

Bear Creek Community Charter School

Charter School Comprehensive Plan

07/01/2023 - 06/30/2026

Charter School Profile

Demographics

30 Charter School Way
 Bear Creek Township, PA 18702
 (570)820-4070

Federal Accountability Designation:	None
Schoolwide Status:	Yes
CEO:	James Smith
Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval:	6/25/2018
Length of Charter:	Five Years
Opening Date:	9/29/2004
Grade Level:	K-8
Hours of Operation:	8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
Percentage of Certified Staff:	100.00 %
Total Instructional Staff:	31
Student/Teacher Ratio:	15:1
Student Waiting List:	396
Attendance Rate/Percentage:	94.60 %
Enrollment:	468
Per Pupil Subsidy:	0
Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch:	37.00 %
Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December:	89

Student Profile

Group	Student Count
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2.00
Asian/Pacific Islander	5.00
Black (Non-Hispanic)	31.00
Hispanic	40.00
White (Non-Hispanic)	378.00
Multicultural	12.00

Instructional Days and Hours

Number Of	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (FT)	Elementary	Middle	Secondary
Instructional Days	0.00	0.00	185.00	185.00	185.00	0.00
Instructional Hours	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Planning Process

Bear Creek Community Charter School utilizes a collaborative team approach to develop the plan, coordinated by the Chief Executive Officer. Involvement will include student representatives (Student Council, National Junior Honor Society), parents, staff, administrators and the Board of Trustees. Key planning meetings are held to coordinate involvement; however, stakeholder involvement will also be solicited during regularly scheduled meetings such as PTO meetings, Board of Trustees meetings, Leadership Team meetings and monthly staff meetings. Some of these meetings are held weekly, while others occur monthly.

Mission Statement

Bear Creek Community Charter School's Mission is to embrace a diverse student body and inspire student success through an innovative curriculum, the cultivation of environmental stewardship, and by holding students, parents, and staff accountable for results.

Vision Statement

Bear Creek Community Charter School is currently operating at capacity, and has done so for the past ten years. There are hundreds of students currently on the school's wait list. The Board of Trustees will be holding a strategic planning session during the upcoming school year to address the possibility of opening enrollment for additional students based on demand.

Shared Values

The following core values guide the mission of Bear Creek Community Charter School:

1. Setting high expectations for academic achievement will lead students to be meaningful contributors to society;
2. We have an obligation to expose children to content-rich materials and programs derived from research-based teaching methods;
3. Engaging children at all levels will inspire them to rise to academic challenges and develop a life-long enthusiasm for learning;
4. Quality teachers are critical to student achievement;

5. Staff will be provided the resources necessary to support their success and be held accountable for delivering measurable results;
6. Education is powerful when students, families, school, and the community are involved;
7. Children must be taught their inherent responsibility to respect the environment and will encourage others to do the same;
8. Children will be challenged to develop leadership skills, build self-esteem and exhibit exemplary character;
9. A safe and nurturing environment is essential to student achievement.
10. Complacency is not acceptable. We must create and embrace a culture of continuous improvement for the benefit of our students.

Educational Community

Bear Creek Community Charter School is located in a rural setting; however, the majority of students reside in an urban setting. Students attending Bear Creek Community Charter School originate from twelve different local school districts located throughout Luzerne County, Lackawanna County and Monroe County. Healthcare and service-related industries are predominant in Luzerne County. Bear Creek Community Charter School provides a small-school environment, with opportunities for hands-on learning, with an emphasis on environmental education. The School partners with other entities within the local community, such as the Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek Foundation, and other entities to expand the school's focus on environmental education. Bear Creek Community enjoys a positive and collaborative relationship with municipal government, local business and community organizations. Parents are extremely active in the school, including the School's Parent-Teacher Organization.

