



The Pathway to the Promise.™

Charter School Renewal Review Teams Findings and Recommendations for

**Career Connections Charter High School
City Charter High School**

**Education Committee Meeting
March 6, 2012**

Why are we doing this?

The Board will vote on charter renewals on March 21, 2012.

What are we seeking to gain from this presentation?

1. Understanding of charter school renewal review criteria from PA charter school law
2. Review teams' findings and recommendations for two charter school renewals
 - Career Connections Charter High School
 - City Charter High School

Purpose of renewal process

It is the responsibility of charter school authorizers to ensure that charter schools are living up to the terms of their charter agreement, adhering to federal and state laws and regulations and providing quality education to all students.

"If they are not living up to their mandate, then they should be closed." Ron Tomalis, Secretary of Education

Charter School Renewal Criteria

A charter may be non-renewed for reasons listed in Section 1729-A(a):

- 1. One or more material violations of the charter agreement**
- 2. Failure to meet student performance requirements set forth in Chapter 4 or the charter agreement**
- 3. Failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management or audit requirements**
- 4. Violations of any provisions of the Charter School Law**
- 5. Violation of any provision of law from which the charter school has not been exempted**
- 6. The charter school has been convicted of fraud.**

Final Checklist for Compliance Under Charter School Law

Criteria	Team Rating
1. The school continues to meet all conditions, standards and procedures contained in the charter agreement.	
2. The school continues to meet requirements for student performance set forth in the charter school law related to curriculum or set forth in the charter agreement.	
3. The school continues to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management and audit requirements.	
4. The school continues to comply with all provisions of law which the charter school has not been exempted, including Federal laws and regulation governing children with disabilities.	
5. The school meets the needs of students with disabilities, bilingual, and at-risk students.	
6. The school continues to have sustained support from teachers, parents, students and the community.	
7. The school provides Pittsburgh Public Schools with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities currently being offered by the school system, and is able to serve as a model to other schools in the system.	
8. The school complies with all federal, state and local regulations pertaining to the health, safety, civil rights and education of the students.	
9. The school has not been convicted of fraud.	

Career Connections Charter High School

Review Team Findings and Recommendation

History

- Original charter approved in 1999.
- Charter renewed in 2002 and 2007.
- Recommendation **not to renew** in 2007.
 - School did not provide the District with expanded choice in educational opportunities and was unable to serve as a model.
 - School did not comply with all regulations pertaining to the health, safety, civil rights and education of students.
 - CCCHS remedied two (2) of four (4) violations and developed action plans to remedy remaining curricular concerns.

Renewal Review team for Career Connections Charter High School

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Major Findings

1. The school **does not** continue to meet all conditions, standards and procedures contained in the charter agreement.
2. The school **does not** continue to meet requirements for student performance.
3. The school **does not** provide Pittsburgh Public Schools with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities currently being offered by the school system and is not able to serve as a model to other schools in the system.
4. The school **does, with exceptions**, continue to have sustained support.
5. The school **does, with exceptions**, comply with all regulations pertaining to the health and safety of the students.

Major Findings

1. The school **does not** continue to meet all conditions, standards and procedures contained in the charter agreement.
 - School is not achieving its stated mission.
 - Dual enrollment pursued in lieu of internship
 - No evidence of innovative teaching strategies or interdisciplinary curriculum
 - “Internships” achieved by students continuing to work at previously held jobs in many cases
 - Very little evidence that supported the development and academic needs of students in their internships

Major Findings

2. The school **does not** continue to meet requirements for student performance.
 - School has not improved pupil learning.
 - Math performance decreased 32.5 percentage points from 2009-10
 - Math Below Basic increased 19.4 percentage points from 2009-10
 - School has not increased learning opportunities for all students.
 - Low rigor
 - Lacks differentiated instruction
 - No higher level or gifted courses offered
 - School has not implemented different and innovative teaching methods.
 - No evidence of different or innovative teaching strategies during classroom observations

Major Findings

PSSA Mathematics Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced

	All Students	AA	ED
2007	26.3	17.5	27
2008	34.5	No Subgroup	No Subgroup
2009	32.2	No Subgroup	No Subgroup
2010	46.2	No Subgroup	42.9
2011	16.7	9.8	14.0

PSSA Reading Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced

	All Students	AA	ED
2007	30	25	32.4
2008	31.2	No Subgroup	No Subgroup
2009	36.4	No Subgroup	No Subgroup
2010	42.3	No Subgroup	38.1
2011	41.7	34.1	40.0

Major Findings

Career Connections AYP Status 2007 to 2011	
2007	School Improvement I
2008	School Improvement II
2009	School Improvement II
2010	School Improvement II
2011	Corrective Action I

Major Findings

3. The school **does not** provide Pittsburgh Public Schools with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities currently being offered by the school system and is not able to serve as a model to other schools in the system.
 - Does not provide any educational opportunities that are not offered at Pittsburgh Public Schools
4. The school **does, with exceptions**, continue to have sustained support.
 - No evidence of a considerable level of parental involvement in the school.
 - No evidence that the majority of parents are satisfied with the school.

Major Findings

5. The school **does, with exceptions**, comply with all regulations pertaining to the health and safety of the students.
- Various facilities issues were identified during a site inspection by an independent contractor.
 - New door hardware issues need to be immediately addressed.
 - Corridors do not meet minimum width requirements.
 - Several items from previous year's inspection were not addressed.

