

U.S. Department of Education
2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs Emily Pake

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Beaufort County Early College High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 5337 Highway 264 East

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Washington

State NC

Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 27889-7889

County Beaufort County

Telephone (252) 940-6227

Fax

Web site/URL

https://www.beaufort.k12.nc.us/Domain/11

E-mail epake@beaufort.k12.nc.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Matthew Cheeseman

E-

mail mcheeseman@beaufort.k12.nc.us

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Beaufort County Schools

Tel. (252) 946-6593

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. TW Allen

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2023 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2022-2023) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 8 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
1 Middle/Junior high schools
4 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 13 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- ☐ Urban (city or town)
☐ Suburban
☒ Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2022 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

| Grade | # of Students |
|----------------|---------------|
| PreK | 0 |
| K | 0 |
| 1 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 |
| 3 | 0 |
| 4 | 0 |
| 5 | 0 |
| 6 | 0 |
| 7 | 0 |
| 8 | 0 |
| 9 | 62 |
| 10 | 71 |
| 11 | 55 |
| 12 or higher | 75 |
| Total Students | 263 |

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0.3 % Asian
 - 16 % Black or African American
 - 37 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 41.7 % White
 - 5 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2021 - 2022 school year: 2%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

| Steps For Determining Mobility Rate | Answer |
|--|--------|
| (1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year | 0 |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year | 4 |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 4 |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021 | 263 |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4) | 0.02 |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 2 |

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
9 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 49 %

Total number students who qualify: 130

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 2 %
Total number of students served 6

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>2</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 3 %
Total number of students served: 8

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 10

11. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

| | Number of Staff |
|--|-----------------|
| Administrators | 1 |
| Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher. | 9 |
| Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc. | 1 |
| Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students. | 0 |
| Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 1 |

12. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 22:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

| Required Information | 2021-2022 | 2020-2021 | 2019-2020 | 2018-2019 | 2017-2018 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance | 99% | 97% | 97% | 99% | 99% |
| High school graduation rate | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

14. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2022.

| Post-Secondary Status | |
|---|-----|
| Graduating class size | 45 |
| Enrolled in a 4-year college or university | 62% |
| Enrolled in a community college | 16% |
| Enrolled in career/technical training program | 0% |
| Found employment | 13% |
| Joined the military or other public service | 9% |
| Other | 0% |

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

16. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

To provide a personalized and supportive educational environment that motivates all students to successfully complete an academically rigorous high school and college curriculum in an atmosphere of mutual respect, collaborative leadership, and positive relationships. BCECHS will continue to be student-centered learning community that equips graduates with the knowledge and skills required for life and work in the 21st Century.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=beaufort_nc#&&hs=1413159 and
https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=beaufort_nc#&&hs=1413163

18. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The Beaufort County Early College High School (BCECHS) was established in 2008 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The school is located on the Beaufort County Community College campus. Beaufort County is a rural district that sits along the Tar and Pamlico rivers and is known for its rich fossil beds. It is a Tier Two county and is ranked number 47 out of 100 counties as the most economically distressed. Over the past decade there has been a decrease in the number of births and families with school aged children moving into the area. It has evolved into a retirement community, and most new residents moved from the north in search of cheaper property on the water. As a result, enrollment has dropped within the school district; however, the enrollment at the early college continues to grow. The total student population in the district has decreased by over 1,000 students. We have increased enrollment by 100 students over the past 10 years, specifically with Hispanic students. In 2012, there were only 10 Hispanic students in the entire school, today we have 97 enrolled.

Primarily, students who attend the early college would be first generation college goers and are from low-income families. This school aims to provide a tuition free education to students from low socio-economic homes. Students graduate with a high school diploma and as many associate degrees and certificates as they can earn. Sixty percent of our students transfer to a four-year institution, and at least 30% enter the workforce with the credentials they earn while attending the early college.

The school staff has a mindset of constant improvement which contributes to the success of our students. This is evident by our growth percentages on end of course assessments each year and the number of graduates completing their associate degrees. The school's growth percentage has increased over the past four years. The school received an A on the School Report Card issued by the state; only 6 other schools in the northeast region received this rating. The school has also earned a 100% graduation rate every year for the past 10 years except for one year.