Board of Trustees

Name	Office	Address	Phone	Email
Peter Austin	Member		5708204070	trustees@bearcreekschool.com
Susan Barry	Member		5708204070	trustees@bearcreekschool.com
David Blazejewski	President		5708204070	trustees@bearcreekschool.com
Brandy Lewis	Member		(570) 820-4070	trustees@bearcreekschool.com
Wendy Lutchko	Vice President		5708204070	trustees@bearcreekschool.com
Nicole Pachucki	Member		5708204070	trustees@bearcreekschool.com

Kimberly Popple	Member		5708204070	trustees@bearcreekschool.com
Stacey Scullion	Member		5708204070	trustees@bearcreekschool.com

Board of Trustees Professional Development

The Board of Trustees receives ongoing professional development in areas important to charter school operations as part of bi-weekly meetings and work sessions, trainings conducted by the school's leadership team, through webinars, the Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools and by hosting a bi-annual strategic planning workshops. Topics include fiduciary responsibility, ethics, personnel, operations, finance and school governance, along with legislative updates. Board members have initiated a formal board training program as required by Act 55, ensuring they meet or exceed the legal requirement for ongoing training.

Governance and Management

Administrators and Trustees communicate regularly via electronic mail, and key administrators attend the bi-weekly meetings of the Board of Trustees to provide operational updates and discuss topics of interest. This includes the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Director of Student Affairs, Director of Intervention & Support Services and the Business Manager. Other staff attend as required. Administrators also interact with Trustees as part of sub-committees, such as Facilities, Personnel, etc. Trustees often volunteer at the School, providing other opportunities to maintain a positive, collaborative relationship with administration and staff.

Student Enrollment

Parents of new students interesting in enrolling at Bear Creek Community Charter School will be given the opportunity to participate in an annual Pre-Enrollment Process. The date pre-enrollment begins and ends will be determined by the school administration each year and will be posted in the school office as well as on the school's web site before January 1. Parents of students interested in enrolling in the school must complete and return an accurate Pre-Enrollment Form by the deadline provided by the school.

As permitted by the Pennsylvania Charter School Laws, Bear Creek Community Charter School will give preference in enrollment to the following categories of students, in the following order:

1. Returning students (re-enrollment of existing students by posted deadline);
2. Children of parents who actively participated in the development (prior to the school receiving its charter) of the charter school (also known as Founder's List);

3. Siblings of a currently enrolled student. For the purpose of this policy, a sibling is defined as a child who is related to an existing student by blood or adoption and who share a legal tie to at least one common parent;
4. Holdover Students from the prior school year;
5. Students residing in the school district in which the charter is located (Wilkes-Barre Area School District);
6. Students residing outside the school district in which the charter school is located (all other school districts within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania).

In the event the number of applicants for any given grade or section exceeds the number of enrollment slots (seats) available, the school will accept students by a random selection process. The school will grant enrollment preference according to the aforementioned criteria. A public lottery will be held, as necessary, to determine enrollment. The date, time and location of the public lottery will be posted at the school, on the school's web site, and in a newspaper of general circulation at least one week prior to the lottery being held. A neutral party will conduct the lottery on behalf of the school. The school will notify applicant parents within 30 days of the lottery with the outcome as to whether their child has been accepted or has been placed on a wait list. The lottery is open to the public.

After all available enrollment slots (seats) are filled, wait lists will be created and maintained for each grade. The initial wait list will be created randomly as part of the public lottery. Following the lottery, additional students will be added to the wait lists on a first come/first served basis. When a slot becomes available in a grade, the parents of the first student on the wait list will be contacted. Acceptance is determined by the parent completing and hand delivering an accurate Pre-Enrollment Form to the school office within twenty-four (24) hours of being notified by the school. If the enrollment slot is declined, if no response is received, or an accurate Pre-Enrollment Form is not hand delivered to the school office within twenty-four (24) hours of being notified, the enrollment slot will be forfeited and the next student on the wait list will be contacted. Once all vacant enrollment slots for each particular grade and section are filled, enrollment will be closed.

