



From left to right: Perry Street Prep PCS, Stuart-Hobson Middle School, The Lab School.

D.C. School Chooser

2013-2014

A K-12 Guide to Finding a Great School for Your Child

STEP 1: THINK ABOUT NEEDS

Your Student's Needs

As you begin thinking about choosing a school, first consider carefully what your child needs from his or her school. There are many important things to think about:

Instruction and curriculum: What teaching style will best help your child succeed? Does your child perform better in a traditional classroom in which the teacher directs all activities? Or does your child need more freedom to explore and pursue his or her own interests? Is it important for your child to study religion or a foreign language? Does your child need a college prep curriculum or training for a particular job? How important are test scores?

If you are looking for a high school, additional questions you may want to ask include: Does the school offer Advanced Placement (AP) courses? If so, which ones? How do students score on those exams? How do students score on PSAT/SAT or ACT college entrance exams? What colleges or fields of study do graduating seniors typically go?

School and class size: Will your child do better in a small school where she/he will get more one-on-one attention or a large school that offers more special services, programs, and activities? Keep in mind that the total number of students in a school does not tell the whole story. You may find a large school that also offers small classes. You may also find that classes at a small school are larger than you expected.

Special programs and services: Does your child have special needs? Look for a school that can provide the following kinds of support services:

- * Special education
- * Honors/gifted and talented programs
- * Classes for English Language Learners (ELL)
- * Counseling

- * Accommodations for a physical disability
- * Speech services

Social and extra-curricular issues: What is your ideal makeup for a school for your child? Should it be co-ed or single sex? What type of racial/ethnic/socio-economic mix is important to you? What activities (e.g., chess club, yearbook) does your child want to participate in? Do you want a school that provides community service opportunities?

Educating the whole child: Is it important for your child to be taught more than just core academic subjects (English/language arts, math, science, social studies)? Does the school offer arts programs or physical education classes? The arts provide opportunities for students to express themselves creatively, and learning to play a musical instrument instills discipline.

A student who participates in regular physical education is more likely to remain motivated to stay healthy and physically active throughout adulthood. If the school you are considering does not provide arts or physical education during the regular school day, find out what after-school activities are available.



Lasalle Backus Education Campus



Gonzaga College High School

Your Family's Needs

The choice of your child's school will affect your whole family. You will need to balance your child's needs with those of your family.

Transportation: Will you be driving your child or will she/he be getting to school independently? Is it important that the school be near a Metro stop or bus line? Do you want the school to be near your home or your job? Does your child need special services? (*Note: Public schools provide transportation only for special needs students.*)

Before- and/or after-school care: Some schools provide both before- and after-care, some offer one or the other, and others do not offer them at all. The schools that do provide these programs sometimes do so for free, and others charge a fee. You will want to get information on what programs may be available, the potential cost, and the hours of operation.

Meal programs: All District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) offer free breakfast for all students and free or reduced price lunch for eligible students. Many public charter schools do the same. Meal programs at private schools may vary, with some including the cost of meals in the tuition. You will want to call schools individually to get more details.

Free and reduced price meals: Your annual income must fall below the levels in this table to qualify for free or reduced price meals. The levels for the 2012-2013 school year are:¹

Number in family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each additional
<i>Reduced price meals</i>	\$20,665	\$27,991	\$35,317	\$42,643	\$40,969	\$57,295	\$64,621	\$71,947	\$7,826
<i>Free meals</i>	\$14,521	\$19,669	\$24,817	\$29,965	\$35,115	\$40,261	\$45,409	\$50,557	\$5,148

¹ As reported by the USDA in the Federal Register on 03/23/12.

Tuition and financial aid: If you are interested in a private school, tuition costs can vary along with what is included in those costs. Many schools also offer financial aid or accept other financial assistance (programs such as Capital Partners in Education and the Latino Student Fund, to name a few).

D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program (D.C. OSP): The D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program was originally created in 2004 to provide low-income D.C. parents with expanded options for the education of their children by providing scholarships to attend non-public, K-12 institutions within the District. The scholarship helps cover most or all tuition and other educational expenses. The program is administered by the D.C. Children & Youth Investment Trust Corporation (CYITC). For more information, call 1-888-329-6884 or email ospadmin@cyitc.org.

Parent involvement: Understanding how a school involves parents is something you should keep in mind when you are considering where to send your child. Contact the school to learn what the parent involvement policy is (most schools should have a written plan) and also use www.greatschools.org to connect with other parents to get their thoughts.