Key strategies used within the school to encourage and challenge students consist of a staff who are data driven and consistent with school-wide expectations. The staff uses a professional learning cycle that is reviewed at every School Improvement Team (SIT) meeting. The SIT reviews data, selects targets based on the data, learns effective teaching strategies, teaches the strategies in their classrooms, receives feedback on implementation, reviews student work and their progress, and reassesses the effectiveness of the strategies. The strategic process is used to build collaboration and consistency within the school.

One such cycle was the implementation of a growth mindset to support the student's emotional needs. Literacy strategies and critical thinking skills have also been a topic implemented through the learning cycle. These cycles have a direct correlation with the continued growth of our students.

In addition to academics and social and emotional learning, soft skills are taught and required in every classroom. A few examples of the skills taught are writing all assignments in complete sentences, writing emails, presenting to different audiences, advocating for themselves, and receiving constructive feedback from peers and their teachers.

Parents and students attend mandatory meetings every year with the counselor and principal to share transcripts, post-secondary options, college acceptance data, and future goals. Individual meetings occur monthly with Hispanic families. The meetings are facilitated by the principal and an interpreter to support this growing group of students and their families, so they are knowledgeable in the US educational system. We also inform undocumented students of their options and scholarships that will help them attend universities in the state.

The staff has developed innovative projects to demonstrate the interconnectedness of the different content areas. Each year, the school hosts a two-day cross curricular project that incorporates all disciplines. Students have solved a murder mystery, researched an impending nuclear attack, and conducted a mock US Congress meeting. Students have also designed rooms in the school building. They were required to research costs, present their proposal to their peers, and see the project to fruition.

This is the first time that this school has been nominated for the National Blue Ribbon award.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The English Curriculum for Honors English I, Honors English II, Honors English III, and Honors English IV is aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) and College and Career Readiness Standards. Most English courses are focused on a curriculum developed by the College Board that seeks to prepare students for higher education, workplace readiness, and AP/SAT readiness by focusing on close reading, higher order thinking skills and reading strategies that will help students grow into more independent learners prepared for advanced reading tasks. As our students take college courses as early as their sophomore year, it is critical that they are prepared for college level reading and feel confident working with complex texts. English courses are aligned vertically, ensuring students gain necessary skills at each level in order to be successful in subsequent courses and providing a variety of reading and writing experiences. Our classes approach reading and writing in an integrated manner, using mentor texts as examples of writing that can be analyzed and learned from in both a reading and writing perspective. After reading mentor texts, students are asked to apply what they have learned in their own writing. Additionally, classes take a backwards design approach, previewing unit assessment writing tasks with students at the beginning of each unit and asking students to determine what skills they will need to gain or improve upon during the unit in order to successfully complete the writing assessment. English classes are student-centered and collaborative and focus on creating a safe environment for students to question texts and share their own writing. Students work daily in small groups to analyze texts, share ideas, and give feedback on writing. Group roles, such as facilitator, manager, recorder, and reporter, rotate often, giving each student the opportunity to develop necessary social, leadership, and communication skills. Students are required to deliver speeches in each English course for a variety of purposes, from analytical to informative to argumentative. Multiple opportunities are provided in low-stakes settings for students to gain more comfort in speaking in front of a crowd. There is also a focus on representing diversity in texts and examining critical societal issues through writing and class discussion. Texts range from American foundational and historical documents to critical reviews to modern poetry, providing opportunities to read different types of texts in order to examine writing elements such as purpose, tone, context, and audience. Students take a reading diagnostic test at the beginning of each year to determine areas of need and these assessments are repeated at mid-year and end of year points to monitor progress and measure growth. Teachers use these assessments to select appropriate texts and give individualized support to students.

1b. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The mathematics department follows the NCSCOS for all of their mathematics courses, including Foundations of Math 1, Honors Math 1, Honors Math 2, Foundations of Math 3, Honors Math 3, and Honors Discrete Math. The department has collaboratively developed teaching strategies to implement a flipped classroom environment in each class. They have created a variety of materials and resources for each student to access and gain conceptual understanding. Students develop understanding by writing notes, creating and completing examples of the content and questions, and complete them at their individual pace. These materials have been hand crafted by the department collectively to allow for multiple learning styles through the use of custom made videos, interactive programs, and hand drawn organizers. Students go through these materials using their personal learning styles within their own pace to build their own understanding of the various topics. Teachers are in constant communication on the development, delivery and success of these materials. Based on student data, the teachers reflect and modify materials to better improve student outcomes. Students are then tasked with bringing this learning into the classroom to complete guided group learning activities with their peers to further develop mastery of the content. These group learning experiences strive to help students gain mastery of a topic and provide opportunities for students to collaborate, discuss, write, and think critically about mathematical concepts. Within these groups students also build leadership skills, 21st century skills and collaboration skills that are required in the modern workforce. Teachers are facilitating within these activities to foster the learning environment and are not the sole source of knowledge. Teachers provide feedback through low-risk summative assessments throughout a

