

Definitions and sources of information

All information is from the **2010-11** school year unless noted.

Abbreviations:

PPS: Pittsburgh Public Schools

PDE: Pennsylvania Department of Education

School name, address, neighborhood, phone number, principal/administrator

Definition: The current school name and principal, acting principal, or administrator as of 9/11 are listed. "PreK" in a school name means the school serves children from ages three to five in an early childhood program.

Sources: PPS and individual charter schools.

School description

Definition: "Magnet school" refers to a whole-school magnet (all students must apply to attend). "School with a magnet program" refers to a school with both magnet and neighborhood (feeder pattern) components. "CTE program" refers to Career & Technical Education. Information about "English as a Second Language" programs can be found on the PPS Web site. Click on "Departments" and use the alphabetical directory. School descriptions apply to the 2011-12 school year.

Sources: PPS Web site, PPS "Options and Offerings Guide."

Number of teachers

Definition: Total number of classroom teachers in the school.

Sources: PPS and individual charter schools.

Enrollment

Definition: Total number of students enrolled in the school as of January 2011.

Sources: PPS and individual charter schools.

Student race/ethnicity

Definition: PPS defines a student's race as black, white, or "other," based on parents' identification. "Other" consists of multi-ethnic, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American students. Charter schools provided similar information. We reported percentages of students in each ethnic subgroup within "other" separately when there were 10 or more students in the group. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

Sources: PPS and individual charter schools.

Principal/administrator stability

Definition: Number of different principals/administrators in a school from the 2007-08 school year to the 2010-11 school year. Schools with "n/a" either opened after 2007-08 or were declared "new" by PDE (Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12 only).

Sources: PPS' "Public School Choices," "Magnet Program Registration Guide," staff lists, and Web site; individual charter schools.

Student daily attendance

Definition: Percentages were determined by dividing the sum total of the number of days each student attended school by the sum total of possible days each student could attend.

Sources: PPS and individual charter schools.

Teacher daily attendance

Definition: Percentages were determined by dividing the sum total of the number of days each teacher attended school by the sum total of possible days each teacher could attend. Non-attendance includes sick days, personal days, funeral leave, military leave, jury duty, and professional leave due to seminars, conferences, etc.

Sources: PPS and individual charter schools.

Special education staff

Definition: Special education services offered at each school by school staff in the 2011-12 school year, excluding programs for students identified as "gifted." Other services not listed here may be provided by itinerant staff depending on students' needs. For definitions of services, click on "Departments" on the PPS Web site and find Special Education in the alphabetical directory. *Note:* By law, district and charter schools must serve students according to their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Like school districts, charter schools must not discriminate against students based on disability.

Sources: PPS and individual charter schools.

Family income status

Definition: Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (a measure of family poverty).

Sources: PPS and individual charter schools.

Student disciplinary actions

Definition: Student disciplinary actions include reported incidents of violence and possession of controlled substances (excluding tobacco) or a weapon on school property. (One incident may involve more than one offender.) For a complete list of incidents at each school that were required to be reported to the state, including the category of "Other Misconduct" which was not reported here, go to www.safeschools.state.pa.us, choose "School Safety," then "School Safety Historic" to view reports. "Number of incidents per 100 students" represents the number of incidents divided by the total student enrollment multiplied by 100, so readers may compare data from schools of different sizes. Information is from 2009-10, the most recent year available.

Source: PDE.

PSSA tests

Definition: Percentage of students at Proficient and Advanced achievement levels on PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment) Reading, Math, Science, and Writing tests, for identified grades; percentage of students at each achievement level on PSSA Reading and Math tests by subgroups* for identified grades or grade spans. Achievement levels (score ranges) include “Advanced,” “Proficient,” “Basic,” and “Below Basic.” Subgroups include student race/ethnicity, family income status, and IEP status.

- Subgroup scores are reported as “n/a” when that subgroup had 0-9 students (test scores for fewer than 10 students in a group or subgroup are not reported by PPS or PDE). For K-8 schools, subgroup percentages were calculated separately for each grade span (3-5 and 6-8), rather than by building total.
- Race/ethnicity for district schools reflects PPS definitions (see above), and charter school information. We report subgroup information when 10 or more students in the subgroup took a particular test. In some cases, a subgroup met the reporting threshold for one subject area only (Reading or Math).
- “Low-income” refers to students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. (PSSA scores were not available by subgroup for students who are not low-income.)
- “IEP” refers to students with an Individual Education Plan for special education, excluding students identified as “gifted.” In some cases, a subgroup met the reporting threshold for one subject area only.
- If a bar in a chart does not include every score range (for example, it appears that no students were “Below Basic”), no students scored in that range.
- Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.

Source: PDE.

Special accomplishments

Definition: Awards, honors, and other kinds of local and national recognition for individual students, school teams, and schools; student participation in national and local community service and celebratory events; and noteworthy creative works produced by students.

Sources: Selected by A+ Schools from information provided by district and charter school principals/administrators and other school staff, PPS Web site, and other sources.

Graduation rate

Definition: PDE determined the graduation rate by adding the number of drop-outs in 9th grade in 2006-07, in 10th grade in 2007-08, in 11th grade in 2008-09, and in 12th grade in 2009-10 to the number of 2010 graduates, then dividing the number of 2010 graduates by that total. Information is for 2010, the most recent year available.

Source: PDE.

Percentage of seniors eligible for Pittsburgh Promise scholarship

Definition: Percentage of 2011 12th grade cohort (as of July 15, 2011), by race and family income status, who met or exceeded the

Class of 2011 Pittsburgh Promise grade point average (GPA) criteria of 2.5. This is one of several criteria for eligibility to receive scholarship funds from the Pittsburgh Promise (see PPS Web site for more information). Fewer than 10 students in a subgroup were reported as “n/a.” Information for racial/ethnic groups other than black and white was not reported due to their small numbers. The Pittsburgh Promise scholarship eligibility indicator reported for district schools was not reported for charter schools, because some charter school students were ineligible due to residency requirements, rather than their GPAs.

