



Charter School Renewal Environmental Charter School

Expect great things.



Renewal

As the charter school authorizer, the School District of Pittsburgh is responsible for the renewal of charter schools, as requested.

Charter agreements are typically for a period of five (5) years.

Renewals consider information gathered from four (4) previous annual reviews.

Causes for Non-Renewal:

1. One or more material violations of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures contained in the written charter signed pursuant to section 1720-A
2. Failure to meet the requirements for student performance set forth in 22 Pa.Code Ch. 5 (relating to curriculum) or subsequent regulations promulgated to replace 22 Pa. Code Ch. 5 or failure to meet any performance standard set forth in the written charter signed pursuant to section 1716-A*
3. Failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management or audit requirements
4. Violation of provisions of this article (the Charter School Law)
5. Violation of any provision of law from which the charter school has not been exempted, including Federal laws and regulations governing children with disabilities
6. The charter has been convicted of fraud.

*Ch. 5 of the PA Code has been repealed and replaced by Ch. 4 (relating to Academic Standards and Assessment).

Review Process

- Annual site visits over term of charter
- Review team reports and discusses findings in terms of renewal criteria
- Findings presented to the Board on June 6, 2023.
- Board votes on June 28, 2023.

Review Team

PPS Team Member

Lisa Augustin
Stephen Connell (Cherie Moshier)
Ron Joseph
Jessica Kapsha
Naomi York
Karen Arnold
Tracy Brezicki

Area of Expertise

Charter Office
Facilities
Finance
Curriculum and Instruction
Curriculum and Instruction
School Administration
Students with Exceptionalities

Background

- First authorized in 2008
- Board Approved
- Most Recent Renewal : 2013 (renewed through 2023 as part of amendment agreement with PPS Board of School Directors)
- Three Locations
 - Lower School (K-2) – 309 S. Braddock Ave
 - Upper School (3-5) – 829 Milton St.
 - Middle School (6-8) – 5525 Columbo St.
 - High School (9-12) – 1154 Chislett St. (temporary location)
 - New high school due to open for the 2025-2026 school year

Demographics

2021-2022 School Fast Facts

Grades	K-10
Enrollment	1011
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.6%
Asian	2.1%
Black	22.9%
Hispanic	3.7%
White	60.8%
2 or More Races	10.0%
Economically Disadvantaged (ED)	28.5%
English Language Learner	0.0%
Special Education	13.4%

Source: PDE Future Ready PA Index

Demographics

2021-2022 Enrollment by Exceptionality	
Autism	25
Emotional Disturbance	19
Intellectual Disability	*
Other Health Impairment	23
Specific Learning Disability	40
Speech or Language Impairment	34
Total	153

Source: PDE; Where (*) appears, data are not displayed due to small group sizes (n=10 or less)

Future Ready PA Index

As Reported on 2017-2018 Future Ready PA Index:

- All Student Group Meets Interim Goal/Improvement Target in English Language Arts/Literature
- All Student Group Meet Interim Goal/Improvement Target in Mathematics/Algebra
- All Student Group Meets Interim Goal/Improvement Target in Science/Biology
- All Student Group Did Not Meet the Standard Demonstrating Growth in English Language Arts/Literature
- All Student Group Meets the Standard Demonstrating Growth in Mathematics/Algebra
- All Student Group Exceeds the Standard Demonstrating Growth in Science/Biology
- All Student Group Meets Performance Standard in Regular Attendance
- All Student Group Exceeds Performance Standard in Career Standards Benchmark

Future Ready PA Index

As Reported on 2018-2019 Future Ready PA Index:

- All Student Group Meets the Interim Goal/Improvement Target in English Language Arts/Literature
- All Student Group Meets the Interim Goal/Improvement Target in Mathematics/Algebra
- All Student Group Meets 2030 Statewide Goal in Science/Biology
- All Student Group Exceeds the Standard Demonstrating Growth in English Language Arts/Literature
- All Student Group Meets the Standard Demonstrating Growth in Mathematics/Algebra
- All Student Group Exceeds the Standard Demonstrating Growth in Science/Biology
- All Student Group Meets Performance Standard in Regular Attendance
- All Student Group Meets Performance Standard in Career Standards Benchmark

Performance Profile & Future Ready PA Index

As Reported on 2021-2022 Future Ready PA Index:

- All Student Group Did Not Meet the Interim Goal/Improvement Target in English Language Arts/Literature
- All Student Group Did Not Meet the Interim Goal/Improvement Target in Mathematics/Algebra
- All Student Group Meets Interim Goal/Improvement Target in Science/Biology
- All Student Group Did Not Meet the Standard Demonstrating Growth in English Language Arts/Literature
- All Student Group Did Not Meet the Standard Demonstrating Growth in Mathematics/Algebra
- All Student Group Meets the Standard Demonstrating Growth in Science/Biology
- All Student Group Exceeds Performance Standard in Regular Attendance (SY 20-21)
- All Student Group Meets Performance Standard in Career Standards Benchmark

Academic Performance – ELA/Literature

English Language Arts/Literature					
School Year	All	Black	White	Economically Disadvantaged	Student with Disabilities
2017-2018	73.3	40.0	81.8	49.2	41.7
2018-2019	73.1	41.9	81.2	51.4	34.3
2021-2022	59.9	26.3	73.2	34.2	31.0

Source: Future Ready PA Index

Performance – Mathematics/Algebra

Mathematics/Algebra					
School Year	All	Black	White	Economically Disadvantaged	Student with Disabilities
2017-2018	53.6	17.6	62.9	25.2	25.4
2018-2019	52.6	16.2	62.6	26.9	13.4
2021-2022	41.8	9.2	54.5	20.1	20.2

Source: Future Ready PA Index

Performance – Science/Biology

Science/Biology					
School Year	All	Black	White	Economically Disadvantaged	Student with Disabilities
2017-2018	82.7	56.0	91.1	57.5	IS
2018-2019	83.2	50.0	90.3	65.3	IS
2021-2022	72.3	31.6	85.5	48.1	44.0

Source: Future Ready PA Index

Highlights

- The creation of a graduate portrait that describes the ECS community's aspirations for its students. The Graduate Portrait shares trends that students may encounter and the values which are held around environmental literacy. It describes the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and mindsets that ECS's students need to thrive in life and career. The Graduate Portrait guides adult actions and decisions, and aligns leadership, teaching and learning, and resource allocations for students growth from kindergarten through graduation.
- The Bike ECS program where students in 3rd-11th grade learn how to and gain confidence in biking throughout the city
- Supportive school cultures across buildings with both primary and intermediate earning the distinction of being PBIS Banner School awarded for fidelity of practice
- A partnership with the Just Discipline Project to develop the restorative practices approach, K-12
- An enrichment program that is open to all students where the school leans into a variety of strengths, not just core academics; Students access enrichment opportunities like battle of the books, Shakespeare competitions, and book clubs throughout the school day and year

Highlights

- An Education for Sustainability graduate course for teachers launched where cohorts of staff are introduced to foundational understandings of sustainability and how to promote a mindset that supports sustainability in a K-12 setting; Connections between sustainability, poverty, and equity issues are highlighted within the course.
- The creation of a remix lab where students are invited to explore their X factor as they level up their learning in new ways. Here, students have access to an expansive assortment of materials, tools, and technologies for creativity and self expression. Students can explore what remix has to offer through a variety of means: Block Zeros, whole classroom collaboration, curriculum project remiXes, and individual projects. Through tinkering, making, and storytelling, students develop both their creativity and their agency as stewards of the future.
- High School Quest Labs or intercessions: ECHS's Quest Labs are mini-expeditions where students learn by doing and actively engage in a variety of real-world experiences that explore new disciplines and industries outside of their daily school context.
- Robust partnerships, including: Chatham University, Tree Pittsburgh, Venture Outdoors, Union Project, Garfield Farms, Assemble, National Opera House, Communitopia, Oasis Farm and Fishery, Hip Hop Unlock, and more

Findings

1. One or more material violations of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures contained in the written charter signed pursuant to section 1720-A
 - ❖ No violation
2. Failure to meet the requirements for student performance set forth in 22 Pa.Code Ch. 5 (relating to curriculum) or subsequent regulations promulgated to replace 22 Pa. Code Ch. 5 or failure to meet any performance standard set forth in the written charter signed pursuant to section 1716-A*
 - ❖ Failed to meet all performance targets
3. Failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management and audit requirements
 - ❖ No violation

Findings

4. Violations of provisions of this article (the Charter School Law)
 - ❖ No violation
5. Violation of any provision of law from which the charter school has not been exempted, including Federal laws and regulations governing children with disabilities
 - ❖ No violation
6. The charter school has not been convicted of fraud.
 - ❖ No violation

Next Steps

- The Board of School Directors votes on the renewal at its Legislative Session on June 28, 2023.
- If approved, the Director of Charter Schools will work with the Solicitor's Office to finalize the charter agreement, which will be signed by the Board President.