unit. Teachers also do reteaching and spiraling of previous materials on introductory tasks before lessons based on formative data seen during their group and individual learning. Students also have opportunities to analyze performance on previous quizzes and tests and complete test corrections to explain their misunderstandings and misconceptions and improve learning gaps or reinforce weaker skills.

1c. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The science department utilizes backward design to address learning standards for Honors Earth Science, Honors Biology, and Honors Chemistry using the corresponding NCSCOS. The department then unpacks the standards to provide students with a clear picture of the expected essential questions and learning goals. Science teachers serve and collaborate on Beaufort County's science leadership team to create formative and summative assessments that identify learning gaps and guide student interventions. This reflective process helps to ensure progress and mastery of content.

In addition to traditional classroom assessments, reviewing student work and learning walks provide feedback to teachers on instructional methods and the classroom impact of unit design and curriculum. Literacy strategies are embedded through the use of metacognitive markers to process reading passages, critical thinking, and application of scientific content. Scientific writing builds literacy and higher-order thinking skills as students extrapolate meaning from passages and formulate written responses to justify conclusions in lab reports and research assignments. The science department collaborates on common rubrics for literacy-based initiatives to ensure continuity between courses and grade levels.

At the classroom level, teachers provide inquiry-based, collaborative, and student-centered instruction. Instructional approaches for lessons include modeling pedagogy, project-based learning, and daily integration of technology that provide differentiation and choice. Teachers use technology such as Gizmos, digital microscopes, open education resources, and the Google Suite to purposefully promote collaboration, enhance, and adapt instruction. Choice boards, menu work, and exploratory activities provide opportunities for students to use preferred learning styles and multiple intelligences to demonstrate mastery in assignments, assessments, and projects. Common rubrics ensure that differentiated instruction remains aligned with learning standards and maintains focus on target goals while allowing flexible instruction.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The Social Studies curriculum content is aligned to the NCSCOS for Social Studies and the College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies. The school offers Honors American Government, Honors World History, Honors American History, and Honors Economics and Personal Finance courses. Social Studies teachers meet frequently to discuss resources and instructional methods, reflecting on current materials and processes to ensure student equity and inclusion of current societal issues, economics, and politics. The curriculum is inquiry based, driven by essential questions. Classrooms utilize the Socratic method coupled with self-directed and cooperative learning. Instruction is student-centered (independent research, small group, partners, oral presentations, peer teaching, and peer evaluations). At the heart of the Socratic method and Inquiry-based learning is analysis of primary and secondary sources and independent research. Class discussions are part of the daily routine with expectations for all students to engage in the active learning process. Central to this approach is reading and writing with an emphasis upon student comprehension and development of higher order critical thinking skills. The use of metacognitive markers is key to this approach whether analyzing a document, letter, or political cartoon. Assessments vary and extend beyond the traditional multiple choice test questions to more non-traditional assessments such as presentations, projects, computer simulation games (such as Sid Meiers' Civilization IV: Colonization), and rubrics. Assessments often include peer evaluations. Projects range in size and time from small projects to more elaborate projects. These projects include digital timelines, Supreme Court Case studies, creation of historical Digital Narratives (five-minute student created mini-documentaries) and the school-wide mock Congress PBL (steps of law creation from grass roots initiatives through committee meetings to final Congressional vote).

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

One of the primary missions of BCECHS is to ensure students are college and career ready. As many students begin taking college courses as early as the second semester of freshman year, these efforts begin as soon as students are enrolled in the school. The school counselor meets with each student one on one to discuss secondary education and career goals every year. The counselor and principal then meet annually with students to review their transcripts and update postsecondary plans. College and career planning classes support upperclassmen as they plan for their future and transition to the job market or college. For dual-enrolled students, BCECHS offers support through required Academic Success Classes offered by the college that provide guidance and direct instruction concerning skills and procedures necessary for success in community college classes. Through this course, students conduct research about potential college choices and career options in which they are interested. This course is taught by the BCECHS college liaison, who also meets individually with each dually enrolled student to work on college course registration that aligns with students' postsecondary plans. Additionally, the school requires a College and Career planning class in students' penultimate year of high school, and a Graduate Success class for graduating students. Through these classes, students learn to build resumes, review scholarship opportunities, and listen to guest speakers from NC universities, community organizations like the College Foundation of NC, and representatives from various military branches in order to learn more about post-secondary options.

