



10-Year Charter Renewal Bestowed During 10-Year Anniversary of Unique Academic Success in the North City of St. Louis

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St. Louis, MO, January 30, 2019—In a designation bestowed only on top charter schools, the Missouri state school board has renewed the charter of North Side Community School in St. Louis to operate for another 10 years. Having been founded in 2009 in what is the region’s most violent and impoverished geographic area, the school is celebrating this honor as it celebrates its 10th anniversary.

Charter schools in Missouri are normally renewed by the Missouri Board of Education every five years. However, in circumstances where a school operates consistently at a high level of excellence—academically and operationally—charters are sometimes renewed for ten years.

North Side originally opened to provide a quality education to students in a neighborhood with few options. The school expanded by adding an Early Childhood Center in 2011. This fall, the school opened a middle school in the heart of Grand Center. In fall of 2019, North Side is adding seventh grade, and in 2020 the expansion will wrap up with the addition of eighth grade.

North Side is one of the most successful charter schools in Missouri. The school has achieved this success while serving one of our state’s communities most challenged by high rates of crime, poverty and housing instability. The school is proof that given the right educational environment, any student can succeed. In the last three years, North Side has earned a 100% score on its annual performance report card administered by Missouri. North Side is the only charter school in the state to achieve this ranking consistently during this timeframe.

North Side students test at proficient and advanced levels on the annual standardized MAP tests at rates exceeding most charter and public schools. The school’s average proficient/advanced rate in math over the past four years sits at 60 percent. For English language arts, the average proficient rate is 68 percent. During this same time span, St. Louis Public Schools proficiency rates sit in the 20 percent range.

North Side's mobility and absentee rates are low relative to other public and charter schools serving children with similar challenges.

North Side Community School is unique in the St. Louis region in many ways:

- 98% of the students are African-American and generally outperform students in other charters and public schools. The vast majority of students live within a three-mile radius of the main campus near Natural Bridge and Kingshighway.
- Personal Attention: There are about 16 students per class. Paid aides and volunteer tutors offer further support in and outside classrooms.
- Family Involvement: Teachers communicate with parents regularly—often daily—and visit family homes to further strengthen relationships to support each child's success.
- Basic Needs First: Dedicated support staff and robust community partnerships allow students to keep their eyes on their education. Every child receives free breakfast and lunch daily based on federal poverty guidelines. Myriad services are offered on site as needed.
- Extended Day/Year: Students in 2d-6th grade attend school until 4:45 p.m. Pre-k through 1st grade attend until 3:30 p.m. All students can arrive as early as 7:45 a.m. The extended school year includes four weeks in June.
- Basic Skills Mastery: The focus remains on reading, writing and math. The expectation is a high level of performance in these areas.
- Culture: Administrators support teachers in creating a culture of high expectations and respect for self and others. North Side Knights have a can-do approach.

North Side is a 501c3 nonprofit organization sponsored by the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) and governed by a committed, caring board of directors.