

Pittsburgh's Charter Schools

Charter schools are free, public schools operated independently of school districts. Four of Pittsburgh's charter schools provided information for this report.

Additional definitions and sources for charter schools

Definitions presented here include indicators, or definitions of indicators, that are unique to charter schools. For common indicators, see pages 73-74.

All information is from the 2006-07 school year unless noted.

School focus

Definition: Core aspects of the school's program (2007-08).

Sources: Selected by A+ Schools from information provided by individual charter schools and charter school Web sites.

Special education

Definition: Information about special education services was provided by each charter school.

Please note: by law, 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: Individual charter schools.

Graduation rate (Northside Urban Pathways only)

Definition: The 2007 graduation rate was determined by adding the number of dropouts in 9th grade in 2003-04, in 10th grade in 2004-05, in 11th grade in 2005-06, and in 12th grade in 2006-07 to the number of 2007 graduates, then dividing the number of 2007 graduates by that total.

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Tests given by the school

City Charter High School:

Definition: New Standards Reference Examinations for Reading and Mathematics: percentage of 10th grade students achieving each standard. 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 2004-05, 2005-06, and 2006-07. 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.

Northside Urban Pathways Charter School:

Definition: Percentage of students at the Proficient or Advanced achievement levels on the Stanford Achievement Tests (SAT 10) for Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, in 7th, 9th and 10th grades.

Source: Northside Urban Pathways Charter School.

Urban League of Pittsburgh Charter School:

Definition: Mean Normal Curve Equivalent (MNCE) for the TerraNova Reading, Language Arts, and Mathematics assessments, in 1st, 2nd, and 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 Pittsburgh Charter School.

Urban League of Pittsburgh Charter School

K-5 charter school

327 N. Negley Ave., 15206

East Liberty

412-361-1008

Chief Executive Officer: Gail Edwards

Number of teachers: 19

Enrollment/Attendance

228 students

African-American: 98.0%

White: 0.0%

Other: 2.0%

Student daily attendance: 92.0%

Special education

Resource room instruction

Speech and language instruction

Occupational therapy

Physical therapy

Family income status

73.7% of students eligible for free/reduced lunch.

Special features

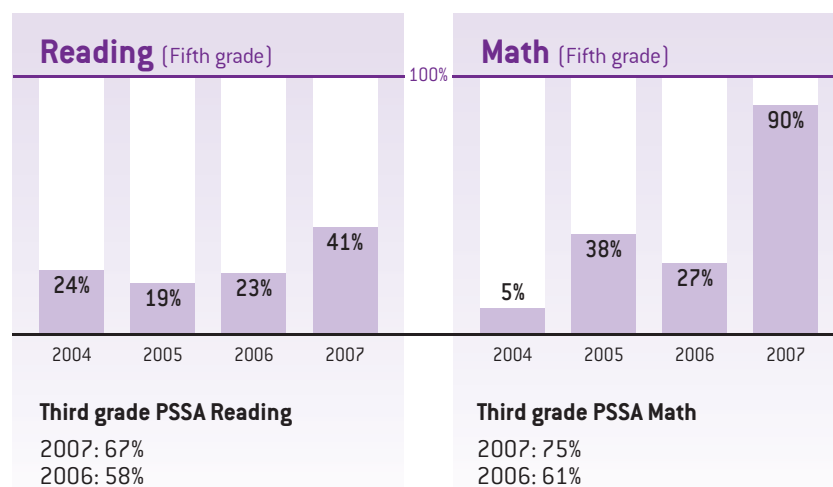
- Extended school year
- Small class sizes
- Drama, violin, piano, ballet, and yoga programs
- Robotics, chess, spelling bee, and school patrol
- Afrocentric school uniforms
- Individualized student education plans
- Teachers required to conduct home visits
- Parents required to do 30 hours of volunteer work

Tests given by the school: TerraNova standardized assessment

Grade	Mean Normal Curve Equivalent*		
	Reading	Language Arts	Mathematics
1st grade (2007)	60.0%	62.9%	59.3%
2nd grade (2007)	52.4	57.9	55.9
4th grade (2007)	56.1	51.2	53.8

* Test scores were reported on a scale of 1-99, with 50 being an average score.

Tests required by the state: Percentage of students at Proficient/Advanced levels on PSSA Reading and Math tests



School focus

- Core curriculum includes math/science/technology emphasis, knowledge of world cultures, Spanish and Japanese language instruction, Afrocentric Social Studies
- Heartwood literature-based character education
- Family and community support

Manchester Academic Charter School

K-8 charter school

1214 Liverpool St., 15233

Manchester

412-322-0585

Chief Executive Officer: Vasilios

Scoumis

Number of teachers: 15

Enrollment/Attendance

198 students

African-American: 98.0%

White: 2.0%

Other: 0.0%

Student daily attendance: 95.0%

Special education

Full special education program to meet students' needs.