Through the dual enrollment opportunities at the community college, students are able to earn an Associate of Arts degree, an Associate of Science degree, or both. Moreover, students who plan to join the workforce after high school are able to earn certifications in career and technical programs like welding, cosmetology, and information technology.

1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Art and music classes are offered through Beaufort County Community College, and are taught by instructors employed by the college. They offer a wide range of art experiences for the students from hands on to the history of the arts. These classes act as dual credits that go towards both their high school diploma and the Associate of Arts and/or Associate of Science degrees. In addition to these courses, BCECHS provides students with an opportunity to join and participate in an art club. The club meets twice a month and allows members to explore different types of art and crafts. Students are able to display their art around the school, district and in the community. This includes exhibiting art at a local theater and creates a link to the local arts council. Several students have entered art shows through this club, with one of our students also winning in a local art competition. Students were encouraged to use their own creativity to submit designs for the school logo. Students voted on designs and the winning design was adopted by the school. Prom committee students create custom decorations and favors for the fall socials and for the spring Prom. For example, for the 2022 Prom, students created custom fairy and butterfly jars by upcycling trash. Additionally, teachers embed artistic opportunities in each classroom.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Physical education and health classes are offered through Beaufort County Community College, and are taught by instructors employed by the college. Within these courses, an emphasis is placed on wellness through the study of diet and nutrition, stress management, and the setting up and implementation of individualized physical fitness programs. These classes act as dual credits that go towards both their high school diploma and the Associate of Arts and/or Associate of Science degrees.

In addition to courses offered through the community college, BCECHS provides students with an opportunity to join and participate in a run club. The club meets once a week after school, during which time

students are able to do a self-paced run or walk along a walking trail that snakes around the entire campus. Throughout the school year, students track and record the amount of miles they cumulatively run. Several club members have also gone on to voluntarily participate in a local 5K community run. The school also received a grant to start a greenhouse club to provide and sell naturally grown vegetables and plants for the local community as a way for students to learn more about healthy nutrition.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

Through Beaufort Community College students have access to a Spanish language course that acts as a dual credit. Students also have access to the North Carolina Virtual Public School online class program that offers a wide variety of world languages such as French, Mandarin Chinese, and even American Sign Language. In addition, students who wish to pursue foreign languages as a part of their future can also earn a translator certificate through the college. With enough credits either through the college program or NCVPS, students can receive an official certificate saying they are a qualified translator in a given language that can be used in future studies and careers.

2d. Technology/library/media

BCECHS is a one-to-one school and we work to ensure every student has access to digital resources. Students may check out a chromebook, laptop or iPad from the school as well as internet hotspots for at home use. All classrooms have wireless internet allowing teachers and students to cast from their personal or school issued devices to classroom. This allows teachers to showcase student work samples for class discussion. Science classrooms are equipped with digital microscopes that have the capacity to take pictures, images, and videos that can be used in laboratory reports and digital narratives. BCECHS also offers an esports program for students. Students of any grade level are given opportunities to join, work, and compete in a variety of esports positions that gives them experience in these fields as well as scholarship opportunities. The esports program has previously had a student earn close to forty thousand dollars in scholarships through esports. The school esports team has advanced to playoff competition. The program offers positions for students of various abilities and skill levels to be as open and inclusive as possible. Students are also invited to participate in our 3d printing club to learn and design their own projects and build engineering skills. Every teacher also provides access to study and learning resources through our digital learning platform and virtual Google meets for students to access outside of the classroom.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

