

# Definitions and sources of information

All information is from the **2009-10** 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 9/10 are 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, PPS “Assistant Superintendents’ Offices and School Listing 2010-11,” 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. 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 2010-11 school year.

**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:** PPS (1/10) 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. This year, we reported percentages of students in each ethnic subgroup within “other” separately when 10 or more students in that group were represented both in enrollment and in PSSA score reports. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

**Sources:** PPS and individual charter schools.

## Student stability rate

**Definition:** A measure of student stability during one academic year. For district schools, the student stability 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. Charter schools provided similar

information. (A high number indicates a stable student population.)

**Sources:** PPS and individual charter schools.

## Principal/administrator stability

**Definition:** Number of different principals/administrators in a school from the 2006-07 school year to the 2009-10 school year. Schools with “n/a” either opened after 2006-07 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 2010-11 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 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](http://www.safeschools.state.pa.us), choose "School Safety," then "School Safety Historic" to view 2009 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 2008-09, the most recent year available.

**Source:** PDE.

### PSSA tests

**Definition:** Percentage of students at Proficient/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 and CAPA 6-12, subgroup percentages were calculated separately for each grade span (3-5, 6-8, and 9-12), rather than by building total.
- *Race/ethnicity* for district schools reflects PPS definitions [see previous page], and charter school information. **We reported subgroup information when 10 or more students in the subgroup took a particular test.** In some cases, for unknown reasons, 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, for unknown reasons, 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 Division of Communications & Marketing, and other sources.

### Graduation rate

**Definition:** PDE determined the graduation rate by adding the number of drop-outs in 9th grade in 2005-06, in 10th grade in 2006-07, in

11th grade in 2007-08, and in 12th grade in 2008-09 to the number of 2009 graduates, then dividing the number of 2009 graduates by that total. Information is for 2009, the most recent year available.

**Source:** PDE.

### Percentage of seniors eligible for Pittsburgh Promise scholarship

**Definition:** Percentage of 2010 12th grade cohort (as of July 15, 2010), by race and family income status, who met or exceeded the Class of 2010 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 the district 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:** 2007-10 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](http://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 2009-10 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 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 high school program.

**Source:** PPS.

### Information by level

#### Principal stability

**Definition:** The number of different principals from the 2006-07 school year to the 2009-10 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.

*Continued on page 124*

\* "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

*(continued from page 123)*

### 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: 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 2008-09 school year.

**Source:** University of Pittsburgh, PASA Project ([www.pasaassessment.org/Rep2009.jsp](http://www.pasaassessment.org/Rep2009.jsp)).

### PSSA tests

**Definition:** See previous page.

**Source:** State information, PDE.

## Additional definitions and sources for 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 2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10. 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.

#### Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh:

**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 Greater Pittsburgh Charter School.

#### College-bound seniors

**Definition:** The percentage of 2010 graduates who were accepted to two-year colleges, four-year colleges/universities, or vocational/trade institutions granting certificates or specialized degrees.

**Sources:** City Charter High School and Northside Urban Pathways Charter School.

#### ACT standard scores for 11th grade students (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 2009-10.

**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 (2008-09) divided by the total number of 12th graders.

**Source:** City Charter High School.

#### Seniors who earned college credit (City Charter High School only)

**Definition:** Percentage of students who earned credit for courses they took at the Community College of Allegheny County during their senior year of high school (2009-10).

**Source:** City Charter High School.

#### Seniors who took college courses (Career Connections Charter High School only)

**Definition:** The percentage of seniors who took college courses during their senior year of high school (2009-10).

**Source:** Career Connections Charter High School.

### For more information

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