



Information Contacts

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Manchester Academic Charter School Wins National Blue Ribbon Award

Pittsburgh, September 9, 2008 – Manchester Academic Charter School has been honored with one of the country's coveted Blue Ribbon awards for school excellence, the U.S. Department of Education announced today. The award is part of the No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, which recognizes public and private schools that are either academically superior in their states or demonstrate significant gains in student achievement. Manchester Academic is the only school in the City of Pittsburgh to receive the commendation this year, and the first charter school in the region to be so honored. It also is one of only a dozen schools in Pennsylvania and 320 in the country to receive the award.

The North Side charter school's recognition follows the completion of its 10th academic year. Opened in the fall of 1998, Manchester Academic provides personalized education to 200 students in kindergarten through eighth grade and has a waiting list of more than 400 children. For five consecutive years, it has met the adequate yearly progress, or AYP, standards under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. It also has earned a Keystone Award from the Pennsylvania Department of Education in recognition of outstanding academic achievement.

“We attribute our success to our emphasis on forging a partnership between school and home to deliver the best education for each child,” says Chief Executive Officer Vasilios Scoumis. “We’re committed to providing our students with a nurturing environment that also gives them a sound educational foundation.”

In addition to receiving public funds, Manchester Academic has obtained philanthropic support from The Heinz Endowments, which endorses offering Pittsburgh families quality choices in where to send their children to school. The foundation awarded Manchester Academic a \$45,000 grant this year to help expand its use of technology. The Endowments also has given the Manchester Youth Development Center, which shares the same facilities as the charter school, \$1.4 million in grants over the past 15 years.

As a Blue Ribbon award recipient, Manchester Academic had to undergo a rigorous evaluation process that included site visits by experienced educators. This group submitted its findings to a national review panel that made recommendations to the U.S. Secretary of Education. Representatives from the school will be invited to a November ceremony in Washington, D.C., where they will receive a plaque and a flag signifying their school's NCLB-Blue Ribbon School status.

For more information about Manchester Academic Charter School or to arrange an interview or a school visit, contact Vasilios Scoumis at 412-322-0585, ext. 166.