Through a joint effort from teachers from all of the core subjects and grade levels, BCECHS has created and organized an annual cross-curricular project for each class of freshmen and sophomores over the past several years. Sometimes spanning multiple days, students work together on projects to solve real-world problems relating to skills they learn throughout the school year in their English, math, science, and social studies classes. The subject materials of these projects have spanned many topics, including solving a fake murder mystery, completing a growth mindset breakout room, competing in a cross-curricular trivia bee, writing a bill and presenting it to a simulated Congress, and even triangulating the coordinates of a (theoretical) explosive device that would threaten a large region of the state. Within their groups, students have to complete tasks that often require them to analyze and interpret text, solve complex math problems, and investigate the results of a scientific lab. In addition, students have to organize their evidence and information into a visual aid, and argue an evidence based claim to a panel consisting of their teachers and peers.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Students not performing at grade level have a large variety of structured resources available to them. Staff keeps track of students struggling through our digital data wall and intervention pyramid spreadsheet. At least every three weeks, teachers collaboratively monitor student progress by updating the spreadsheet to share students making below a C average in a course, along with sharing what strategies they are trying and

how they have communicated with parents. This allows the staff to identify students who may be struggling in multiple areas and collaboratively work on interventions. Tutoring is offered to all students, but students in all state tested courses who are not predicted to be proficient on the exams are requested to stay after school for tutoring once a week. Each department has a designated day for after school tutoring so students can get help in multiple areas as needed. Based on diagnostics testing, students receive individualized practice and remediation through IXL, Newsela, and CommonLit. Upperclassmen are volunteer tutors in several courses. These students willingly give their time to work with students one on one or in small groups that are struggling in their courses. Each grade level has a targeted study hall for identified students that need extra time and help. This starts with a freshman level class called "Study Skills" where the students are taught strategies for studying and time management. During these targeted study halls, our upperclassmen tutors have a chance to work with students one on one and students can peer tutor or complete group work. Beginning in the sophomore year, students that still need extra support also take an ACT Preparatory class as well as a Leadership Development course that is independently paced.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

One of the goals of BCECHS in recent years was to work on fostering a growth mindset in the students beginning with their freshman year. In conjunction with this, students are encouraged to take opportunities to go above and beyond what is expected from them, both inside and outside of the classroom. One opportunity that students have been given is becoming peer tutors, which requires them to use their free time to work with other students that are struggling academically in order to provide them with individualized attention. Many students are also encouraged to participate in clubs such as Math Team, Battle of the Books, and Science Olympiad, all of which provide them opportunities to go beyond the required curriculum, as well as take part in competitions outside of the regular school day. After their first semester at BCECHS, students who have performed well academically and who have shown an appropriate maturity level are encouraged to do an early enrollment into their college level classes. For those students who excel specifically in mathematics, they are given a chance to enroll in an accelerated math course, often finishing their math credits a whole school year sooner than their peers. With opportunities to take advantage of summer classes, some students are able to finish not only their high school diploma, but also both their Associates of Arts and Associates of Science in as little as four years.

3c. Students with disabilities:

The school has eight students with 504's and six students with IEPs. Teachers and the principal meet with the school counselor and transition coordinator at least once a year to make sure the students' needs are being met based on student data, student feedback, and parent input. Students are provided with a variety of accommodations such as reading aloud, testing in a separate room, extended time, etc. One student uses an adaptive device to aid in her hearing and her teachers wear a microphone during instruction. Teachers also offer adaptive seating throughout each class for students with physical disabilities or who need to move more often. The IEP lead visits classrooms and has one on one interventions for our IEP students. Teachers offer online access to a variety of learning resources that the students can refer back to or work on at their own pace. Peer tutoring is used by students with disabilities during their targeted study halls. The guidance counselor and college liaison work with students on self-advocacy and putting a plan in place as they transition to college courses.

3d. English Language Learners:

With our large Hispanic population, BCECHS has put in place specific opportunities for ELLs in order to fully support their academic career. On campus, we have a full time interpreter for students. She works one on one with students throughout the year to assist them with navigating day to day tasks, coordinate with teachers and parents to keep them informed, and translate announcements so all populations are reached. The school also employs an ESL teacher who works with the students once a week to improve their reading, writing, and speaking skills so they may further integrate with their peers and teachers. The school uses data from WIDA screening and ACCESS tests to identify needs and modify instruction. Teachers provide bilingual resources for these sessions to help ensure students understand concepts and content. Many of our bilingual students who are upperclassmen have signed up and volunteered their free time to come into

classrooms and work hands on with some of our freshman and sophomore students to help them by translating and tutoring. Our school has set up a rotating schedule for these volunteers so that needs are being met in all subjects throughout the week. The school, with the help of our interpreter, has set up multiple family night programs for the parents of our ELL students to learn about their child's various academic and future needs. We have had parent nights to learn about PowerSchool with GPA, attendance, and grades, college visits to local campuses, speakers coming in to talk about scholarship opportunities and how to use the College Foundation of North Carolina to plan for college.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