Source: PPS.

SAT scores

Definition: The SAT is an admissions test required by many colleges.

Sources: 2008-11 SAT average Critical Reading and Mathematics standard scores for each school, PDE (www.pde.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/data_and_statistics/7202/sat_scores/674663); national and state average scores, College Board.

Percentage taking SAT

Definition: Number of 12th graders in 2010-11 who took the SAT divided by the official 12th grade enrollment.

Source: PDE.

Percentage taking AP courses

Definition: Number of students, by race and family income status, who took at least one Advanced Placement course divided by total student enrollment or by grades 9-12 for 6-12 schools. Fewer than 10 students in a subgroup were reported as “n/a.” Information for racial/ethnic groups other than black and white was not reported due to their small numbers.

Sources: PPS, Career Connections Charter School, and Northside Urban Pathways Charter School.

International Baccalaureate (Pittsburgh Obama 6-12 only)

Definition: Percentage of students taking at least one course in the International Baccalaureate high school program.

Source: PPS.

Information by level

Principal stability

Definition: The number of different principals from the 2007-08 school year to the 2010-11 school year. For schools with two campuses, each campus was counted.

Sources: PPS’ “Public School Choices,” “Magnet Program Registration Guide,” staff lists, and Web site; individual charter schools.

Special education: PSSA participation

Definition: Percentage of students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP), excluding “gifted” students, who took the PSSA for Reading and Math. The percentage represents those students who were not eligible to take an alternate test.

Source: PDE.

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* “Subgroup” means a group within a larger group. For example, “white fifth-graders” is a subgroup of all fifth-graders.

Definitions and sources of information

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Special education: PASA participation

Definition: Total number of students who took the PASA (Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment, for students with significant cognitive disabilities) for Reading and Math.

Source: University of Pittsburgh, PASA Project (www.pasaassessment.org/Rep2011.jsp).

Special education: PSSA-M participation

Definition: Total number of students who took the PSSA-M (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment-Modified) for Reading and Math.

Source: PDE.

PSSA tests

Definition: See above.

Source: State information, PDE.

Additional definitions and sources for charter schools

Student stability rate

Definition: The rate represents the total number of students who did not transfer (no record of a transaction other than “promotion”) during the entire year divided by the official enrollment for the year, which is calculated in October. (A high number indicates a stable student population.)

Sources: Individual charter schools.

Tests given by the school

City Charter High School:

Definition: ACT assessments in English, Reading, Mathematics, and Science: standard scores for a cohort of students who took the ACT

series—the EXPLORE assessment in 9th grade, the PLAN assessment in 10th grade, and the ACT assessment in 11th grade (a test some students take instead of the SAT). Scores for all subject areas were combined into one composite standard score. The cohort represents students who took the assessment in 2008-09, 2009-10, and 2010-11. The combined scores would remain the same year to year if school growth occurred at the same rate as the national norm group.

Source: City Charter High School.

Manchester Academic Charter School:

Definition: Mean Normal Curve Equivalent (MNCE) for the TerraNova standardized assessment in Reading, Language Arts, and Mathematics, for kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades. MNCE is calculated by adding the normal curve equivalent scores of all students in the group and dividing by the total number of students in that group. Test scores were reported on a scale from 1-99, with 50 being an average score.

Source: Manchester Academic Charter School.

Northside Urban Pathways Charter School:

Definition: Measures of Academic Progress® (MAP) scores for 6th through 12th grades. MAP is a computer adaptive test in Reading and Math. Scores are reported on a scale from approximately 160 to 250.

Source: Northside Urban Pathways Charter School.

Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh:

Definition: Mean Normal Curve Equivalent (MNCE) for the TerraNova Reading, Language Arts, and Mathematics assessments, in kindergarten through 4th grades. MNCE is calculated by adding the normal curve equivalent scores of all students in the group and dividing by the total number of students in that group. Test scores were reported on a scale from 1-99, with 50 being an average score.

Source: Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh Charter School.

College-bound seniors

Definition: The percentage of 2011 graduates who were accepted to two-year colleges, four-year colleges/universities, or vocational/trade institutions granting certificates or specialized degrees.

Sources: Career Connections Charter School (2010), City Charter High School, and Northside Urban Pathways Charter School.

ACT 11th grade standard scores (City Charter High School only)

Definition: The ACT is a college readiness assessment some students take instead of the SAT. Note: This indicator represents all students who took the ACT 11th grade assessment in 2010-11.

Source: City Charter High School.

Percentage of seniors taking the ACT (City Charter High School only)

Definition: The number of 12th graders who took the ACT in 11th grade (2009-10) divided by the total number of 12th graders.

Source: City Charter High School.

Students who earned college credit (City Charter High School only)

Definition: Percentage of seniors who earned credits at the Community College of Allegheny County and Duquesne University.

Source: City Charter High School.

For more information

- A+ Schools: www.aplusschools.org
- Pittsburgh Public Schools: www.pps.k12.pa.us
- Career Connections Charter High School: www.ccchs.net
- City Charter High School: www.cityhigh.org
- The Environmental Charter School at Frick Park: www.environmentalcharterschool.org
- Manchester Academic Charter School: www.macsk8.org
- Northside Urban Pathways Charter School: www.upcs.net/up/home.html
- Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh Charter School: www.ulpgh.org/programs/charter.asp
- Pittsburgh Promise: www.pittsburghpromise.org
- Pennsylvania Department of Education: www.education.state.pa.us, <http://paayp.emetric.net>