



Allegheny County **OPPORTUNITY SCHOOLS**

APPENDICES

Methodology

Defining Opportunity Schools

Throughout this report, we have emphasized our goal of celebrating Allegheny County schools that are repeatedly breaking the link between income and achievement by leading students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to achieve at high levels. We recognize, however, that it is possible to define “repeatedly breaking the link” and “achieve at high levels” in a number of ways.

In settling on a definition, we sought to offer an intuitive set of criteria and to set the bar high enough that we feel comfortable claiming any schools that meet our criteria are truly defying the odds for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Our criteria meet these objectives.

A school was named an Opportunity School if it met the following criteria:

- A high poverty public elementary or middle school program (district or charter) where overall student proficiency rates on the Pennsylvania System for School Assessment met or exceeded overall state proficiency rates in both math and reading in more than half of the tested grades for both 2013 and 2014; or
- A high poverty public high school program (district or charter) where overall student proficiency rates on the Keystone Exams met or exceeded overall state proficiency rates in both Algebra and Literature for both 2013 and 2014.

A school was named an On-the-Cusp School if it met the following criteria:

- A high poverty public elementary or middle school program (district or charter) where overall student proficiency rates on the Pennsylvania System for School Assessment were higher than overall state proficiency rates or were within 5 percentage points in both math and reading in more than half of the tested grades for 2013–2014; or
- A high poverty public high school program (district or charter) where overall student proficiency rates on the Keystone Exams were higher than overall state proficiency rates or were within 5 percentage points in both Algebra and Literature for 2013–2014.

For the purposes of this report, we started from the federal definition of high poverty schools found in No Child Left Behind. According to the legislation, high poverty schools are those in the top poverty quartile

Appendix A

in the state.¹⁶ In Pennsylvania, this includes all schools with approximately 61 percent or more economically disadvantaged students. Using this definition as a starting point, and for ease of reporting and clarity, we ultimately considered any school with 60 percent or more economically disadvantaged students to meet the high poverty criteria.

In Pennsylvania, the overall state proficiency rates are high, but not insurmountable. In addition, requiring that schools meet this threshold in over half of tested grades and in both core subjects ensures that students are consistently receiving a high-quality education. Finally, requiring schools to replicate success over multiple years suggests that their success is not just a function of statistical noise or one particularly motivated or high-skilled cohort of students.

In this report, we also made a decision to treat combined elementary/middle schools as two separate schools (K-5 and 6-8) and combined middle/high schools as two separate schools (6-8 and 9-12). This decision ensured that each school received an equal opportunity to meet the criteria and that we were comparing similar data.

Data sources

Proficiency rates were taken from the 2012–2013 and 2013–2014 Required Federal Reporting Measures.¹⁷ Data in these reports was also utilized to calculate the performance of students who are not economically disadvantaged, and the income and race proficiency gaps. Demographic data, attendance rates and graduation rates were taken from the 2013–2014 Pennsylvania School Performance Profiles.¹⁸ School safety data came from the 2013–2014 Safe Schools Reports.¹⁹ Student stability rates came from the 2014 A+ Schools Report to the Community²⁰ as well as survey responses from the Opportunity Schools. Per-pupil spending data for individual school districts came from 2012–2013 summary level Expenditure Data published by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.²¹ Finally, college matriculation rates were found in the 2012–2013 Graduates Public by School report.²²

Appendix B

Allegheny County District Level Achievement Data

School Districts	Total Enrollment	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Math Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced	Reading Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced
Duquesne City	366	100	20	19
Clairton City	785	90	46	41
Sto-Rox	1,419	85	34	33
Pittsburgh	26,041	77	59	54
Woodland Hills	3,846	77	54	51
Wilkesburg Borough	932	76	35	27
McKeesport Area	3,507	69	50	46
East Allegheny	1,692	68	58	54
Cornell	646	65	59	59
Steel Valley	1,647	64	57	55
Penn Hills	3,908	60	55	54
Highlands	2,500	59	68	64
South Allegheny	1,572	55	63	64
Brentwood	1,181	53	76	78
Carlynton	1,429	50	78	72
West Mifflin	2,996	50	68	67
Northgate	1,228	49	70	70
Allegheny Valley	991	42	71	74
Riverview	1,031	40	81	81
Gateway	3,498	37	71	73
Elizabeth Forward	2,355	35	82	78

NOTE: Districts sorted by percentage of economically disadvantaged students.

