

2012 Program Report Card: Agricultural Science & Technology Education Programs (Connecticut State Department of Education)

Quality of Life Result: All Connecticut students have a successful transition to adulthood, assume a contributing role in a world-class workforce, and become productive members of their community and society at large.

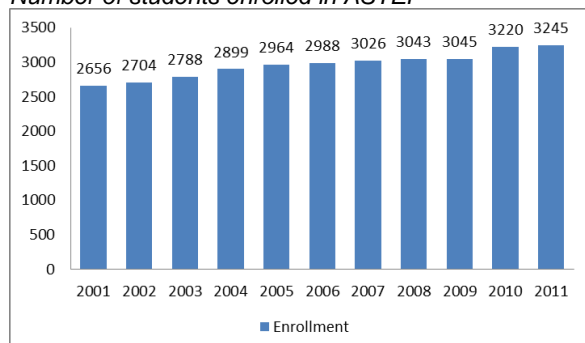
Contribution to Result: Agricultural Science and Technology Education Programs (ASTEP) are one of the public school choice options that are raising the educational attainment level of participating students throughout the state through high-quality and rigorous education. They provide educational choices that contribute to a more highly educated agricultural workforce. ASTEP provide the opportunity for each student to achieve his or her highest potential by offering challenging, relevant and rigorous curriculum and instruction within the classroom environment; leadership training through National FFA programs; experiential learning through Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE). In addition, these programs provide a creative and flexible environment that values each student's unique abilities, talents, interests and learning styles. Greater student learning and engagement in school lead directly to a more prosperous adulthood with greater contributions to the economy and society.

| Program Expenditures | State Funding | Federal Funding | Other Funding | Total Funding |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Actual FY 11 | \$4,560,565 | | Not Applicable | \$4,560,565 |
| Estimated FY 12 | \$5,060,565 | | Not Applicable | \$5,060,565 |

Partners: Institutions of higher education, business and industry, theme-specific associations/groups, educational researchers and parents.

How Much Did We Do?

Number of students enrolled in ASTEP

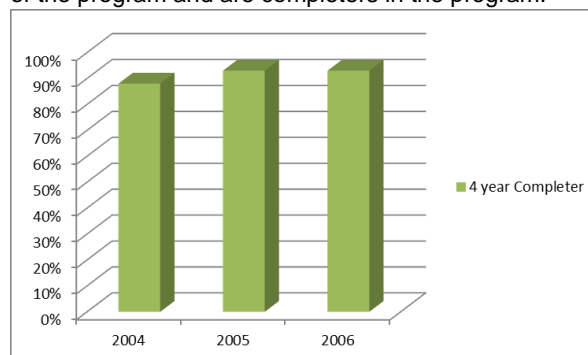


Story behind the baseline: ASTEP enrollment has grown over 22% in the past ten years, growing from 2656 in 2000-01 to 3245 in 2011-12. The greatest growth was seen in the more urban programs of Bridgeport and Trumbull with a 28% and 75% increase respectfully. Schools that have a perceived strong animal science pathway also saw significant growth, Suffield 81%, Region 6, Wamogo 54%, Region 14, Woodbury 31%. This has afforded more students the experience of learning in an experiential model. Since the first pilot program in Middletown during the 1955-56 school year the rate of enrollment growth has been consistent resulting in 19 ASTEP by 2011-12. The post-secondary success of ASTEP graduates revealed in the Better Off Measurements is increasing the demand for ASTEP.

Trend: ▲

How Well Did We Do It?

Percentage ASTEP graduates who finished four years of the program and are completers in the program.