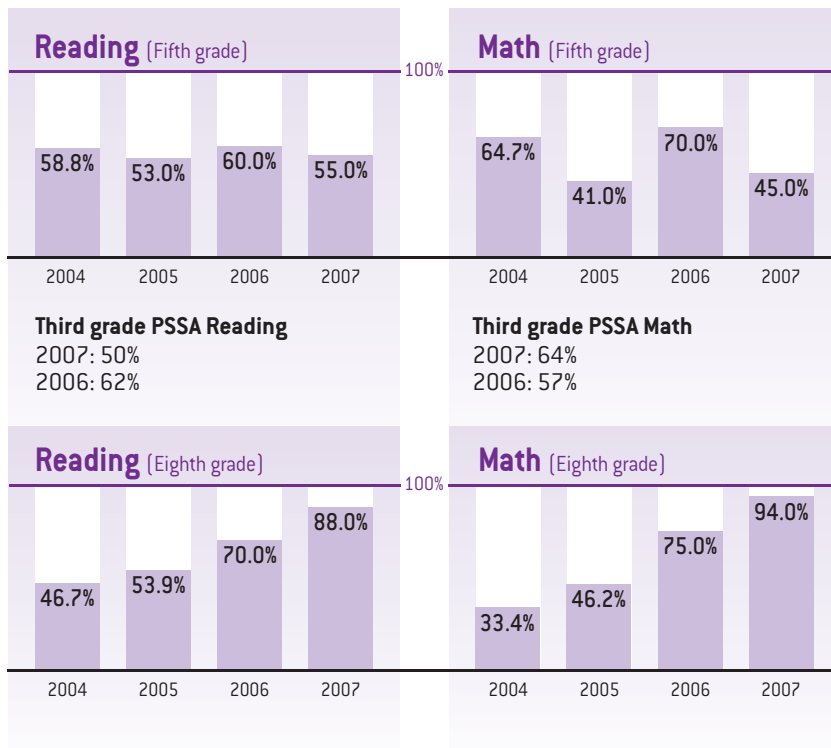
Family income status

76.0% of students eligible for free/reduced lunch.

Special features

- K-8 Spanish language
- Teacher assistants in every classroom
- Partnership with Manchester Youth Development Center for after-school and summer school programs
- Partnerships with the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Sarah Heinz House, Carnegie Science Center, and Manchester Craftsmen's Guild

Tests required by the state: Percentage of students at Proficient/Advanced levels on PSSA Reading and Math tests



School focus

- Standards-driven academic curriculum
- Use of neighborhood and community resources
- Technology classes K-8

Northside Urban Pathways Charter School

6-12 charter school

914 Penn Ave., 15222

Downtown

412-392-4601

Principal: Cathy Russo

Number of teachers: 26

Enrollment/Attendance

275 students

African-American: 98.0%

White: 2.0%

Other: 0.0%

Student daily attendance: 95.0%

Special education

Learning support

Emotional support

Anger management counseling

Student Assistance Program
(behavioral health)

Family income status

90.0% of students eligible for free/reduced lunch.

Special features

- Twelfth grade internships
- Laptop computers for grades 9-12
- One-on-one tutoring
- Competitive cheerleading
- Steelpan and symphonic bands
- New library
- Mentoring program through college years
- Values for Life program
- Member of Greater Pittsburgh Independent Basketball League

2007 graduation rate: 93.0%

College readiness

Average SAT scores, 2007	Northside Urban Pathways	National average
Critical Reading	390	502
Mathematics	385	515

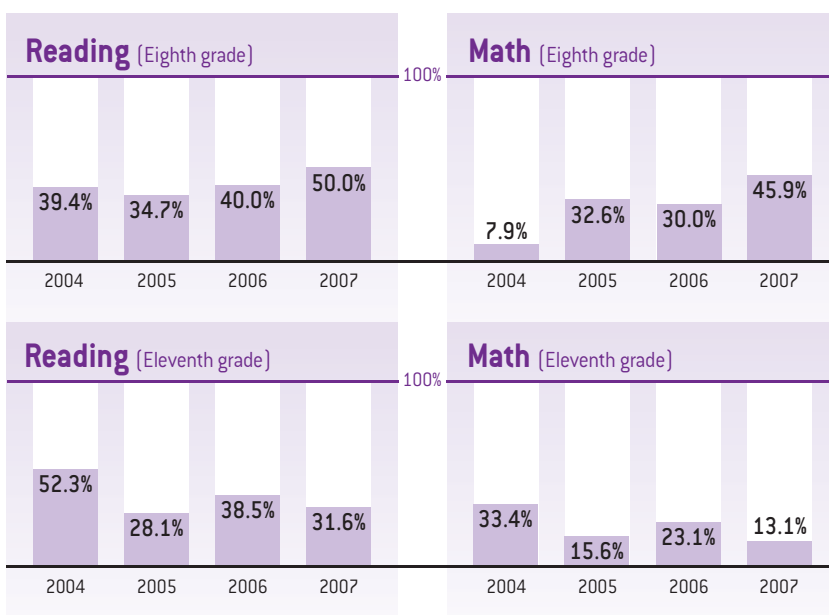
Percentage of students taking the SAT: 54.0%

Percentage of students taking AP (Advanced Placement) courses: 14.0%

Tests given by the school: Percentage of students at Proficient/Advanced levels

Grade	Reading	Stanford Achievement Test 10		
		Math	Science	Social Studies
7th grade (2007)	37.3%	50.4%	37.1%	36.5%
9th grade (2007)	40.3	51.0	37.8	44.1
10th grade (2007)	36.2	43.7	33.1	37.2

Tests required by the state: Percentage of students at Proficient/Advanced levels on PSSA Reading and Math tests



School focus

- Standards and performance-based (promotion to next grade is based on demonstrations of proficiency)
- Use of Downtown cultural and educational resources and facilities

City Charter High School

9-12 charter school

717 Liberty Ave., Suite 900,
15222

Downtown

412-690-2489

Chief Executive Officer: Richard
Wertheimer

Number of teachers: 51

Enrollment/Attendance

530 students

African-American: 55.9%

White: 42.0%

Other: 2.1%

Student daily attendance: 93.0%

Special education

Inclusion services for all
disabilities.

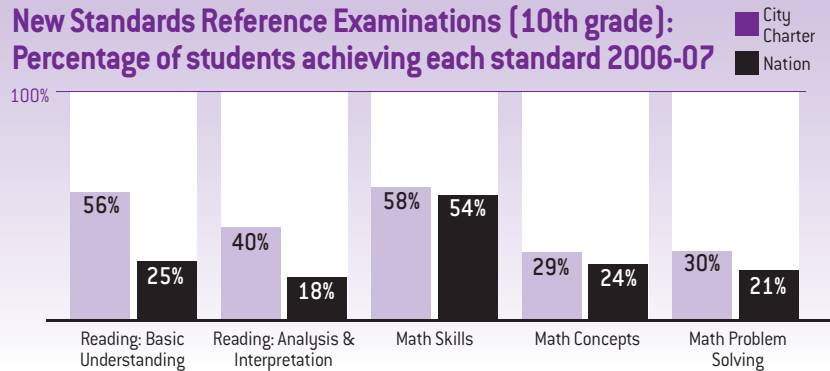
Family income status

58.0% of students eligible for
free/reduced lunch.

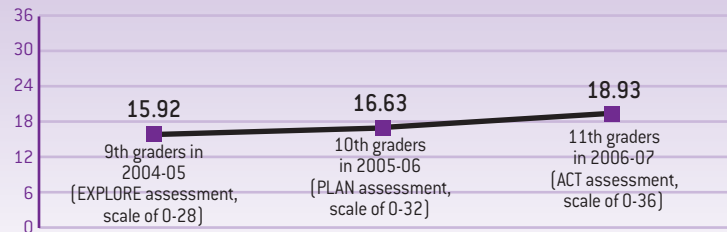
Special features

- Balanced year-round calendar
- Teachers stay with students all four years
- Laptops with wireless Internet access for all students
- Wellness program focused on the whole child
- Physical education that stresses life-long fitness through YMCA participation

Tests given by the school

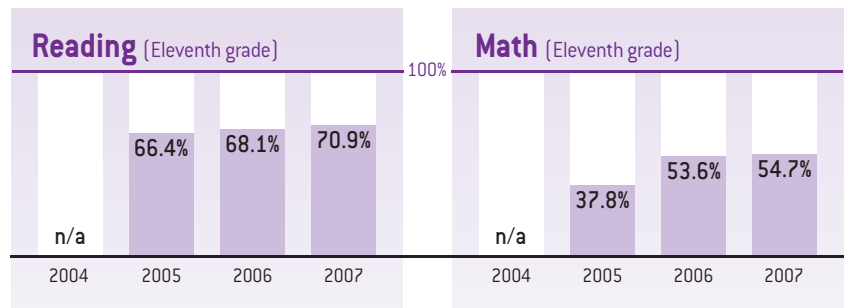


ACT assessments: English, Reading, Mathematics, Science (measuring growth over time for a group of students)*



* Scores were combined for all subject areas. Growth in scores over time indicates a greater rate of progress than the national norm group.

Tests required by the state: Percentage of students at Proficient/Advanced levels on PSSA Reading and Math tests



City Charter did not have an 11th grade in 2004.

School focus

- Interdisciplinary, project-based learning focused on standards
- Academic and Career Plan for each student: mentors, job shadowing, internships, and for-credit college courses for qualifying students
- Technology-infused learning environment