Appendix B

Allegheny County District Level Achievement Data

School Districts	Total Enrollment	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Math Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced	Reading Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced
Shaler	4,629	35	78	77
Baldwin-Whitehall	4,117	34	84	80
Keystone Oaks	1,987	31	82	78
North Hills	4,248	28	86	85
Chartiers	3,370	26	80	77
Deer Lakes	2,008	26	77	74
Plum	3,975	23	83	83
South Park	1,968	22	82	79
Montour	2,802	21	86	86
West Allegheny	3,258	19	85	84
Fox Chapel	4,245	18	88	87
West Jefferson	2,831	17	87	88
Moon	3,723	16	87	86
Avonsworth	1,541	14	81	86
Quaker Valley	1,960	14	87	86
Bethel Park	4,452	12	88	85
South Fayette	2,793	12	95	93
Hampton	3,027	11	92	91
Mt. Lebanon	5,244	9	92	92
Pine-Richland	4,621	7	90	89
Upper St. Clair	4,133	7	90	90
North Allegheny	8,281	6	89	89

NOTE: Districts sorted by percentage of economically disadvantaged students.

Proficiency Data For On-the-Cusp Schools

		Grade: Elementary										
		Carnegie El Sch	Elroy Avenue El Sch	Manchester Academic CS	Pittsburgh Allegheny K-5	Pittsburgh Beechwood K-5	Pittsburgh Greenfield K-8	Pittsburgh Liberty K-5	Pittsburgh Linden K-5	Pittsburgh Phillips K-5	Propel Montour	Woodland Hills Academy
Demographics	Economically Disadvantaged	63	61	81	87	75	70	70	71	66	66	61
	Black	17	6	96	70	16	23	70	65	33	33	53
	White	68	87	2	18	49	55	16	26	54	57	41
Total Percentage of Students Proficient or Advanced	3rd Grade All Students	78	80	58	88	78	58	88	64	82	72	78
	Math											
	Economically Disadvantaged	68	79	55	86	77	53	80	59	76	62	70
	Black	73	NA	58	85	NA	NA	80	50	62	53	69
	White	80	83	NA	94	89	50	100	100	89	84	92
	3rd Grade All Students	69	72	60	65	72	75	68	52	78	72	69
	Reading											
	Economically Disadvantaged	55	66	55	63	74	76	57	41	70	66	57
	Black	55	NA	60	57	NA	NA	54	38	69	53	59
	White	74	71	NA	82	74	75	93	92	75	84	84
	4th Grade All Students	85	82	88	85	81	80	74	77	80	71	61
	Math											
	Economically Disadvantaged	82	73	89	83	81	82	68	60	64	64	57
	Black	NA	NA	91	82	NA	NA	67	67	53	80	71
	White	92	79	NA	93	90	83	NA	100	100	72	42
	4th Grade All Students	70	76	71	71	65	72	66	66	66	82	61
	Reading											
	Economically Disadvantaged	68	65	72	68	67	73	58	43	54	76	50
	Black	NA	NA	68	64	NA	NA	57	52	42	80	67
	White	75	79	NA	93	80	82	NA	100	86	84	50
	5th Grade All Students	82	71	67	62	52	72	76	67	68	67	78
	Math											
	Economically Disadvantaged	73	69	67	59	42	67	62	52	63	50	69
	Black	NA	NA	63	58	36	NA	65	48	67	33	70
White	96	73	NA	60	66	92	NA	93	71	76	82	
5th Grade All Students	62	73	58	53	43	55	59	58	56	65	57	
Reading												
Economically Disadvantaged	52	69	61	48	36	43	38	34	48	50	42	
Black	NA	NA	53	53	36	NA	44	34	42	42	50	
White	70	73	NA	50	56	75	NA	93	63	72	68	