Bear Creek Community Charter School is an equal opportunity educational institution.

Parent Communication

Communications to parents regarding registration procedures, dates, and when applicable, a description of the lottery process.

No files have been uploaded.

Registration Policy

Registration Policy

No file has been uploaded.

Intent to Enroll Form

Intent to Enroll Form (English and all other languages)

No file has been uploaded.

Student Enrollment History

Enrollment History—Part I

School Year	Number of Students at the Beginning of the School Year	Number of Students at the End of the School Year	Number of Students Expelled	Reasons Students Withdrew During the Year	Number of Students Retained
2017	468	461	0	Moved out of area; District would not transport; Expanded athletic opportunities.	4

Enrollment History—Part 2—Enrollment by Grade by School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2018	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	51	0	0	0	0

Stakeholder Involvement

Bear Creek Community Charter School solicited input from multiple stakeholder groups using a variety of methods.

Information from professional and paraprofessional staff was solicited as part of our annual Pre-Service Training, which is held prior to the start of the new school year, as well as through ongoing conversations and dialogue throughout the school year. This included engaging in large and small group dialogue about the needs of our student body, opportunities for improvement, and enhancing the educational experience and academic performance of our students. School Leadership often conducts an online survey at the end of the school year to solicit feedback from staff on professional development, school policies, opportunities for improvement, etc.

School administrators were engaged in the process as part of weekly School Leadership Team meetings as well as one-on-one meetings as needed.

Parents were engaged through in-person dialogue with PTO participants, and all parents were provided an anonymous Parent Satisfaction Survey.

Student input was solicited through both Student Council and through the National Junior Honor Society membership.

Information from the parent survey, as well as student, staff and administrator input, was discussed with the Board of Trustees. Parent Satisfaction Survey information was made available to the public through the school web site. Collectively, this input was incorporated into the school's plan.

Federal Programs

Coordination of Programs

Technical Assistance

The LEA provides guidance, technical assistance, and support to schools developing schoolwide programs in the areas of needs assessment, comprehensive planning, implementation, and evaluation of schoolwide program and requirements.

Describe the technical assistance provided. Explain why it was considered high quality technical assistance.

Bear Creek Community Charter School is a single school LEA. Any technical assistance required or needed was obtained directly through the Pennsylvania Department. This includes webinars and information provided on the Comprehensive Planning Google Site operated by the Capital Area Intermediate Unit. Bear Creek Community Charter School staff actively participate in regional seminars hosted by the Division of Federal Programs, and is represented at the annual Federal Programs Conference sponsored by the Pennsylvania Association of Federal Programs Coordinators.

Provider	Meeting Date	Type of Assistance
Ann Way, Federal Programs Monitor	4/2/2019	ESSA & UGG Compliance Review
Pennsylvania Association of Federal Program Coordinators	10/19/2018	Every Student Succeeds Act and Uniform Grant Guidance
Pennsylvania Association of Federal Program Coordinators (Conference Sessions)	5/7/2019	Schoolwide Planning and Overall ESSA Compliance
Pennsylvania Department of Education (LIU 18)	9/14/2018	Federal Programs Coordinator Training
The Danielson Group	8/15/2018	Professional Staff Training on the Framework for Teaching
The Danielson Group	8/6/2019	Follow-Up on The Framework for Teaching

Consolidation of Funds

Please indicate if your school/charter is consolidating state, local, and federal funds. (Your school/charter must keep on file an approval letter from your Regional Coordinator).

No, the school does not intend to consolidate the funds.

Needs Assessment

Charter School Accomplishments

Accomplishment #1:

Bear Creek Community Charter School continues to differentiate itself from its chartering school district and other public schools in Luzerne County through academic performance on the PSSA, engaging parents in the assessment of school operations and through hands-on environmental education programming.