Sit down with your child and have a family conversation about the things you both want in a school and ask yourselves how important are those things (very, somewhat, not at all)? Use the [Needs](#) worksheet found in the *D.C. School Chooser Workbook* to help you write it all down and keep track.

STEP 2: UNDERSTAND THE CHOICES

Public, Private, Public Charter Schools: What are They?

The good news is that there are many school options for D.C. parents and students. The key is to understand what those options are and the differences between them.

District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)

- * Public schools are free to every child that is a resident of the District of Columbia.
- * Starting in kindergarten, every child is assigned to and is guaranteed a spot in a neighborhood school based on the home address.
- * To apply to a different school, there is the “out of boundary” process (see p. 7).
- * To apply to a preschool/pre-kindergarten program, there is a lottery process (see p. 7).
- * Selective city-wide schools and specialized programs:

DCPS Specialized Citywide High Schools: Any student can apply, regardless of where they live. Each has a specialized focus (e.g., Duke Ellington School for the Arts).

DCPS K-8 specialized programs: Some schools include specialized programs (e.g., Oyster-Adams dual language program – English/Spanish) or have a special focus for the entire school (e.g., Deal Middle School – International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program: MYP). Students assigned to these schools as their neighborhood school get priority, and other students must apply (see p. 7).

Public Charter Schools

- * Public charter schools are independently operated public schools that are open and free to all D.C. students regardless of their neighborhood or academic achievement.
- * Public charter schools often have the freedom to develop specialized programs and create or select their curriculum.
- * Students from anywhere in the city may apply to any public charter school.
- * Each school has its own application process, and there are no application fees or tuition costs.
- * The D.C. Public Charter School Board (PCSB) authorizes, oversees, and monitors all public charter schools.

Private Schools

- * Private schools are non-public schools that charge tuition for attendance.
- * Many have school-based aid and/or accept scholarships or other outside forms of financial aid.
- * Some private schools have religious affiliations.
- * Students who want to attend private schools must apply, and there may be required entrance exams and application fees.
- * Private schools have the freedom to develop specialized programs, curriculum and decide which students attend their school.
- * Private schools are not required to publish test score results, and may take different kinds of tests than DCPS and public charter schools.
- * No single organization is responsible for overseeing private schools, but most if not all are accredited (if not, it is important to find out why).

STEP 3: VISIT YOUR TOP CHOICES

Our Web site contains more than we could ever include in this printed guide, but no single piece of information tells the whole story. Visiting is the only way you can tell whether you and your child will feel safe and comfortable at the school. You will also be able to see whether the teachers are enthusiastic and the students are engaged in learning.

Now that you have narrowed your choices, it is time to visit the schools:

Schedule your visit. Pick three or four dates and times that work best for you and then call the school. Explain that you are considering applying or enrolling your child and would like to visit. Find out if you will be able to meet the principal and observe classes while you are there. Have your calendar handy so you can write down the date and time of your visit. School phone numbers are provided on the school profiles.

Think about what you want to see at the school. Before you go, use the *Schools to Visit* worksheet from the *D.C. School Chooser Workbook* to help write down the questions you want to make sure you ask during your visit. (You can find it at www.greatschools.org/dc.)

Your observations of the school can start the moment you get there. Make sure you take the *Things to Watch for* worksheet from the *D.C. School Chooser Workbook* and a pen so you can record your observations and the answers to the questions you prepared in advance.

Arrive early. Plan to get to the school 10 minutes before your scheduled visit and check in at the main office when you arrive. That will give you a chance to check out the neighborhood and watch how the front office works (Do they greet you? Are they polite? Are phones answered promptly?). You may also receive a visitor's pass to wear during your visit.



Center City PCS - Brightwood

Ask and observe. This is your chance to get the information you need to make the best choice for you and your child. You have prepared your questions in advance and you are ready, so do not be afraid to ask them or others if they come up. And don't worry if you forget to ask something important; you can always call later.

Visiting classrooms is an important part of the school visit and may tell you the most about whether the school is a good place for your child. Visit as many classes as you can, but when you are in classrooms do not disturb the students' learning.

Keep your eyes open and think about all the things you see: the schoolyard, the classrooms, and the area around the school. Record your observations on the *D.C. School Chooser Things to Watch for* worksheet you brought with you.

Have a great visit!

STEP 4: MAKE YOUR DECISION

Now that you have visited your top choices, you should have a good idea which schools are a good fit for your child. Start by looking over the notes you took during your school visits. Use your impressions from those visits and the information you gathered to follow these next steps. They will help you find the right school(s).