Starting as freshman all students are placed into a school wide intervention pyramid which tracks their future interests, assessment data, and progress. This is used to collect data and determine which tier of our Multi-tiered System of Supports a student should be in and what supports need to be provided. Freshman students who are placed in our tier 2 for targeted intervention are placed in a student success and study skills class during their spring semester. The class implements a course of study on the Habits of Mind Institute to target students' social-emotional needs. Students learn about the attitudes and dispositions that help students become better thinkers and problem solvers who know what to do when the answers are not immediately apparent. Using this course the school is able to identify and provide specific support for students. Through this and our school counselor, students can be recommended to the school social worker, the school psychologist, or to Family Wellness, which is a private therapy company contracted with the district.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

BCECHS evaluated student-centered data and integrated a school improvement plan that prioritizes the development of a growth mindset as the key to student resilience and success. Staff members explicitly teach skills and habits that foster a growth mindset and recognize students who exemplify these attributes through monthly grade-level nominations. These skills motivate students and create a uniform and positive vocabulary that promotes perseverance through this rigorous program. Staff provides SEL check-ins with all students through formative assessments and one-on-one meetings with students who are struggling or at risk. Targeted freshmen study skills classes teach Habits of the Mind to enhance academic and emotional growth and provide skills and support to fill gaps and promote success.

BCECHS has a comprehensive approach to supporting students' career and college goals, including one on one planning with the guidance counselor and college liaison, as well as courses that prepare students for life after high school. In these courses, students learn about post secondary options, complete modules related to life skills in Everfi, and practice professional communications. As students proceed through this program, motivation toward post-secondary planning is applauded as staff posts incoming college acceptance announcements on a bulletin board to celebrate post secondary plans as they charter their future collegiate courses.

Connection between students and staff builds motivation and engagement and fosters a positive learning environment. In the recruitment of applicants, staff and students visit the local middle schools to share their experiences and build rapport. Faculty and staff strive to be visible across campus, beginning with greeting students as they arrive and throughout the day. The Student Government Association (SGA) plans and sponsors staff-student events such as volleyball and kickball tournaments that build relationships in the school community. Spring and fall socials at the community college and after-school clubs keep underclassmen and upperclassmen connected. BCECHS hosts an eSports team and provides opportunities for students to participate in student government, greenhouse club, prom committee, book club, service club, art club, fitness club, math club, and yearbook club. Partnerships with local private and charter schools provide opportunities for students to participate in sports.

Literacy, academic, and social development intertwine through shared writing forums where students share poetry and reflective responses that build connection, provide personal expression for the writers and invoke empathy for the listeners.

BCECHS uses an evidence-based positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) framework to maintain a school-wide focus on positive social and emotional behaviors; these expectations are posted throughout campus. The campus-wide expectations stress the importance of respect, responsibility, kindness, and integrity for all staff and students. Faculty and staff enforce these expectations by praising positive behaviors and providing correction and consequences for negative behaviors. Staff models these expectations, and students follow their examples.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Parental and community partnerships build collaboration that supports and underpins student success and future preparation. BCECHS initiates engagement with families through summer meetings and first-semester orientation and continues with biquarterly progress reports. Teachers identify and monitor at-risk students, providing academic and emotional interventions and eliciting family support. As students proceed in their program, family and graduate meetings with administration, teachers, the school counselor, and the community college liaison ensure students and families understand various educational pathways and college planning, while ensuring additional support for first-generation college students.

The increased enrollment of Hispanic students provides challenges and prompts strategic planning to bridge language and cultural gaps. The acquisition of a school interpreter helped ensure every family understands

all written and oral school communication. Monthly Hispanic family outreach sessions provide support for families. Survey data drives session content and elicits community involvement. Local representatives from the health department and community college financial aid representatives provide need-based resources for families concerning adolescent mental health and the college application process.

Resources for families include social media outreach on school Facebook and Twitter pages, all-call programs, and the Alertus mobile application to disseminate pertinent school communication and promote engagement with all families. A school website posts announcements, resources, online payment options, and Family Academy resources that help families understand course credit requirements, how to calculate GPA and grading calculations, and college planning through CFNC. The Family Academy also informs and educates parents on testing, grading, scheduling, and school policies. Through a Parent Technology Night staff helps parents learn how to log into PowerSchool, Google Classroom, and Blackboard to stay informed of student progress, monitor absences, and encourage student success.

As a Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS), partnerships with community colleges, universities, businesses, and industry are embedded into instructional programs. Through our Beaufort County Community College partnership, we work with local law enforcement, health care professionals, business owners, and skilled trade professionals to provide courses with authentic learning opportunities to equip students to participate in the local job market. These opportunities include associate degree programs and vocational training in welding, plumbing, nursing, cosmetology, basic law enforcement, automotive repair, and HVAC. Students gain exposure to authentic engagement through job shadowing opportunities and guest speakers from various local businesses and governmental organizations. The community college hosts career and job fairs with representatives and industry partners who provide valuable guidance toward future planning. We partner with community colleges and universities to offer career and college pathways and additional training once students graduate from our program. Armed forces recruiters visit upperclassmen to provide information on military enrollment options. SGA-sponsored school service projects such as a food pantry and clothes closet help meet the needs of students and community members while building a service-oriented culture across the campus.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Supporting and encouraging professional growth and development is a core philosophy of Beaufort County Early College High School. Forty-four percent (4 out of 9) of our teachers are National Board Certified (two are currently renewing their certification). BCECHS has a National Board Certified teacher in each of its four curriculum departments. Four faculty members have Master's degrees and two have Doctoral degrees. Additionally, two faculty members are working on advanced degrees.

Professional development extends beyond personal educational goals. The BCECHS approach to professional development is built upon the Professional Learning Cycle and Instructional Core framework. The school improvement team is the principal decision-making body for professional development. As a small school, all teachers and staff participate in SIT and MTSS meetings. The school improvement team analyzes student data and discusses student and grade level needs to identify specific, targeted professional development to assist teachers in delivering rigorous instruction to students leading to positive student achievement. Professional development focuses on powerful practices designed to improve student academic performance such as improving student reading comprehension through the use of metacognitive markers, teacher questioning techniques that emphasize proper wait time, effective use of scaffolding, integration of technology, and the development of higher level critical thinking skills.

The school's instructional coach/instructional technology leader attends monthly training sessions and provides school-wide training as well as one-on-one training in instructional strategies aligned with the district instructional improvement plan. All teachers participate in professional development and participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) at the school and district level. The faculty is trained in effective use of technology, Instructional Rounds, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, Data Analysis, Learning Walks, Observation and Feedback which develop strong instructional practices that contribute to increased instructional rigor and college-ready students.

Teachers participate in district workshops and state and national conferences as attendees and presenters. Attendance is based on personal desire as well as school and district goals. BCECHS teachers frequently provide professional development to faculty members and other teachers throughout the district, providing teachers with instructional tools and innovative practices intended to increase student engagement and academic success.

The administrator attends monthly professional development at the district level, networks with other principals, shares best practices and initiatives, encourages site visits, and promotes professional development opportunities among her staff. The administrator provides guidance and direction, based upon data analysis, in the implementation of systematic best practices and instructional strategies which have repeatedly produced measurable growth in teachers and students.

Professional development is constantly being evaluated for effectiveness in improving classroom instruction, and student achievement. All professional development is intentional, monitored and revised as needed based upon teacher input, school surveys, state performance measures and EVAAS (Education Value Added Assessment System) data.

4. School Leadership:

“Collaborative” defines the leadership philosophy of Beaufort County Early College High School. The principal involves the faculty in decision-making. Collaborative decision making occurs at all levels: Department meetings; Professional Learning Communities; School Improvement Team; and the school Curriculum Council. Teachers and staff contribute to the decision-making process on a regular basis. BCECHS is a small school. All faculty function as educational leaders. Based on the annual NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey, 100% of BCECHS teachers report that they feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them, are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction, are assessed objectively, have a shared vision, and are provided effective leadership at the school by the SIT Team. This percentage is significantly higher than responses in the rest of the district and the state.

Collaborative decision making and problem solving extends beyond our school. Teachers have the opportunity, and are encouraged, to develop leadership skills as well as showcase their instructional knowledge and expertise through involvement in district wide initiatives and programs as well as state level conferences. English, Math, Science and Social Studies teachers from the school actively participated, often assuming leadership roles, in developing district pacing guides, common assessments, and curriculum development. The school’s English and Social Studies teachers assumed key roles in the district curriculum adoption process for English and Social Studies. The process lasted 18 months and concluded with presentations to the school board.

