

# Building Pathways to Transportation Careers: A Partnership with Manchester Public Schools

The Connecticut Training & Technical Assistance (T2) Center is proud to partner with Manchester Public Schools to introduce its high school students to meaningful opportunities in the transportation field. This partnership has strengthened the school's pre-apprenticeship program with Manchester Public Works. The goals of this initiative were to educate students on safety practices as they become independent road users and spark their interest in transportation careers.



Through classroom visits, students were introduced to a range of safety and technical topics, which increased their awareness and understanding of CT's transportation systems. Key messages reinforced the importance of respecting work zones, slowing down, and navigating them carefully. Students learned that traffic control patterns are thoughtfully designed based on roadway speed and volume to communicate clear, consistent guidance to the traveling public. Students also explored foundational electrical safety concepts, including how electricity affects the human body and how to identify electrical equipment and hazards in everyday conditions. Hands-on activities reinforced these lessons. Students had the opportunity to learn about the various components of traffic cabinets, explore traffic signal

detection systems, and wire traffic signal heads. Additional topics included the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), speed feedback signs, Automated Traffic Enforcement Safety Devices (ATESDs), and the use of drones in transportation. The visits provided students with practical, real-world experiences that they could apply navigating roadways in their daily lives or considering future employment. We are so grateful for our subject matter experts who contributed to this effort: Warren Rogers, Bill Eyberse, Scott Yeomans, Stephen Frycz (City of Stamford), Joshua Michalak (CT Dept. of Transportation), Jason Hughes, and Shawn Barry (T2 Center).

Students also participated in a field trip to the University of Connecticut College of Engineering's Connecticut Transportation Institute (CTI), where they not only heard from Dr. Eric Jackson, but also had the opportunity to explore CTI's driving simulators, which look at how technology is shaping the future of transportation safety and research. James Mahoney led a tour of the Connecticut Advanced Pavement Laboratory (CAP Lab), where students gained insight into the materials, testing process, and innovations used to support road construction and maintenance.

The students' teacher described one of our workshops as a "great presentation, it was geared to high school level knowledge. The content was all real-world and related to things we've even covered in our construction classes this week. I liked how there were questions to the students and hands-on parts as well as pieces for them to see and hold. We loved the energy and passion - even the teachers learned something new." Students commented saying that, "*the examples and stories made it interesting*" and "*there are a lot of careers in transportation I didn't know about.*"

Through this partnership, Manchester High School students gained valuable knowledge on safety topics and were introduced to exciting career pathways in transportation. By bridging education, workforce development, and industry collaboration, this initiative has helped to prepare students for both responsible road use and future success in the transportation field.



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