Eliminate schools where you felt unwelcome or unsafe. Cross off any school on your list that does not seem like a comfortable place for you and your child. During your visit, were students roaming the halls instead of being in class? Was bad language used by students with no correction by an adult? Did it feel like the students ran the building?

Compare information about your choices. Look over the notes you filled in on the [Needs](#) worksheet from the *D.C. School Chooser Workbook* to see how the information you collected matches what you thought would best meet the needs of your child and family.

Look at your school visit notes and rank the schools on your list. Rank the schools based on how much you liked what you saw during your visits. Keep in mind things you noticed: cleanliness, students' behavior, enthusiasm of teachers, whether students seemed engaged, and the overall feeling you got from the school.

Review these school profiles again. Use the *D.C. School Chooser* and the profiles on www.greatschools.org/dc to remind yourself of specific features about each school, and then rank the schools again based on academic performance using the 2011 Test Score Rating and the DC-CAS test scores provided. Private schools take completely different kinds of tests, so if you are considering private schools, you can contact each individual school for test score information.

Keep in mind that students who attend high-performing schools are more likely to be prepared for college, the workplace, and life.

Make your decision. Once you have considered all these factors, your first choice may be obvious. If one of the schools ranks high in all categories, you have found your school! If the rankings are mixed, you may have to decide which qualities are most important to you.

Apply to more than one school. Your first choice may not be available, so you will want to apply to at least two other schools that meet most of your needs. This way, you work to ensure that your child has the opportunity to go to a school that you like.



STEP 5: APPLY AND ENROLL ON TIME

Different types of schools have their own procedures and deadlines. Review the information below and the enrollment calendar on p. 9 to help you get organized.

School Type	2013-2014 School Year Application Start and End Dates
DCPS neighborhood schools	None
DCPS Specialized Citywide High Schools	November 16, 2012 – December 14, 2012 For more information, visit www.dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/highschoolapp .
DCPS non-neighborhood schools/specialized K-8 programs, and preschool/pre-kindergarten (Out of Boundary and Application Lottery)	January 28, 2013 - February 25, 2013 at 11:59 pm For more information visit www.dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/oob . Text LOTTERY to 91990 for a reminder from DCPS.
Private schools	Can vary, contact school directly or view profile.
Public charter schools	Can vary, contact school directly or view profile (most schools will have a March 15, 2013 deadline).

DCPS Specialized Citywide High Schools: These high schools do not participate in the DCPS out of boundary lottery process, nor are they neighborhood schools. They are open to any student anywhere in the city to apply to for high school.

Depending on the school(s), there might be extra items required, so please make sure to review what schools may be asking for beyond the initial form. The following schools participate:

- * Benjamin Banneker High School
- * Columbia Heights Education Campus
- * Duke Ellington School of the Arts
- * McKinley Technology High School
- * Phelps ACE High School
- * School Without Walls High School

After the schools' selection process, students will receive one notification in mid-March letting them know which schools they have been accepted to or been waitlisted. For more information and updates, check out the DCPS website: www.dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/highschoolapp. You may also contact DCPS at 202-488-9282 or email hsonlineapplication@dc.gov.



KIPP DC PCS: AIM Academy

DCPS non-neighborhood schools – Out of Boundary Lottery: A process to apply to a DCPS school that is not your assigned neighborhood school. Parents may apply to up to six different schools. Applications for the 2013-2014 school year will only be accepted online – no paper. You can begin applying on January 28, 2013. *The deadline to submit all applications is 11:59 pm on February 25, 2013.* Visit www.dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/oob for more information.

DCPS K-8 specialized programs: For specialized programs (like dual language at Oyster-Adams) you must use the out of boundary lottery.

Private schools: Each school has its own application procedures. Admission requirements will vary and may include student essays, student and parent interviews, letters of recommendation, and auditions or portfolios of work.

Public charter schools: You may apply to as many public charter schools as you like. Many have an “open enrollment period” during which they collect applications. At the end of this period, if more applications are received than there are spaces available, a lottery is held to determine how many students will be accepted. Either way, get your application in as soon as possible. Most schools will have a March 15, 2013 deadline and a March 22, 2013 lottery.

Early childhood programs: We do not list early childhood only programs in this guide, but you can go to www.greatschools.org/dc and search among many programs that specialize in early childhood. You can also go to www.readytolearn.org, a website by Fight For Children with tips and more resources about your options in D.C.