The school has four teachers on the district curriculum council, one of whom serves on the administrative curriculum council. . The district council, as well as the BCECHS curriculum council, focuses on analysis of student and teacher needs, problem solving, feasible solutions and effective instructional strategy implementation which benefits all teachers and students. The focus is always on powerful teaching practices, rigorous instruction, and high expectations for teachers and students which results in the creation of a safe and dynamic learning environment. Our teachers not only share their expertise with others but hold themselves and their peers accountable for enhanced instructional practice and professional growth.

The administrator utilizes and shares data with the faculty which leads to thoughtful, reflective, and analytical decision making regarding collaborative problem solving and solution generation. This has empowered the staff to be proactive in the decision-making at the school. As a result, the goals of the school, instructional strategies, and professional development are targeted specifically to the needs of our students and teachers.

The school improvement team is an integral component of school leadership. All faculty participate in SIT meetings. Parents, student representatives from the student government association and a representative from the district office provide input to the decision-making process during the monthly meetings. The input from various stakeholders, along with student performance data, is used to modify, continue, or implement

new instructional initiatives, goals, or professional development. Involvement of all stakeholders ensures reflective, inclusive, data driven decision-making and best practices which continues to develop college and career ready young adults.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

BCECHS strives to respect, recognize, and value diversity in the classroom and throughout the school community. The school has launched a program specifically aimed at supporting Hispanic students and families in their journey to explore colleges and careers. As part of this program, the school has a full time interpreter who works closely with Hispanic families to ensure they understand school policies, procedures, and requirements. We hold bilingual events outside school hours to provide parents and families with information about transcripts, applying to college, scholarships, and community resources. Our school's mission is to provide equity to first generation college goers and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. To that aim, we meet yearly in one on one sessions with students and their families to talk through their postsecondary pathways and provide them information. In classrooms, students examine global issues and perspectives from a variety of cultural perspectives by reading a wide range of texts-including primary sources- and student-selected research projects. English classrooms are filled with a diverse array of independent reading options representing a wide range of cultures, identities, and backgrounds. Students are provided ample opportunities to share their background, beliefs, values, and culture through oral presentations, writers showcase celebrations, and class discussion. Teacher SEL check-ins invite students to share information about their culture, their lives at home, and their identities privately with the teacher. Our PBIS matrix reinforces expectations regarding treating all with respect and kindness.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The school utilizes the Framework for Powerful Results Professional Learning Cycle. This framework guides much of what the staff does as a school. It requires that staff members examine school and student data to determine areas of student need. Based on an examination of data, staff identify an instructional target or strategy that will be a focus schoolwide. The curriculum team then researches powerful practices to meet the identified need and provides professional development on this practice to the school staff. The staff reads and discusses professional resources on these practices to deepen their understanding before participating in a period of practice in their own classrooms, during which time they practice implementing this new instructional strategy with their students. Following this safe practice period, teachers observe each other in the use of the strategy and provide feedback on those observations. The staff meets to review student work and data to monitor the effectiveness of the new strategy and to make adjustments as needed. The staff continues to monitor progress in order to decide if further adjustments and actions are needed or if a new instructional focus should be adopted.

This framework has, indeed, been powerful for the school. Through this process, BCECHS has implemented strategies to improve critical thinking and questioning, to foster a growth mindset among students, to improve reading engagement and performance, and to improve student constructed response writing. At the end of each of these cycles, the focus strategy is continued even as a new strategy is added, allowing teachers to become experts and implementing many impactful strategies in their classrooms. The school has continued a focus on growth mindset by recognizing a student each month from each grade level who has exhibited growth mindset characteristics; by beginning the year with class discussions and activities about growth mindset; and by having students reflect at each progress report on their own progress while setting personal goals. To improve reading, the faculty incorporates reading daily across the curriculum and helps students use metacognitive markers to improve and monitor comprehension and critical thinking about texts in each content area. The school has built an explicit focus on critical thinking, teaching students about the different levels of thinking and purposefully planning lessons that incorporate many higher order thinking activities while simultaneously teaching students to question texts, assumptions, and ideas in critical ways. The staff developed a common expectation for constructed response answers and each teacher explicitly shared those expectations with students in their content area. The staff has developed content specific rubrics for both reading and writing strategy implementation that has helped to foster consistency schoolwide.