A study of the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) found robust positive effects for male students, including higher graduation rates and post-graduation earnings as well as evidence of improved learning (test scores) and engagement (attendance).

**Overview of CTHSS**

- **16** technical high schools at the time of the study
- **8%** of Connecticut high schoolers enrolled in CTHSS schools
- **31%** of CTHSS students are from the state’s five poorest central cities
- **3+** CTE courses taken by students in their program

**10-17** CTE programs offered at the schools

**8th grade**

When students apply to CTHSS schools

**Key findings**

Attending a CTHSS school paid off with large gains for male students compared to similar students who applied to CTHSS but attended other schools.

- Better grade 9 attendance rates
- Better grade 10 test scores
- Higher high school graduation rates
- Higher post-graduation quarterly earnings at age 23 or older

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1. The sample excluded students who applied to CTHSS after grade 8 or who had an Individualized Education Program.
2. The study did not find any significant effects for female students.
How do we know that attending a CTHSS technical high school caused these differences in student outcomes?

The study used a regression discontinuity design, which evaluates a program's impact by comparing groups just above and just below a cut-off point for eligibility—in this case, the CTHSS admission score. This design assumes the two groups are similar except for the intervention.

Boys High School Graduation Rate, 2007–17

Key Takeaways

Read the full report: https://cteresearchnetwork.org/resources/effects-career-and-technical-education-evidence-connecticut-technical-high-school-system

Positive effects for CTHSS male students included 10 percentage points higher high school graduation rates and 32 percent higher quarterly earnings at age 23.

Most of the positive effects for male CTHSS students are due to the benefits of a stand-alone technical high school experience.

Although male CTHSS graduates were less likely to attend college initially, there is evidence that these differences fade by age 23.

Understanding why male but not female students appear to benefit from attending a CTHSS school is an important avenue of future research.

This study was conducted by a team at the University of Connecticut and Vanderbilt University, which is affiliated with the Career and Technical Education Research Network. To learn more about the research team and the network, visit https://cteresearchnetwork.org.

The study is supported by the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, through Grant R305A180511 to Vanderbilt University. The study team and project are part of the CTE Research Network, which is supported by the Institute of Education Sciences at the U.S. Department of Education with funds provided under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act through Grant R305N180005.

3 The study employed a fuzzy regression discontinuity approach due to deviations in CTHSS admissions.