DCPS

Offers spots in preschool (starting at age 3) and pre-kindergarten (starting at age 4).

Please note: spots are not guaranteed. You must apply through the DCPS Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten Lottery. Applications are due by 11:59 pm on February 25, 2013. Visit www.dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/oob for more information.

Public Charter Schools

Most public charter schools have preschool or pre-kindergarten programs, and some specialize in early childhood only. The standard charter school application should be used for these programs.

Private Schools

There are many options for private early childhood programs as well as regular private schools. Visit the GreatSchools Web site to find one that is the best for you.





Choose, Apply, and Enroll Calendar

You have a lot of ground to cover. Many schools set their own enrollment start dates and deadlines, so be ready to call schools directly. Use the calendar below for things you need to do and when to do them, the school profiles, and the worksheets in the *D.C. School Chooser Workbook* to get organized and get moving!

Month	Task
October 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Figure out what you want and what your child wants in a school. Use the <i>D.C. School Chooser</i> and Web site www.greatschools.org/dc to research schools. Make a list of the schools you want to visit and learn more about. Be aware of private school and DCPS Specialized Citywide high school application deadlines. Schedule school visits – especially for private schools and DCPS Specialized Citywide High Schools!
November 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start school visits November 1st (or the first Monday of the month). Start filling out applications for private schools and DCPS Specialized Citywide schools (application is available on November 16, 2012 at www.dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/highschoolapp).
December 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue school visits – start scheduling DCPS and public charter school visits. Continue filling out and start sending in applications for private schools and DCPS Specialized Citywide High Schools (application is due on December 14, 2012).
January 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue school visits – especially DCPS and public charter schools. Finish and submit any private school applications (depending on deadlines). Obtain all necessary application forms from public charter schools by January 20th. Make a final list of the schools that feel right.
February 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start filling out the DCPS Out of Boundary and preschool/pre-kindergarten application (available on January 28, 2013 at www.dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/oob). Complete online DCPS out of boundary application and preschool/pre-kindergarten application by February 25, 2013 at 11:59 pm
March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out if you were selected for a DCPS school through the Out of Boundary Lottery the week of March 4, 2013 Find out if you were selected or waitlisted for a DCPS Specialized Citywide High School on March 22, 2013 Fill out and send in applications for public charter and private schools (most have a March 15, 2013 deadline and a March 22, 2013 lottery). Find out if lotteries were held and if you were selected or waitlisted for a public charter school.
April 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know to which schools your child has been accepted. Make your final decision of where you will enroll your child. Get all necessary enrollment forms/paperwork. Turn in all remaining applications for all schools (depending on deadlines)!
May/June 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit completed enrollment forms/paperwork by required date. Make sure your child has all the required immunizations.

About GreatSchools

GreatSchools is an independent, nonprofit organization that improves education by inspiring parents to get involved. We empower parents with information and tools so they can choose the best school for their children, support their children's education, and improve schools in their communities. Parents choose GreatSchools to connect with each other – to find the right schools, share stories and advice, and get their parenting questions answered.

In the past year alone, more than 41 million people visited GreatSchools (www.greatschools.org). With hundreds of thousands of ratings and parent reviews about schools across the country, GreatSchools is the paramount parent-to-parent education community.

How GreatSchools collects data. Information for the GreatSchools Web site and the *D.C. School Chooser* comes from a variety of sources including OSSE, DCPS, PCSB, and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) for items including but not limited to test scores, teacher credentials, and school enrollment. Additional information is provided by individual schools, LEA, or other websites.

Please note: some schools may change their information after the *D.C. School Chooser* has been printed. Therefore, we always recommend you contact and visit schools in person to get all your questions answered.

New GreatSchools Rating Methodology

What is the New GreatSchools Rating? The new GreatSchools Rating combines multiple factors with the aim of helping parents identify higher performing schools in a given city. Since 2006, GreatSchools has published a rating for all schools nationally based on standardized test scores. The new rating combines test score performance with student academic growth, college readiness, and school climate, and is being piloted for schools in Milwaukee, Indianapolis, and Washington, D.C.

The following describes the calculation of the new GreatSchools Rating for Washington, D.C. schools. Note: For the pilot year of 2013, the new rating in Washington, D.C. will only include the academic component. We will continue to investigate ways to integrate school climate measures in the future.

Overall GreatSchools Rating. The Overall GreatSchools Rating is a roll-up of multiple sub-ratings. The relative weights assigned to each sub-rating depend on the amount of data available per school, as shown below.

Rating weights for Washington, D.C. schools in 2013

	Test Scores	Student Growth	College Readiness
<i>Elementary</i>	50%	50%	
<i>Middle</i>	50%	50%	
<i>High</i>	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%

If a school does not have sufficient data for a Student Growth sub-rating, its Overall Rating will be based on test scores alone. However, a school must have a Test Score sub-rating at a minimum in order to get an Overall Rating. **The Overall GreatSchools Rating is on a 1-10 scale and is categorized as follows: 1-3 = “Below average,” 4-7 = “Average,” 8-10 = “Above average.”**

Schools designated “low performing” by a local authority.

If a local authority identifies a school as low performing and this designation could result in school closure, it influences the overall GreatSchools Rating. This policy ensures that parents have clear information about a school that is at risk of closure due to low academic performance. For example, the D.C. Public Charter School Board assigns ratings from Tier 1 (high performing) to Tier 3 (low performing) to D.C. charter schools based on a Performance Management Framework. Schools that are persistently or significantly low performing (Tier 3) can have their charters revoked, resulting in closure. Thus, D.C. charter schools designated as low performing (Tier 3) cannot receive higher than a 3 or “Below Average” GreatSchools Rating. If a Tier 3 school had a calculated GreatSchools Rating of 3 or below, its rating would not change. If a Tier 3 charter school received a calculated GreatSchools Rating of 4 or higher, its final GreatSchools Rating would be a 3. While this rule applies only to D.C. charter schools at this time, it can be applied in other instances where comprehensive performance ratings are provided by local authorities.

Sub-rating #1: Test Scores. The Test Score sub-rating is based on 2012 District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System (DC-CAS) proficiency rates for students in grades 3 through 8 and 10 in math and reading. We start by calculating ratings for each grade and subject tested. The test results for all schools for a given grade/subject combination are sorted from low to high and divided into deciles. The bottom 10% of schools get a rating of 1, the next 10% get a 2, on up to 10, which indicates the school's result is in the top 10%. If there are several identical values that overlap from one rating decile to another, they are given the higher rating. A rating is not calculated for any grade/subject combination with fewer than 50 school results.


The Test Score sub-rating for each school is calculated by averaging that school's ratings for each grade and subject tested. For example, a Test Score sub-rating of “1” means that school scored in the bottom 10% statewide for most grades and subjects tested. The Test Score sub-rating is on a 1-10 scale and is categorized as follows: 1-3 = “Below average,” 4-7 = “Average,” 8-10 = “Above average.”

Sub-rating #2: Student Growth. The Student Growth sub-rating measures how well schools contribute to students' one-year academic gain, taking into account the students' test score from the prior year. The Student Growth sub-rating uses Median Growth Percentile (MGP) results in reading and math from the 2011 to 2012 testing period. MGP data for public and charter schools was provided to GreatSchools by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. For more information on the Median Growth Percentiles, please see <https://pcsb-pmf.wikispaces.com/Growth+Model+FAQ>.

Looking at MGP helps us understand which schools are raising student achievement at higher levels than other schools, regardless of the students' starting point. In order to account for some of the natural variation in the growth model, we categorize schools by their range of MGP, as opposed to the specific MGP value. We translate those categories into a rating as follows:

Median Growth Percentile Range	Growth Rating	Growth Rating Category
65 and up	10	Above average
60 to 64	8-9	
41 to 59	4-7	Average
36 to 40	2-3	Below average
35 and below	1	

Within each MGP category, schools are ranked by their actual MGP and divided into equal groups to receive a corresponding Student Growth sub-rating. For example, schools that are in the 60 to 64 range are ranked by their MGP and split into two groups, with the higher group receiving a “9” and the lower group receiving an “8.” The Student Growth sub-rating is categorized as follows: 1-3 = “Below average,” 4-7 = “Average,” 8-10 = “Above average.” Student Growth sub-ratings are not published for schools with MGP results for fewer than 10 students.



Sub-rating #3: College Readiness. The College Readiness sub-rating measures schools' 12th grade participation in the SAT and ACT exams, and the percent of those test-takers that reached a "college-ready" benchmark on those exams. Scores are from 2010-2011 and include results for all students enrolled in the fall of their senior year.

What are the "college-ready" benchmarks?

The College Board has determined that the "college-ready" benchmark for SAT is a score of 1550, which indicates a 65% likelihood of achieving a B- average or higher during the first year of college. Read more at <http://satbenchmark.collegeboard.org/>.

Similarly, ACT has determined that reaching the following scores on each ACT exam is indicative of being "college-ready":

- * English: 18
- * Mathematics: 22
- * Reading: 21
- * Science: 24

Read more about the ACT College Readiness Standards at <http://www.act.org/standard/pdf/CRS.pdf>.

For purposes of the College Readiness sub-rating, GreatSchools looked at the percent of test takers that reached any one of the above "college-readiness" indicators.

To calculate the College Readiness sub-rating on a 1-10 scale, we calculated decile rankings for both the percent of 12th graders that took either the SAT or ACT exam, and the percent of test takers hitting a college-readiness benchmark. We then combined those two ratings, weighting the participation ranking at 25% and the college-ready ranking at 75%. The College Readiness sub-rating is categorized as follows: 1-3 = "Below average," 4-7 = "Average," 8-10 = "Above average." College Readiness sub-ratings are not calculated for schools with fewer than fifteen students tested.

It is important to note that the College Readiness sub-rating is a comparative rating for schools within Washington, D.C. Thus, an "Above average" rating may not mean that most students in a school are demonstrating "college-ready" scores; rather,

it simply means that it is above the average performance for Washington, D.C. schools on this metric.

Climate Rating. In the future, GreatSchools intends to incorporate a Climate Rating for Washington, D.C. schools in the Overall GreatSchools Rating, which would provide insight into elements such as safety and cleanliness, respect and relationships, expectations for students, teacher collaboration and support, and family engagement. For 2013 this is not included in the Overall GreatSchools Rating for Washington, D.C. schools.

What is the PCSB School Performance Report?

The public charter school board's Performance Management Framework (PMF) measures the performance of a D.C. charter school including factors like student academic progress over time, student achievement during the previous school year, D.C. CAS scores, SAT scores, attendance rate, and other indicators. Schools earn points, which are calculated into an overall percentage.

For schools with grades 3-8 and/or grade 10, PCSB has implemented the PMF to assess school-wide academic performance. These schools are rated by tiers:

Tier 1 schools (65-100 percent) meet standards of high performance

Tier 2 schools (35-64 percent) fall short of high performance standards but meet minimum overall performance standards;

and Tier 3 (0-34 percent) schools fall significantly short of high performance standards, showing inadequate performance.

The tiers help PCSB hold schools accountable for their results.

- * Tier 1: High-performing schools are publicly recognized by the PCSB and are exempt from more in-depth monitoring.



- * Tier II: Mid-performing schools are exempt from more in-depth monitoring unless conducted as part of the charter review or renewal cycle.
- * Tier III: PCSB conducts an on-site, more in-depth review for low-performing schools during the school year following the release of the PMF.

Pursuant to the PCSB's authority under the School Reform Act, low-performing schools or campuses may have their charters revoked. For more information on the PMF, please visit <http://www.dcpubliccharter.com/PCSB-Publications/PMF-Results.aspx>.

Use the GreatSchools Web site for More Information

Our website www.greatschools.org provides a wealth of current information in a parent-friendly, easy-to-read format to help you in your school search. On the Web site, you will find:

- * Test scores and GreatSchools ratings for public, public charter, and private schools
- * School reviews and ratings from parents, students, and teachers
- * A parent community where you can ask questions about local schools or give advice to others
- * Information about teachers and the student population
- * Details about extracurricular activities, sports, clubs, and more from the school principal
- * A search function that allows you to compare schools and districts

- * Helpful articles and newsletters about topics such as homework help or bullying prevention
- * A special education section for and about families with students who have special needs

Why is Choosing the Right School Important?

When you choose a great school for your child, from preschool to high school, it will have a lasting impact on his or her life. Schools vary widely. They have different degrees of success in teaching their students math, reading, and other subjects; providing a safe environment for learning; preparing students for the world of work and college; and developing well-adjusted, responsible young adults. Some schools do many of these things well, and some schools may have mixed results, while still others face significant challenges.

When it comes to education, one size does not fit all. Different children thrive in different settings, so it is important for you to consider what type of school and school environment will help ensure your child's success. Choosing the right school for your child may seem difficult, but you can do it if you take it one step at a time. *If you want more help or information, please call the GreatSchools D.C. Parent Hotline at 202-431-5538 or email us at dc@greatschools.org.*



**Streamline your search
with the GreatSchools
D.C. Web page:**

www.greatschools.org/dc