Final Checklist for Compliance Under Charter School Law

Criteria	Team Rating
1. The school continues to meet all conditions, standards and procedures contained in the charter agreement.	Not Sufficient
2. The school continues to meet requirements for student performance set forth in the charter school law related to curriculum or set forth in the charter agreement.	Not Sufficient
3. The school continues to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management and audit requirements.	Sufficient
4. The school continues to comply with all provisions of law which the charter school has not been exempted, including Federal laws and regulation governing children with disabilities.	Sufficient
5. The school meets the needs of students with disabilities, bilingual, and at-risk students.	Sufficient
6. The school continues to have sustained support from teachers, parents, students and the community.	Sufficient w/ exceptions
7. The school provides Pittsburgh Public Schools with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities currently being offered by the school system, and is able to serve as a model to other schools in the system.	Not Sufficient
8. The school complies with all federal, state and local regulations pertaining to the health, safety, civil rights and education of the students.	Sufficient w/ exceptions
9. The school has not been convicted of fraud.	Sufficient

Recommendation – Not Renew

Based on a thorough analysis of Career Connections Charter High School, the Pittsburgh Public Schools review team recommends that the Board **not renew** the charter.

Next Steps

The Board will vote on this recommendation at the March Legislative Session.

The Board's resolution will direct the District to send written notice of nonrenewal to the charter school, stating the grounds for such action and provide reasonable notice to the charter school of the date on which a public hearing concerning the nonrenewal will be held.

Following the public hearing, the Board will be asked to vote again on the renewal.

City Charter High School

Review Team Findings and Recommendation

New Location

- School relocated to 201 Stanwix Street, Downtown Pittsburgh, in December 2011.
- New location was inspected by independent firm and approved by the District.
- District sent communication to school confirming relocation.

Renewal Review Team For City Charter High School

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Major Findings

1. The school **does** continue to meet all conditions, standards and procedures contained in the charter agreement.
2. The school **does, with exceptions**, continue to meet requirements for student performance.
3. The school **does** provide Pittsburgh Public Schools with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities currently being offered by the school system and is not able to serve as a model to other schools in the system.
4. The school **does, with exceptions**, meet the needs of students with disabilities and at-risk students with exceptions.
5. The school **does** continue to have sustained support.

Major Findings

1. The school **does** continue to meet all conditions, standards and procedures contained in the charter agreement.
 - School is achieving its stated mission.
2. The school **does, with exceptions**, continue to meet requirements for student performance.
 - School is achieving AYP in Reading.
 - Improvement is needed in Mathematics.
 - CCHS has initiated strategies to address Mathematics performance, including hiring a new math teacher.

Major Findings

PSSA Mathematics Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced

	All Students	White	AA	ED
2007	54.7	67.4	48.5	49.3
2008	61.2	68.2	55.8	60.4
2009	55	85.7	28.4	47.9
2010	50.0	60.0	37.3	43.8
2011	48.5	72.3	36.4	42.2

PSSA Reading Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced

	All Students	White	AA	ED
2007	70.9	84.8	63.2	64
2008	66.3	79.5	53.8	56.9
2009	71.8	87.5	59.7	63.4
2010	71.9	80.0	62.7	67.1
2011	77.2	78.7	76.6	73.3

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education

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City Charter High School

Major Findings

City Charter AYP Status 2007 to 2011	
2007	Made AYP
2008	Made AYP
2009	Warning
2010	School Improvement I
2011	School Improvement II

Major Findings

3. The school **does** provide Pittsburgh Public Schools with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities currently being offered by the school system and is not able to serve as a model to other schools in the system.
 - Senior internship component
 - Extensive list of business partners
 - Innovative instructional strategies, including Looping
4. The school **does, with exceptions**, meet the needs of students with disabilities and at-risk students with exceptions.
 - Continues to operate a full inclusion model regardless of a continuum of services that may be necessary to meet the needs of some students

Major Findings

5. The school **does** continue to have sustained support.

- Sustained support from parent, students, teachers and the community
- Excellent parent and student communication
- Parents feel their needs are met

Final Checklist for Compliance Under Charter School Law

Criteria	Team Rating
1. The school continues to meet all conditions, standards and procedures contained in the charter agreement.	Sufficient
2. The school continues to meet requirements for student performance set forth in the charter school law related to curriculum or set forth in the charter agreement.	Sufficient w/ exceptions
3. The school continues to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management and audit requirements.	Sufficient
4. The school continues to comply with all provisions of law which the charter school has not been exempted, including Federal laws and regulation governing children with disabilities.	Sufficient
5. The school meets the needs of students with disabilities, bilingual, and at-risk students.	Sufficient w/ exceptions
6. The school continues to have sustained support from teachers, parents, students and the community.	Sufficient
7. The school provides Pittsburgh Public Schools with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities currently being offered by the school system, and is able to serve as a model to other schools in the system.	Sufficient
8. The school complies with all federal, state and local regulations pertaining to the health, safety, civil rights and education of the students.	Sufficient
9. The school has not been convicted of fraud.	Sufficient

Recommendation - Renew

Based on a thorough analysis of City Charter High School, the Pittsburgh Public Schools review team recommends that the Board **renew** the charter for five (5) years through 2016-2017.