Proficiency Data For On-the-Cusp Schools

		Grade: Middle	Highlands MS	Propel Montour	Pittsburgh Brookline K-8	Pittsburgh Carmalt K-8	Grade: High	City Charter High School	
Demographics	Economically Disadvantaged		64	66	67	76		69	
	%								
	Black		9	33	10	43		53	
	White		86	57	79	43		36	
Total Percentage of Students Proficient or Advanced	6th Grade All Students		70	72	67	62	11th Grade All Students	66	
	Math						Math		
		Economically Disadvantaged		63	67	64	59	Economically Disadvantaged	62
		Black		50	NA	NA	47	Black	57
		White		74	78	67	71	White	81
	6th Grade All Students		61	70	53	62	11th Grade All Students	72	
	Reading						Reading		
		Economically Disadvantaged		51	63	50	59	Economically Disadvantaged	68
		Black		36	NA	NA	53	Black	67
		White		65	75	52	71	White	79
	7th Grade All Students		75	78	77	72			
	Math								
		Economically Disadvantaged		72	77	77	69		
		Black		80	67	NA	71		
		White		75	90	83	72		
	7th Grade All Students		61	73	68	74			
	Reading								
		Economically Disadvantaged		57	70	60	66		
		Black		70	67	NA	81		
		White		61	86	71	67		
	8th Grade All Students		74	75	81	70			
	Math								
		Economically Disadvantaged		65	68	83	64		
		Black		75	53	NA	64		
	White		74	87	88	80			
8th Grade All Students		74	77	74	87				
Reading									
	Economically Disadvantaged		64	71	74	85			
	Black		56	65	NA	86			
	White		76	83	76	87			

Appendix D

Per-pupil Spending For School Districts in Allegheny County

School districts	Total exp
Upper Saint Clair	\$23,866.73
Quaker Valley	\$21,171.91
West Mifflin Area	\$20,760.64
Pittsburgh	\$20,594.82
Wilkesburg Borough	\$19,049.39
Montour	\$18,952.11
Duquesne City	\$18,820.95
Fox Chapel Area	\$18,308.08
Riverview	\$17,861.73
Allegheny Valley	\$17,491.73
Cornell	\$17,285.91
Gateway	\$16,757.35
Keystone Oaks	\$16,672.38
Penn Hills	\$16,549.45
Moon Area	\$16,104.98
Carlynton	\$15,719.20
North Hills	\$15,525.33
Deer Lakes	\$15,504.70
Northgate	\$15,463.42
Brentwood Borough	\$15,377.45
North Allegheny	\$15,306.81
West Allegheny	\$15,236.38
Chartiers Valley	\$15,157.66

School districts	Total exp
Woodland Hills	\$15,039.65
Mt Lebanon	\$14,975.49
Clairton City	\$14,954.43
Avonworth	\$14,925.12
Shaler Area	\$14,793.91
Bethel Park	\$14,695.15
East Allegheny	\$14,657.82
Elizabeth Forward	\$14,613.58
McKeesport Area	\$14,486.54
Hampton Township	\$13,744.03
Baldwin-Whitehall	\$13,621.97
Pine-Richland	\$13,614.90
Plum Borough	\$13,593.39
South Fayette Township	\$13,589.91
Steel Valley	\$13,396.16
South Park	\$13,304.42
West Jefferson Hills	\$13,211.83
Highlands	\$13,045.22
Sto-Rox	\$12,738.16
South Allegheny	\$11,695.51

NOTES: The 11 highlighted districts are high poverty school districts in Allegheny County. Latest spending data is from the 2012–2013 school year.