

YSWPCS Implementation Grant Overview

Young Scholars of Western Pennsylvania Charter School (YSWPCS) opened its doors to kindergarten through fifth grade students in the 2011/2012 school year. YSWPCS, the first multilingual and multicultural elementary school in the greater Pittsburgh area, is committed to providing a proactive environment for language acquisition that fosters a dynamic global learning environment for the intellectual and social development of its students. This model creates an ideal setting for reducing racial and cultural isolation and improving student academic outcomes. Initial success has been documented with 46% of its ELL population that had not scored proficient in initial benchmark testing becoming proficient in the third quarter of the school year. The school's innovative language concentration program requires students to become conversant in three world languages and bridges differences by requiring *all* students to be engaged in new language acquisition.

YSWPCS has achieved the diversity sought to deliver its research-based model effectively, with 21% of the school population engaged in its ELL program. The leadership and staff of the school is highly experienced in working in the charter school environment and the school's governing and advisory board includes educational experts and community members with the strengths needed to govern and support a large public non-profit organization. The school is fully enrolled for the 2012/12 school year and has a substantial waiting list.

To build upon its initial success, YSWPCS seeks this implementation grant to further refine its program to improve curriculum and to support professional development with staff, specifically around expanding curriculum to new grade levels and integrating curriculum across contents and through project-based learning. The school also seeks to improve faculty use of data-driven instruction to improve student outcomes, especially with disadvantaged and ELL students.