Accomplishment #2:

Bear Creek Community Charter School has successfully implemented a new English Language Arts series that is Pennsylvania-Core aligned for grades K-8, and continues to provide ongoing professional development to staff related to this endeavor. In support of this new program, the school is working to build classroom libraries with pertinent titles that support the curriculum and appeal to student's interests.

Accomplishment #3:

Parent Satisfaction. Fifty-four percent (54%) of Bear Creek Community Charter School's parents recently completed an anonymous parent satisfaction survey. Of those responding, one hundred percent (100%) of the parents reported they were satisfied with Bear Creek Community Charter School and would recommend Bear Creek Community Charter School to a friend or family member.

Accomplishment #4:

Bear Creek Community Charter School successfully implemented a new Math series in kindergarten through eighth grade, and documented the School's Math curriculum to include unit plans, scope and sequence, and ongoing professional development. A documented Math curriculum was previously a concern, as was a Math series that was not Pennsylvania/Common Core aligned. During the 2018-2019 school year, a new process was successfully implemented that included standardized lesson planning, along with a weekly administrative review process.

Accomplishment #5:

Bear Creek Community Charter School's charter with the Wilkes-Barre Area School District was up for renewal in August 2019. The District raised no concerns regarding school operations, and approved the School's fourth five-year charter renewal six months prior to charter expiration.

Charter School Concerns

Concern #1:

Student data regarding performance in Math, including PSSA and benchmark data, does not indicate a level of adequate student growth.

Concern #2:

Concerns exist over shortcomings in curricular alignment to the new Pennsylvania Core Standards. Math curriculum has been successfully documented. School administrators are working collaboratively with teachers to document the school's ELA and Science curriculum, and ensuring proper alignment to the Pennsylvania Core academic standards.

Concern #3:

The waiting list of students who apply for admission but are unsuccessful in obtaining a spot continues to grow. The demand has significantly outpaced availability. This will be a topic of strategic planning by the School's Board of Trustees, which will occur during the upcoming 2019-2020 school year.

Prioritized Systemic Challenges

Systemic Challenge #1 (*Guiding Question #3*) Ensure that there is a system within the school that fully ensures consistent implementation of a standards aligned curriculum framework across all classrooms for all students.

Aligned Concerns:

Student data regarding performance in Math, including PSSA and benchmark data, does not indicate a level of adequate student growth.

Concerns exist over shortcomings in curricular alignment to the new Pennsylvania Core Standards. Math curriculum has been successfully documented. School administrators are working collaboratively with teachers to document the school's ELA and Science curriculum, and ensuring proper alignment to the Pennsylvania Core academic standards.

Systemic Challenge #2 (*Guiding Question #0*) Bear Creek Community Charter School cannot currently accept all the students who apply. The existing wait list for openings is 339 students. The School conducts no marketing efforts to attract new students - the demand is based upon "word of mouth" from existing and former students/parents.

Aligned Concerns:

The waiting list of students who apply for admission but are unsuccessful in obtaining a spot continues to grow. The demand has significantly outpaced availability. This will be a topic of strategic planning by the School's Board of Trustees, which will occur during the upcoming 2019-2020 school year.

Charter School Level Plan

Action Plans

Goal #1: Ensure that there is a system within the school that fully ensures consistent implementation of a standards aligned curriculum framework across all classrooms for all students.

Indicators of Effectiveness:

Type: Interim

Data Source: Classroom observation, curriculum review, PSSA data, student benchmark data.

Specific Targets: Charter school staff, administrators and third-party consultants/resources will review, enhance, and ensure consistent implementation of a standards aligned curriculum which will result in increased student achievement and greater academic growth.

Strategies:

Ensure school curriculum is fully aligned to new Pennsylvania Core Standards

Description:

Utilize a collaborative effort of school staff, administration, and third-party consultants/resources to review and enhance the school's curriculum to ensure it is fully aligned to the rigorous Pennsylvania Core Standards. This process will include curriculum mapping, beginning with Math, followed by Reading.

