

The Williamsburg Charter High School

School Profile for Colleges

CEEB CODE: 330904

Year Founded: 2004
Enrollment: 600 students
Senior Class: 124
Authorized By: Chancellor of the New York City Board of Education
Administration:
CEO: Eddie Calderon-Melendez
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Principal: Marsha Spampinato
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Mission Statement

The Williamsburg Charter High School unites youth, families, staff, teachers and the community at large in providing young people with the tools necessary to make sense of the world, and prepares them in their journey to become skilled workers and literate citizens of the world community.

Young people will accomplish this through their participation in a rigorous and demanding liberal arts education that includes language, literature, writing, science, history, mathematics, the arts, technology, and exploration in disciplines designed to teach fairness, justice, respect and compassion for themselves and others, as well as the skills of critical thinking, communication and research.

Who We Are:

- Enrollment capacity is 600 students, most of whom hail from the working-class areas of Brooklyn and Queens.
- Admission to the school is highly sought-after (almost ten interested students for every spot), and is conducted by lottery. The lottery is open to any resident of New York City, regardless of academic, athletic or other ability.
- The school reflects the ethnic diversity of New York.
 - 59% Hispanic
 - 25% African-American
 - 10% White
 - 1% Asian descent
 - 5% Other
- Our students speak over a dozen different languages, including Spanish, Polish, Arabic, Albanian and Haitian Creole; 45% speak a language other than English at home.
- 84% of our students receive free or reduced school lunch.
- Almost all of our students are first-generation college students.
- We are members of the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC) and the College Access Consortium of New York (CACNY).

Our Methods and Our Success

Despite being located in District 14, of the poorest parts of New York City, WCHS has maintained a record of academic success in its first three years. We have worked with our student body to instill a school culture of achievement and high expectation through hard work. Highlights thus far include:

- 91% attendance rate (79% in District 14)
- 88% anticipated graduation rate (47 % in District 14)
- 95% of teachers certified; 13:1 student/faculty ratio
- 95% teacher retention rate.
- Full-time Director of Parent Relations with 15% of all parents in Parent-School Association.
- Diverse Board of Directors that includes 1 parent, 1 staff member and 1 current student voting member.
- National Latin Exam—25 students honored (6 *summa cum laude*, 2 *maxima cum laude*, 7 *magna cum laude*, 10 *cum laude*).
- Theater productions including *Aida* (first New York City public high school to secure licensing rights), *Home on the Morning Train*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *The Wiz*, *Rumors*.

Although any student can enter the WCHS admission lottery, students work hard to succeed here. Unique aspects of a WCHS education include:

- Student/Teacher ratio: 13:1
- Longer school day: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
- Longer school year: August 27 – July 3
- Required grade of 70 to pass classes (65 in District 14).
- Stringent graduation requirements (see reverse side)
- School Uniforms
- Merit/Demerit system for good or inappropriate behavior

Graduation Requirements for WCHS compared to New York City Public Schools

Academics (one credit = one semester)

Subject Area	WCHS required units of credit	NYC required units of credit
English	8	8
Social Studies	8	8
Mathematics	8	6
Science	8	6
Foreign Language	6**	2
Health	1	1
The Arts	4	2
Physical Education	4	4
Community Service	100 hours	No Requirement

**Because no foreign language was offered during the first year of the school's existence, some students in the Class of 2008 may graduate with only 4 credits of foreign language. Beginning with the Class of 2009, all students must complete six credits of foreign language.

Additional Graduation Requirement: Senior Seminar/Demonstrating Mastery Conference

In addition to their other academic requirements, Seniors must pass Senior Seminar, an inter-disciplinary course designed to prepare students for the academic rigors of college. At the conclusion of Senior Seminar, students are to prepare and present a portfolio that includes:

- 2-page analysis of a favorite song or poem
- Activities log of grades 9-12
- A "map" of the student's life
- An autobiographical multimedia presentation such as a video, PowerPoint or website
- An essay on ethics describing the student's "ethical code."
- 2-page paper on the personal meaning of a famous painting, sculpture or photograph
- 2-page paper on the personal and societal impact of some aspect of technology or mass media
- Performance of a monologue or soliloquy
- A résumé
- A 2-page paper exploring a career and the education required to pursue that career
- An 8-10 page library-based research paper on a theme in American History
- A reflection journal

Academic Ranking

WCHS ranks its students annually on a weighted 4.0 GPA scale. Only academic classes are factored into GPA. AP or classes are granted an extra 1.0 points due to their increased difficulty.

Grading Scale

96-100.....	4.0
90-95.....	3.75
85-89.....	3.5
82-84.....	3.25
80-82.....	3.0
77-79.....	2.75
75-76.....	2.5
72-74.....	2.25
70-71.....	2.0
Below 70.....	0.0

Distribution of Junior Year GPA for Class of 2008

Rank	GPA
1.....	4.25
25.....	3.36
50.....	3.02
75.....	2.56
100.....	2.05
124.....	1.40

Course Offerings and Basic Progression

	9 th Grade		10 th Grade		11 th Grade		12 th Grade	
	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2
English	English 1	English 2	English 3	English 4	English 5	English 6	English 7	English 8
Math	Math A1	Math A2	Math A3	Math A4	Math B1	Math B2	Math B3	Math B4
Social Studies	Global History 1	Global History 2	Global History 3	Global History 4	U.S. History 1	U.S. History 2	Participation in Government	Economics
Science	Earth Science 1	Earth Science 2	Living Environment 1	Living Environment 2	Chemistry 1	Chemistry 2	Physics 1	Physics 2
Foreign Language**	<i>No Foreign Language</i>		Latin 1	Latin 2	Latin 3 or Italian 1	Latin 4 or Italian 2	Latin 5 or Italian 3	Latin 6 or Italian 4
Advisory	Advisory 1	Advisory 2	Citizenship & Current Events 1	Citizenship & Current Events 2	Communication Skills & Leadership 1	Communication Skills & Leadership 2	College Writing & Research Skills 1	College Writing & Research Skills 2

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Co-Curricular Courses: Physical Education, Health, Chorus, Art, Dance, Senior Seminar

Honors Courses Offered: English 3, English 4, Latin 3, Latin 4

AP Courses Offered: English Language/Composition, English Literature, Calculus, Physics, U.S. History, European History, Studio Art, Art History

Additional Academic Opportunity: "College Bound" program allows students who have exhausted WCHS offerings to take college classes at CUNY: Queens College

Sports: Soccer (B), Baseball (B), Basketball (B,G), Wrestling (B,G), Track (B,G), Cross-Country (B,G), Handball (B,G)

Clubs: Peer Tutoring, Rock Band, Aspira (leadership program for Latino/a youth), Chess, Environmental, Knitting, National Honors Society, Literary Magazine, Ladies' Club, O.S.H.N.O. ("Old Students Helping New Ones;" mentoring club), NCCJ (school chapter of National Conference for Community and Justice), G-Club (student support for men's issues), Culinary, Yearbook, Comic Book

Annual Theatrical Performances: Musical, Play, Winter Dance/Chorus Recital, Spring Dance/Chorus Recital

Testing

Because this is our first graduating class, we do not yet have enough data to provide meaningful statistics about our students' performance on standardized tests.

Almost all of our students are first-generation college students, and frequently lack the savvy and resources to prepare for standardized tests in the way that some of their more sophisticated peers will. We believe that our students' grades, as well as their decision to attend and to remain at a far more demanding and rigorous school than was required of them, speaks more deeply about their academic ability and personal character than any other factor.