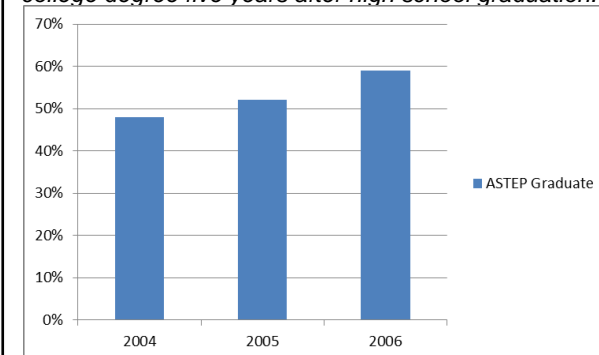


Story behind the baseline: ASTEP accept students that have a high desire to study and work in the agricultural industry. To obtain the maximum benefit from an experiential learning model and to gain the greatest number of career and college ready skills, a student needs to remain in the program for a full four years. Completers are graduates who have received all the course work, leadership skills, and career skills, an ASTEP offers in a given pathway. The data shows that after an increase in the percent of students being completers in 2004, the percentage of agriculture completers has remained steady at 93%.

Trend: ▲

Is Anyone Better Off?

Percentage of ASTEP graduates who earned a four-year college degree five years after high school graduation.



Story behind the baseline: The need for Connecticut graduates to obtain education beyond high school has been well documented. By increasing the rigor and relevance of the curriculum and providing students with authentic learning and assessments the number of graduates of ASTEP who obtain four-year degrees five years after graduation has significantly increased, from 48% to 59%. State wide, in 2004, only 32% of high school graduates had a four-year degree, five years after graduation. 2004 is the most recent year that college degree information for the State of Connecticut is available this rate is comparable to those observed in previous years. ASTEP provides students with skills and knowledge which affords them to be college and career ready.

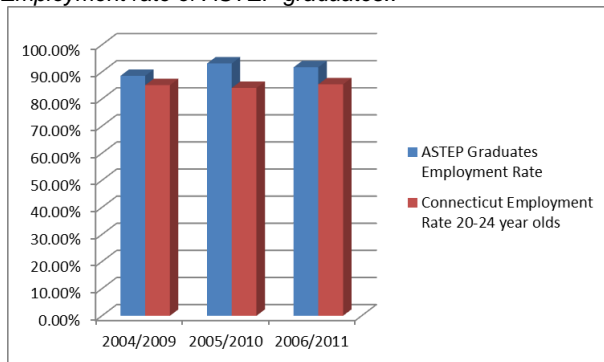
Trend: ▲

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Is Anyone Better Off?

Employment rate of ASTEP graduates..



Story behind the baseline: The 2004/2009; 2005/2010; 2006/2011 are the graduation year/Five-year follow-up completion year. Thus 2004/2009, the 2004 is the year the students graduated and 2009 is the employment rate for the year they completed the follow-up study. In 2009, the 2004 ASTEP graduates had an 11.45% unemployment rate while 20-24 year olds in Connecticut had a 14.9% unemployment rate. The percentage of employed graduates of ASTEP rose significantly from 2009 to 2010, and then increased slightly for 2011. Even through the difficult economic times, ASTE graduates have been more successful than their Connecticut 20-24 year old cohorts, averaging 5.25% higher employment rate.

Trend: ◀▶

Proposed Actions to Turn the Curve:

Action 1: Most ASTEP have capacity to enroll more students but do not because of budget constraints of the local education agency. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) currently does not know the *actual* demand for ASTEP statewide. Neither ASTEP capacity data nor wait list data has been formally collected. Interest in ASTEP beyond those who apply or enroll is not currently measured. Future analysis of such information will assist CSDE in ensuring maximum outreach for these effective programs.

Action 2: The CSDE will identify ASTEP that excel in recruiting and retention of ethnic and racial minorities and identify specific successful strategies used by the identified ASTEP. CSDE will then work closely with ASTEP that have lower ethnic and racial diversity than found in their local recruiting region in employing identified successful strategies. Best practices in recruiting and retention of ethnic and racial minorities will be a part of a knowledge-sharing conference in December 2013.

Data Development Agenda:

- 1) Identify, define and collect statewide data that will measure the *actual* demand for ASTEP, particularly among students/families who are not yet applying to ASTEP.
- 2) Identify, define and collect data on the number of enrolled freshman who become ASTEP completers.
- 3) Identify, define and collect data on successful ethnic and minority student recruitment practices in ASTEP.
- 4) Collect CAPT data to assist in the measuring of ASTEP in the effectiveness of preparing students for college and career.