SAS Alignment: Standards, Curriculum Framework

Implementation Steps:

Review Curriculum & Prepare Curriculum Map for Math and Reading

Description:

Review existing curriculum to determine alignment to Pennsylvania Core Standards, develop curriculum map, pacing schedule, unit and lesson plan formatting. Provide appropriate training to instructional staff, along with time for ongoing collaboration. Implement procedures for review of unit and lesson plans.

Start Date: 7/1/2017 **End Date:** 6/30/2020

Program Area(s): Professional Education, Special Education

Supported Strategies:

- Ensure school curriculum is fully aligned to new Pennsylvania Core Standards

Goal #2: Engage in strategic planning with the School's Board of Trustees to determine if there is a desire to provide more opportunity for students to attend Bear Creek Community Charter School and the educational and other programs that are available to charter school students.

Related Challenges:

- Bear Creek Community Charter School cannot currently accept all the students who apply. The existing wait list for openings is 339 students. The School conducts no marketing efforts to attract new students - the demand is based upon "word of mouth" from existing and former students/parents.

Indicators of Effectiveness:

Type: Interim

Data Source: Applications for Admission from the Spring of 2019 and historical student enrollment application data.

Specific Targets: Output from a Board of Trustees strategic planning session.

Strategies:

Initiate the first high level steps in considering whether or not to provide more opportunities for students to participate in the safe and supportive environment created by Bear Creek Community Charter School.

Description:

Strategic planning, a comprehensive process to consider what is in the long-term best interests of the school and students, is the first step in addressing this problem/issue.

SAS Alignment: Safe and Supportive Schools

Implementation Steps:

Initiate Strategic Planning

Description:

Strategic planning will be held in the Fall of 2019 or Spring of 2020 to consider what, if anything, will be done to provide more opportunities for children to attend Bear Creek Community Charter School.

Start Date: 5/1/2019 **End Date:** 6/30/2020

Program Area(s): Student Services

Supported Strategies:

- Initiate the first high level steps in considering whether or not to provide more opportunities for students to participate in the safe and supportive environment created by Bear Creek Community Charter School.

Charter School Level Affirmations

We affirm that this Charter School Plan was developed in accordance, and will comply with the applicable provisions of 22 Pa. Code, Chapters 4, 12, 49 and Article 711. We also affirm that the contents are true and correct and that the plan was placed for public inspection for a minimum of 28 days.

We affirm that the responses in the Professional Education Core Foundations and the Professional Development Implementation Steps focus on the learning needs of each staff member to enable all staff members meet or exceed the Pennsylvania academic standards in each of the core subject areas.

Affirmed by David Blazejewski on 7/2/2019

Board President

Affirmed by James Smith on 7/2/2019

Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer

Affirmation for Compliance with the Public Official & Employee Ethics Act

The original Public Official and Employee Ethics Act (the “Ethics Act”) was amended and reenacted in 1989 by Act 9 of 1989 and in 1998 by Act 93 of 1998. (See Act 9 of 1989, 65 P.S. §401, et seq. and Act 93 of 1998, Chapter 11, 65 Pa.c.s. §1101 et seq.) The Act provides that public office is a public trust and that any effort to realize personal financial gain through public office is a violation of that trust. The Act was passed to strengthen the faith and confidence of the people of the Commonwealth in their government. The Act established the State Ethics Commission to administer and enforce the provisions of the Act and to provide guidance regarding the standards established by the Act.

The Bear Creek Community CS assures that it will comply with the requirements of the Public Official and Employee Ethics Act (the “Ethics Act”) and with the policies, regulations and procedures of the Pennsylvania State Ethics Commission. Additional information about the “Ethics Act” is available on the Ethics Commission’s website at: <http://www.ethics.state.pa.us/>

Affirmed by David Blazejewski on 7/2/2019

Board President

Affirmed by James Smith on 7/2/2019

Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer