

U.S. Department of Education
2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[] Public or [X] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Bi-Cultural Day School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2186 High Ridge Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Stamford State CT Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 06903-3401

County Fairfield

Telephone (203) 329-2186 Fax _____

Web site/URL http://BCDS.org E-mail office@bcds.org

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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*n/a n/a n/a E-mail office@bcds.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Connecticut Association of Independent Schools Tel. _____ (860) 572-2950

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. David Pitkoff
(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.

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

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, write N/A in the space.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

1. 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. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. 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 and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 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.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
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.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	5	6	11
K	13	19	32
1	20	14	34
2	7	20	27
3	16	14	30
4	21	15	36
5	15	13	28
6	15	20	35
7	22	13	35
8	21	21	42
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	155	155	310

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 100 % White
 - 0 % 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 2015 – 2016 school year: 1%

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, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	2
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	334
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.006
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Hebrew, Russian, Spanish, Yiddish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2 %
6 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1 %
Total number students who qualify: 4

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %
28 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 0 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 2 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 10 Other Health Impaired
- 10 Specific Learning Disability
- 6 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	5
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	37
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. 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 15:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **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 2016.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 1987

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

Bi-Cultural is a community day school embracing students and families across the Jewish spectrum and inspired by a deep respect for all family traditions.

PART III – SUMMARY

Teaching Minds, Reaching Hearts

Bi-Cultural is a Modern Orthodox community day school embracing all Jewish families located in scenic Stamford, Connecticut. We provide an exemplary, innovative, and inspiring Jewish and general education, while igniting a love of learning that nurtures the unique potential within each child. A dual language school, students are immersed in both English and Hebrew from Pre-K enabling students to develop full oral, reading and writing proficiency in 2 languages as well as an appreciation for cultural diversity. The Talmud teaches us that “each child brings his or her own blessing into the world.” At the heart of the Bi-Cultural philosophy is our commitment to educating the “whole child” and developing the whole person. Our collaborative classroom model fosters a respectful atmosphere enabling students to explore new ideas and become confident risk takers. Whether athletic or artistic, musical or social, intellectual or any combination of the above, our staff is deeply committed to finding the “just-right” way to capture a child’s imagination and to cultivate each child’s special gifts.

The school was founded by a group of visionaries with Mr. Walter Shuchatowitz, as founding principal in 1956 opening with 10 students. Bi-Cultural’s reputation as a proven and progressive leader in secular and Judaic studies has consistently garnered national attention. Among many accomplishments, BCDS holds the proud distinction of receiving a citation from the U.S. Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon School in 1987, the distinguished Jerusalem Prize from the State of Israel, recognizing BCDS as a world-class institution, and most recently, the top award in the 2015 National Jewish Education Innovation Challenge for development of a replicable, integrated educational model for making Judaic Studies relevant to middle school students.

Today, over 310 students in grades Pre-K through eighth grade enjoy small classes, experienced and dedicated teachers, and outstanding facilities on a 13 acre campus. Within a school culture of rich professional development, we offer a robust and differentiated student support program and extensive extra-curricular offerings. With cutting edge technology and a Makerspace, students have ample opportunities to engage in S.T.E.A.M. literacy necessary for the 21st century. Now in it’s 61st year, BCDS consistently stands at the forefront of best practices in education.

Learning Lab

At Bi-Cultural, our comprehensive and systematic approach encourages students to work through a process of inquiry, investigation and integration. Tapping into student individual interests, our youngsters learn how to develop questions, make observations, gather evidence and conduct research as they connect, analyze and interpret real-world concepts. Our classrooms are rich in curricular content that is meaningful for students because it is rooted in overarching essential questions, coupled with differentiated learning environments where a wealth of specific and targeted instructional approaches are offered to meet a variety of student needs across the academic spectrum.

Experiential Learning Within and Beyond the Classroom

Experiences within and beyond the classroom abound at Bi-Cultural. Outdoor learning centers bridge theory and practice bringing classroom concepts to life. Community engagement and leadership are core values. From a student’s earliest days at Bi-Cultural, the Jewish values of chesed (kindness) and tikkun olam (improving the world) are part of the program. Our students learn explicitly about exemplary character traits and put them into practice by volunteering in local food pantries, visiting the sick and fostering lasting friendships with seniors. Community involvement and social action initiatives help Bi-Cultural children gain an appreciation for all the blessings in their lives and provide the opportunity to experience the joy and importance of helping others and doing good deeds.

Our Commitment to Student Improvement

In a Bi-Cultural classroom, every child’s progress is closely monitored to ensure continued growth and improvement. In all subject areas, numerous formal, informal and performance-based assessments are administered throughout the school year and utilized to inform each student’s educational program. Our

child study process pulls together integrated teams of teachers and specialists to design individualized education programs for students who benefit from instructional support or enrichment. Our small classes facilitate a highly individualized and differentiated learning environment enabling young minds to stretch, grow and flourish.

A Staff and Philosophy That Helps Every Student Grow

Embedded in the instructional fabric of Bi-Cultural Day School is a staff dedicated to nourishing, molding and shaping the character of our students. Modeling kindness, enthusiasm and optimism serves as a vehicle for youngsters to grasp challenging concepts and navigate a multitude of learning experiences. There is a Hebrew Proverb that states, “A child is not a vessel to be filled, but a lamp to be lit.” We pride ourselves on the quality of our faculty and their passionate abilities to ignite our children and inspire them to soar to new heights. It is within this firm foundation that our students become successes in our classrooms, our communities and imprint a positive impact on our world.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The core curriculum at Bi-Cultural Day School is a multi-layered design that provides unique opportunities for student growth, engagement and enrichment. This begins in our early childhood program and extends through 8th grade. We have developed a curriculum design embracing experiences that awaken curiosity. Through music, rhyme, storytelling and games, our pre-k students tap into critical thinking in all disciplines. Children learn through play as they develop social interactions, language skills, problem solving, and creative ideas.

Math, in the early childhood program, showcases specific activities designed to promote an awareness of number sense, spatial relationships, patterns, math fluency, logical reasoning and enhancing their application to real world problems. Math lends itself to the Project Based Learning model where students have an opportunity to explore concepts that require a deep examination of the curriculum. Through reflection, benchmark assessments and curricular evaluations, teachers have found the quality of student work, accuracy, engagement and overall student progress, during the PBL process to be significantly higher. An example of PBL success is with the 5th grade Virtual Occupation Project where students demonstrate understanding of balancing a budget. Another is our 6th grade Learning by Design Project where students utilized skills to design blueprints for an addition to our school campus. Students also conducted a feasibility study to measure the cost effectiveness of their design. The marriage of these projects with data collection on student skill acquisition is a key component of the success of our math programs. 90% of BCDS 3rd-7th grade students scored above the national average for reading and math on standardized tests. Recently, our 6th grade math team, earned 3rd place at the New England Math League Competition.

Our ELA programs offer similar standards of excellence throughout the grade levels. Students are given opportunities for purposeful writing across the curriculum. With both formative and summative assessments, students are given the tools and strategies for being effective communicators. Two of our students were chosen from 1,700 entries to be published in the 2016 CT Student Writers Magazine that honors excellence in writing by students from kindergarten through high school. Additionally, ten of BCDS students were winners in the Stamford Ferguson Library Literary Competition, largest number of student winners from one school. BCDS has notably dominated this competition for the past 5 years.

Our science curriculum is designed to have students work through the scientific method with hands-on experiments that stimulate thinking and promote inquiry, investigation and integration. A state-of-the-art science lab packed with plants and living critters that children love to explore, and process-oriented projects in which children study the scientific method and the foundation of experimental design. Students have the opportunity to incorporate STEM methodology. The importance of applications and methodologies are incorporated across the curriculum in school projects such as the fifth grade “Invention Convention,” and the middle school Science Fair. Three of our 7th grade students received honors in CT State Science Fair. We recently added a fully equipped Makerspace to our campus providing a platform for students to test their theories. This launched the school into the forefront of this modern education movement which blends learning innovation with cutting-edge technology and hands-on discovery.

Our social studies curriculum is no exception to our high standards of excellence as we have made tremendous strides in creating developmentally appropriate and meaningful student connections to economics, geography, history and civics. Throughout our school students work to identify everything from their place within the community to a complex look at world cultures, US history and how our past affects the future of our global community. Our curriculum extends far beyond the text book. Guest speakers and performers frequent our classrooms and stage. Outdoor learning centers bridge theory and practice by bringing classroom concepts to life. Visiting the local food pantry enables our students to appreciate the blessing of nourishment and performing for our seniors inspires joy and meaningful connectivity in our community and civic responsibilities. Our students tour the Connecticut State Capitol, travel to historic Philadelphia and take a seat at our nation’s government in Washington, DC. Our field trips tap into diverse

modalities providing opportunities to engage intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially and physically in the learning process and make curricular connections.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Bi-Cultural Day School focuses on teaching the whole child. With that in mind, we have other curriculum areas that offer balanced instructional time, coupled with acquisition of foreign language. Bi-Cultural is in compliance with the program's foreign language requirements. In fact, we are a dual language school from Pre-K through 8th grade! Our children graduate with fluency in Hebrew literacy and the oral arena.

Our addition of the BCDS Makerspace, makes us better equipped to provide opportunities for students to work with STEAM. The Makerspace Lab is a unique space that encourages discovery, collaboration and creation; melding DIY methods with modern technology. Every part of the lab space is devoted to a distinct method of tinkering, from a full-scale Lego wall to a pegboard of traditional tools such as hammers and screwdrivers to a corner for woodworking to a bank of sewing machines and quilting supplies. In addition to tools and building materials, the lab features a new 3D printer attached to a standalone PC loaded with the most current 3D software. Students in the middle school were given an opportunity to work in the Makerspace Engineering Lab during their elective times. This is also available during the "Lunch and Learn" component of the day where students in grades 3-8 register to work in the lab during lunch enrichment time. Over 197 students have worked in the lab within the first year of existence.

Our school wide art program has expanded as well as we now offer a more in depth study of fine arts in the middle school. Students not only learn the elements of art and principles of design, but they look to utilize these concepts in their own pieces. Line, shape, form, value, space, color and texture become more than just vocabulary terms in our art program. They become a tool used to discuss, analyze and create their own pieces of art. Students work with charcoal, clay, pastels, oil and water-based paint to create their masterpieces. The importance of art is recognized and valued throughout the school. School wide art shows display student work and pay tribute to their efforts in creating such masterpieces.

Our school places a large emphasis on learning about technology and coding. In grades 1-3, students learn coding by solving a series of puzzles through the use of both visual and text-based languages, which increase in difficulty throughout the year. These puzzles set the foundation for learning basic programming concepts. Fourth graders build upon those basic skills by creating their own video games. Middle school students work on larger-scope projects, such as creating their own websites in text-based languages such as HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. Coding is an important, high-level skill that teaches thought-processing, persistence, and problem-solving skills. Students learn to think through a problem, stay focused if it doesn't work the first time, and learn how edit their own work to find and correct their own mistakes. These skills, vital to coding, also apply to everything we do in our daily lives. Being a Google classroom school provides students a platform to stay connected with the lesson in a way that extends beyond the classroom. Students have access to links, videos and teacher feedback through their Google Classroom portal making learning more accessible for each child. With the support of Smart Boards in each classroom, individual devices in the middle school, school wide access to computers and iPads, our digital natives are equipped for life in the 21st century.

Physical education classes are a favorite among our students and help in the development of a well-rounded student population. Students demonstrate abilities in gross motor movements along with the principles and strategies for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Each student participates in physical education class twice a week. Our "BCDS Bobcat" student athletes have garnered recognition for their extracurricular efforts in various team leagues. Aside from their work in physical fitness challenges, playing basketball, volleyball, soccer, baseball and the many other activities, physical education class is a time where students work on team work, sportsmanship and communication skills with their peers. These are not only necessary for maintaining a healthy lifestyle, but also life skills for the future.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Our Special Services department includes a wide array of programs and services designed to meet the needs of our learners who require an individualized educational approach. We have a Child Study Process in place which enables teachers, administrators and parents to identify learning needs and partner together in crafting a plan for academic, social and emotional success. Our team includes resource specialists in general and Judaic studies subject areas, Ortin Gillingham trained teachers, a school psychologist, a speech and language pathologist, executive functioning integration and occupational therapy services. Student identification is systematic and incorporates formal and informal observations and assessments from the school and outside providers. Students are met at their ability level and taught strategies to reach and exceed standards. The goal of the program is to set up a structure enabling students to progress in their individual academic trajectory gradually releasing supports as evidenced by educational metrics analysis, performance assessment and observation. Most students exit our program before 8th grade! Our program includes concrete methods and criteria for assessing progress and achievement of outcomes and allows for a calculation of how much progress is achieved.

As one parent said, “My child came to Bi-Cultural as 7th grader who could not read. He is dyslexic and severely learning disabled. Within the first week, the amazing team of caring educators at BCDS immediately put an educational plan in place for my child which included multiple sessions of one-on-one reading support with an Ortin Gillingham specialist, pragmatic language with the speech and language pathologist, emotional counseling with the psychologist and small group instruction for language arts and Hebrew. Before Bi-Cultural, my child had no friends and lacked confidence. In just one year, thankfully my child progressed significantly in reading, made friends and gained the confidence to overcome obstacles. Thank you, for believing in my child and helping him regain his love of learning.”

Metrics drive our student support services. We include concrete methods and criteria for assessing progress and achievement of outcomes. We also allow for a calculation of how much progress is achieved. In doing this we have utilized our SMART goals system. (S –Specific M –Measurable A –Attainable R –Relevant T–Time Bound.) We set our performance criterion examples to be measured within one of the below measurements: Within 5 minutes, 3 out of 4 trials, 4 times weekly, 2 times daily and for 5 consecutive sessions. An example of how we set a benchmark goal would be as follows: “In 36 instructional weeks, Mark will solve 35 multiplication math facts correctly per minute, as measured by 3rd grade Computer Assisted Program data.” The benchmarks set are measured by the following examples:

Benchmark 1: By the end of the 1st marking period of 2014, Mark will solve 20 multiplication math facts correctly, as measured by 3rd grade Computer Assisted Program data with once a week instruction.

Benchmark 2: By the end of the 2nd marking period of 2014, Mark will solve 35 multiplication math facts correctly, as measured by 3rd grade Computer Assisted Program data with once a week instruction.

In addition to an Ortin Gillingham specialist, a total of 2 full time employee positions are dedicated to curricular support in general studies and a total of 1 full time employee position is dedicated to Hebrew language support. This support is more explicit than the level of differentiation administered by classroom teachers of guided groups in math, reading or Hebrew language. During these hours the specialists teach students in small groups or on-on-one. Middle school resource room and middle school study hall are offered daily. Support staff are expected to help teachers modify and differentiate assignments and assist students in issues related to organization and executive functioning. We measure success by creating benchmark goals as part of an overall student individualized education plan and monitor and adjust to ensure steady growth using metrics, performance based assessment and teacher observation. We also provide services for students who need enrichment. This structure enables the student to learn with an instructor at an enriched academic level in a blended learning environment. We measure success by observation and standardized assessments. All assessments are offered to maintain high levels of achievement and diminish achievement gaps.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Our school works very hard to engage students in meaningful lessons that motivate them to embrace experiences that awaken curiosity. We strive to empower students in finding ways that they can make a difference not only in our school, but in the world around them. Our teachers are widely noted for their endeavors for academic engagement, but our focus is on teaching the whole child. We also work to tap into the interests of the students and make learning meaningful, valuable and important to each child. We recently had a second grade student speak to her teacher about her ideas for water conservation. The teacher not only encouraged the idea, but helped the student launch a social media campaign raising awareness for her concern.

The standards for academic excellence is a bar that we continue to raise. With our performances in academic competitions such as E2K, New England Math League, Stamford Literary Competition and many others, we have secured our spot in the community as being a premier center for Jewish education. The environment that we have created for our students is one that encourages creativity, supports student initiatives and champions positive student relations.

To balance the tremendous support we give for academic and social growth, we also value the importance of emotional growth. Our school psychologist is just one of the ways we foster a caring and nurturing environment for student emotional growth. She has her finger on the pulse of the school with her daily “lunch bunch” meetings that give students a chance to connect and feel supported. We have an advisory program that offer students time to meet and share academic, social or emotional concerns with teachers. Study halls have also been a forum for students who need additional support, to seek out the help of a teacher. The school climate is one that promotes positive growth and success for the students as well as the teachers.

At Bi-Cultural Day School, teachers are recognized as experts in the field and have a wealth of ideas for us to continue to be trailblazers in education. Colleagues are quick to support new teacher-generated ideas as they see the incredible value it has for our school community. Several members of our faculty have presented at national conferences, board meetings and “faculty-share” opportunities. The support at this school is vital, vibrant and very much resonates throughout the halls of Bi-Cultural.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The partnership between school and home is vital to the overall success of any educational program. However, the partnership between the school family and the community is one that is necessary for growing empathic, young individuals who will evolve into our leaders of tomorrow.

Being a Jewish day school, one of the founding principles is to engage students in meaningful religious, cultural and chesed experiences as we strive to deepen their connection to Judaism and the Jewish people. This is carried out through our BCDS Chesed club where students work to provide funds, materials and opportunities to those in need. Our students take ownership and great pride in their efforts as it makes a tremendous impact on the lives of others. Currently, our students are working to collect toys for “David’s Treasure Tree Closet,” at the Stamford Hospital. This program was set up in memory of a child from a former BCDS parent to brighten the days of children in the hospital. Our students also work with the “Ohel” organization which services children (and adults) who have been touched by various personal challenges. Ohel has a foster care program, an adolescent home, as well as many other programs. Each class in grades K through 8 is paired with a child who will benefit from our work. In our community, our entire 8th grade is also heavily involved with the “Friendship Circle.” This organization was founded on the idea that within each person is a soul, regardless of any limitations that may surround it. Each year, our 8th grade makes meaningful and often life-long connections to these children. We have found a profoundly reciprocal effect on both our students and the “Friendship Circle” community. Through their efforts, students feel a deeper connection to each other, to the school and to the community.

The idea of “school improvement” begins within the students themselves. When actively involved in community service, our students are better equipped to target other areas that need improvement on a macrocosmic level. Our school offers community learning opportunities with our weekly Torah workshops, parent workshops, Special “Drop off Days,” and parent Ambassador programs. Our teachers are encouraged to take advantage of local workshops, conferences and partnership with Yeshiva University to bring back exciting ideas to further enrich and enhance our school. We are proud of how families in our community rally around the growth we experience as a school.

3. Professional Development:

The professional development approach at Bi-Cultural is rich and robust. Considered a leader of innovation and excellence in the Jewish Day School world, Bi-Cultural is at the forefront of progressive educational pedagogy and methodology. This past year alone, 2 of our middle school teachers were selected as presenters at the national Association of Middle Level Education conference (AMLE), 1 teacher represented our school professionally at the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools forum, and 1 teacher was selected for the highly competitive, fully funded Connecticut Writer’s Project summer mentor program. In the Judaic Studies arena, our school was chosen as the only middle school in the United States to partner with an Israeli-based approach called “Ayeka,” which harnesses teachers with “tools to breathe life into Jewish text study to enable a personally relevant, meaningful, and life-impacting experience.” We are the proud recipient of the 2015 Jewish Education Innovation Challenge award (JEIC), an organization that seeks new educational models that are replicable aimed at reigniting passion in Jewish Education.

True to our mission, we endeavor to offer a holistic approach balancing individualized teacher interests with initiatives the central administration identifies as necessary to propel the organization forward as an institution. Both elements are critical for student success and academic achievement. Teachers are encouraged to attend off-site workshops for inspiration and new ideas, with the expectation of producing a concrete and systematic implementation plan. Most recently, we had a “staff share” day in which 6 teachers prepared and ran workshops for the whole faculty enabling all our teachers to get a glimpse of the professional learning that had taken place throughout the year. We even took a staff field trip to a children’s museum to help us re-imagine the possibilities of our early childhood program... can’t wait for our upcoming trip to the Math Museum in NYC to explore hidden nuggets for our homegrown Makerspace! In house staff development days are dedicated to learning together, examining issues which affect the entire school and creating action plans to address both school and student improvement. Such initiatives have included various curricular objectives and reviews, Learning by Design, and Thinking Maps, to name a few.

If funds allowed, our dream would be to grow a staff development coaching model enabling our teachers to learn from peers before, during and after lessons. It is our belief that this structure would serve as a problem solving mechanism, encourage reflection and foster collaboration.

4. School Leadership:

The overarching philosophy of the Bi-Cultural leadership team is overseeing our carefully crafted, shared mission and partnering with students, parents, faculty, students and community to “make it happen.” The Head of School embodies and articulates the mission of the school and serves as the centralizing figure within the school and community. She oversees all departments in the academic and operational arenas, is responsible for financial matters and is accountable to the Board of Trustees for overall management of the school and for developing new initiatives.

The next layer of leadership is comprised of 3 associate principals for elementary and middle school, and one associate principal dedicated to early childhood. The Associate Principals for General and Judaic Studies oversee all aspects of secular/Judaic subjects, support and evaluate staff, manage professional development, and works together to identify points of integration between the General and Judaic departments. The third Associate Principal functions in both a supervisory and operational capacity. In addition to supporting and evaluating staff, he creates and runs the master schedule, manages the facility,

and oversees discipline. The Associate Principal for early childhood not only manages the early childhood department, but also is integral in our admissions process. Collectively, the members of the educational cabinet are good listeners, but individually bring unique skills sets to the leadership team providing the staff, students and parent body with a balanced presentation. The team meets twice a week to troubleshoot potential concerns and shape school success.

Let's use the unit of Holocaust Studies to illustrate this snapshot. In grade 7, our students study the Holocaust in depth and experience a multi-dimensional unit to comprehend this period of history. They read books, create original works of writing and art, and commemorate the memories of lives lost through a student written performance incorporating Hebrew, history, music, dance and technology. As an extension, our students collaborate with the community at large and are active participants in the ceremony which attracts over 400 people. Through this intergenerational dialogue, the children are immersed in personal stories of survival, learn how to conduct themselves respectfully in serious matters, and practice respect. Both the children and the seniors have come to enjoy, love and cherish these encounters. Bi-Cultural Day School is rooted in the community and is truly the heartbeat of the community. The leadership team is committed to the success of all our students both within and beyond the school day.

PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At Bi-Cultural, we know academic excellence is a differentiated process, not a “one size fits all” product. We believe in teaching to the “whole child,” and that children are most successful in a warm, nurturing and joyful learning environment. Each child is celebrated as unique and is educated according to his personal interests and individual educational trajectory. To ensure a balanced approach, we have developed a complex system of pathways that enable every child to achieve a level of excellence through a multi-dimensional approach. Cross-curricular units of study and coordination among academic areas enable enriched learning opportunities and deeper learning experiences. Under the guidance of integrated teaching teams, students pursue academic exploration and leadership opportunities designed to sharpen intellect, expand skill base, build community responsibility and deepen Jewish identity.

PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

1. Non-public school association(s): Jewish

Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. Select the primary association first.

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status? Yes X No

3. What is the educational cost per student? \$21715
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$10672

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 23%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 47%

PART VIII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova, Third Edition

Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: McGraw Hill, CTB

Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	636.2
Number of students tested	40
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova, Third Edition

Grade: 4

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: McGraw Hill, CTB

Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	673.2
Number of students tested	31
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova, Third Edition

Grade: 5

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: McGraw Hill, CTB

Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	681.4
Number of students tested	36
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova, Third Edition

Grade: 6

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: McGraw Hill, CTB

Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	719.6
Number of students tested	37
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova, Third Edition

Grade: 7

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: McGraw Hill, CTB

Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	707.7
Number of students tested	41
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova, Third Edition

Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: McGraw Hill, CTB

Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	649.2
Number of students tested	40
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova, Third Edition

Grade: 4

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: McGraw Hill, CTB

Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	671.5
Number of students tested	31
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova, Third Edition

Grade: 5

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: McGraw Hill, CTB

Scores are reported here as:

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	679.3
Number of students tested	36
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova, Third Edition

Grade: 6

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: McGraw Hill, CTB

Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	704.5
Number of students tested	37
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova, Third Edition

Grade: 7

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: McGraw Hill, CTB

Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	692.1
Number of students tested	41
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: