

Definitions and sources of information

All information is from the **2011-12** 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 9/12 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 and 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 2012-13 school year.

Sources: PPS Web site, PPS “Options and Offerings Guide.”

Building accessibility

Definition: Whether or not a school is “accessible” (school entrance and all floors and classrooms are accessible to individuals who use wheelchairs); has an accessible entrance but no elevator; or is “accessible, with exceptions” (has an accessible entrance and most, but not all, floors and classrooms are accessible).

Sources: PPS and individual charter schools.

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 2012 (1/12).

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 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 2008-09 school year to the 2011-12 school year. The 2011-12 school year tabulation includes mid-year changes. Schools with “n/a” either opened after 2008-09 or were declared “new” by PDE.

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-based staff in the 2012-13 school year, excluding programs for students identified as “gifted.” Other services may also be provided at the school, 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, “low income”

Definition: 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 2010-11, 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 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 page 114), 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 tracking the number of individual ninth graders in 2007-08 who graduated in 2011 or earlier. For more information about how the rate was determined, go to www.education.state.pa.us and click on “Graduation Rates.” Information is for 2011, the most recent year available.

Source: PDE.

Percentage of seniors eligible for Pittsburgh Promise scholarship

Definition: Percentage of 2012 12th grade cohort (as of August 31,

2012), by race and family income status, who met or exceeded the Class of 2012 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 district average for low-income students was not available in time for publication. 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.

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 was reported as “n/a.” Information for racial/ethnic groups other than black and white was not reported due to their small numbers. No information was available for Obama 6-12, Science and Technology 6-12, or Westinghouse 6-12.

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

Information by level

Principal stability

Definition: The number of different principals from the 2008-09 school year to the 2011-12 school year. The tabulation for 2011-12 includes mid-year changes.

Sources: PPS and 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.

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: PDE.

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.

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