

Definitions and sources of information

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

Abbreviations:

PPS: Pittsburgh Public Schools

RTI: Real Time Information, a PPS Web-based student information management system (A+ Schools was granted read-only access to RTI under a confidentiality agreement with PPS)

PDE: Pennsylvania Department of Education

School name, address, phone number, principal/administrator

Definition: The current school name and principal, acting principal or administrator as of 10/07 is listed. “PreK” in a school name means the school serves children from ages three to five in an early childhood program.

Sources: PPS Web site (10/07) 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 magnet and neighborhood (feeder pattern) components.

Source: PPS Web site.

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.

Sources: RTI (1/07) 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 American-Indian, Asian and Hispanic students. Charter schools provided similar information. Percents may not add to 100 because of rounding.

Sources: RTI and individual charter schools.

Student daily attendance

Definition: Percentages were determined by dividing average daily student attendance by enrollment.

Sources: RTI and individual charter schools.

Special education

Definition: Special education services offered at each district school in the 2006-07 school year, excluding programs for students identified as “gifted.” For definitions of services, see “Special Education” on the PPS Web site (www.pps.k12.pa.us).

Source: PPS Program for Students with Exceptionalities (10/07).

Family income status

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

Sources: RTI and individual charter schools.

Special features

Definition: Partnerships, projects and other kinds of learning experiences not offered at every school (2007-08).

Sources: Selected by A+ Schools from school handbooks and other information provided by PPS, and information provided by charter schools.

Tests given by the district

Definition: TerraNova Reading and Mathematics (percentage of students at Proficient/Advanced achievement levels) for 2nd grade, TerraNova Reading for 9th grade, TerraNova Mathematics for 10th grade. No tests given by the district were reported for grades 6-8.

Source: RTI.

Tests required by the state: PSSA

Definition: Percentage of students at Proficient/Advanced achievement levels on PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment) Reading and Math tests. Levels (score ranges) include “Advanced,” “Proficient,” “Basic” and “Below Basic.” Third grade scores were rounded to zero decimal places.

Source: PDE.

Definitions and sources of information *continued*

SAT scores

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

Sources: 2007 SAT average Critical Reading and Mathematics standard scores for each school, PDE and Northside Urban Pathways Charter School; national and state average scores, College Board.

Percent taking SAT

Definition: Number of district high school graduates in 2007 who took the SAT at least once divided by the total number of 2007 graduates; percent of seniors at Northside Urban Pathways Charter School who took the SAT in the 2006-07 school year.

Sources: PDE and Northside Urban Pathways Charter School.

Percent taking AP courses

Definition: Number of students taking at least one AP (Advanced Placement) course divided by total student enrollment.

Sources: PPS and Northside Urban Pathways Charter School.

International Baccalaureate (Pittsburgh Schenley High School only)

Definition: Percentage of students taking at least one course in the International Baccalaureate program, offered only at Schenley.

Source: PPS.

Strengths and challenges

See page 75.

Note about the graduation rate. PDE calculates graduation rates for schools, which are posted at www.paayp.com. A+ Schools prefer to report rates from the RAND Corporation, which published estimated graduation rates over four or five years for PPS high schools, in 2006. RAND is currently updating this information. When it's available, graduation rates for each high school will be posted on the A+ Schools Web site.

Information by level

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.

Source: PDE.

Special education: PSSA performance

Definition: Percentage of students with an Individual Education Plan, excluding gifted students, who scored at the Proficient or Advanced achievement levels on the PSSA for Reading and Math.

Source: PDE.

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. Information is from the 2005-06 school year.

Source: University of Pittsburgh, PASA Project.

PSSA score ranges

Definition: The percentage of students at each level who scored in the "Advanced," "Proficient," "Basic" and "Below Basic" score ranges. (For a similar breakdown of scores by school, see the A+ Schools Web site: www.aplusschools.org.)

Source: PDE.

For more information

A+ Schools: www.aplusschools.org

Pittsburgh Public Schools: www.pps.k12.pa.us

City Charter High School: www.cityhigh.org

Manchester Academic Charter School: www.macsk8.org

Northside Urban Pathways Charter School:
www.pathways.k12.pa.us

Urban League of Pittsburgh Charter School: www.ulpcs.org

Pennsylvania Department of Education: www.pde.state.pa.us