along with other states, are taking to close the achievement gap. Key pieces of legislation as well as example programs are discussed.

## [Census: Hartford County is CT's Manufacturing Powerhouse](#)

*Hartford Business.com*

*January 28, 2015*

This article features the increase in number of manufacturing jobs in Connecticut over the past few years.

## [A Master Plan to Eliminate the Achievement Gap](#)

*The Achievement Gap Task Force*

*February 28, 2014*

This document was presented to the Connecticut General Assembly and extensively outlines the achievement gap in Connecticut. The report provides statistics and solutions.

## [Helping Over-Age, Under-Credited Youth Succeed: Making the Case for Innovative Education Strategies](#)

Bob Rath, Kathryn Rock, and Ashley Laferriere

*Our Piece of the Pie*

*July 2012*

This report was published by Our Piece of the Pie the same organization that Opportunity High School belongs to. The report discusses the issue of over-aged students who are behind in credit as well as possible solutions. The authors provide insight to much of what Opportunity High School is doing in order to help these students.