U.S. Department of Education
2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Pender Early College High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 100 Industrial Drive
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Burgaw   State NC   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 28425-5081

County Pender County

Telephone (910) 362-7925   Fax
Web site/URL
https://sites.google.com/a/pender.k12.nc.us/pechs/   E-mail christie_brown@pender.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. Steven Hill_____E-mail_steven_hill@pender.k12.nc.us_____
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Pender County School District   Tel. (910) 259-2187

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 Cindy Fontana
(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 electronic signature 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 2021 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 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.

5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.

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. 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 current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

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

1. Number of schools in the district   9 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
    (per district designation):   5 Middle/Junior high schools
                                            4 High schools
                                            0 K-12 schools

                                            18 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not 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
    [X] Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2020 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 Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	20	35	55
10	24	34	58
11	16	34	50
12 or higher	20	48	68
Total Students	80	151	231

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   <u>0</u> % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school (if unknown, estimate): <u>0</u> % Asian
                                          <u>10</u> % Black or African American
                                          <u>20</u> % Hispanic or Latino
                                          <u>0</u> % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                          <u>70</u> % White
                                          <u>0</u> % 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 2019 - 2020 school year: <u><1</u>%

    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 *to* the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	1
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	243
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

    <u>Spanish</u>

    English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: <u>15</u> %

                                                                 <u>35</u> Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: <u>33</u> %

            Total number students who qualify: <u>77</u>

8. Students receiving special education services: <u>0</u> %

                                       <u>0</u> 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. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>0</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>0</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: <u>1</u>

10. 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.	0
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school 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   <u>26:1</u>

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	72%	76%	85%	92%	98%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	95%	95%	95%

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 2020.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	63
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	56%
Enrolled in a community college	21%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	10%
Joined the military or other public service	3%
Other	10%

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

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

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

Our staff will prepare students to have choices in the world by ensuring that every student reads, writes, thinks, and talks in every classroom every day.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

Pender Early College High School has operated on the hybrid model for the entire 2020-2021 school year. We assigned students to two cohorts. One cohort attended Monday and Tuesday, while the other cohort attended Wednesday and Thursday, with Friday being a remote learning day. The schedule was designed around the schedule of our partner school, Cape Fear Community College, because our students do not have college classes on Fridays.

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

There is an application process for all students desiring to attend Pender Early College High School.

Students will apply, either as a rising freshman or transfer from a traditional high school, for the upcoming fall semester. The applications for the next school year are available on our school website by December of each year.

PECHS holds recruitment sessions at all county middle schools, as well as a parent night in January. All applications are due in February to PECHS.

In March, interviews are held for all applicants and letters including their acceptance status are mailed.

PART III - SUMMARY

Pender Early College High School is not a traditional high school; instead, we are a school of choice. Students who attend PECHS will graduate in four or five years with a high school diploma and the opportunity to earn a two year associate's degree in conjunction with Cape Fear Community College with transferable credits to a four year university. Students also have the opportunity to earn diplomas, certificates, credentials and/or a terminal degree for which they may be eligible.

All students are required to complete the Comprehensive Academic Portfolio; CAP, which consists of the following four parts: Research paper, Presentation, Portfolio and Product. The Product includes a minimum of 150 volunteer community service hours, a 36 hour job shadowing/internship and participation in a minimum of four educational workshops/seminars or camps. We provide many educational opportunities to support students with career exploration including interest inventories, guest speakers, college tour field trips, film festival field trips etc. We have also provided multiple opportunities for students to attend virtual college tours with schools that offer their area of study for post graduate planning.

Our students do not participate in the AP program nor the IB program. Due to our academic schedule, it is not possible to have traditional sports, however PECHS has clubs during the week and students are encouraged to become involved with the various clubs, community service projects and organizations that PECHS and CFCC offer in addition to activities within their local communities; (due to COVID restrictions, volunteer service opportunities, and club activities have been extremely limited, and field trips have not been permitted) however club sponsors have most recently been providing club meetings via virtually. We also encourage students to share their personal interests especially if we do not currently have a club in which they are interested. For example, we have in the past had an Anime club, Tea club, Creative Writing club, Locker Room club, etc.

Encouraging students to express themselves and their interests by creating new clubs is a way for our students to positively interact with their peers outside of the academic class. Club time is also built into the school day so that transportation does not adversely affect a student's participation. The students we serve come from all areas of our large county; some students live over 45 minutes away from our camps, so having clubs built into the school day has generated more club participation.

The students whom we serve come from various backgrounds to include, college educated parents, first generation college students, as well as first generation high school students. As with any school we work closely with our students to prepare them for college courses. A built in study/tutoring program by teacher configured into our regular schedule for students to utilize to improve their understanding of course material, or complete missed assignments while a teacher is present to facilitate learning. This is called Wolf Lunch for our school. This opportunity is also available to our students at the college level through the community college's math and writing lab.

Each year, our testing coordinator reviews our grade 10 Pre-ACT scores (the state of NC pays for all public school sophomores to take the Pre-ACT and for all juniors to take the ACT) and meets with students to provide resources for them to improve specific subject test scores for their upcoming ACT. All juniors also take the PECHS ACT boot camp facilitated by our teachers/CDC/school counselor to provide specific subject area content, test taking strategies, and assist students in choosing colleges to receive their test scores. PECHS' small size allows for this excellent opportunity to be provided for our students at no cost to them.

In preparing students for writing no matter what subject or college course is being taken has been a school wide initiative. The TPEQEA, Topic, Point, Examples, Quotation, Elaboration, and Analysis writing format is what is currently recommended for academically and intellectually gifted students throughout the state of NC, but PEHCS knows that all of our students can benefit from this learning strategy.

The majority of PECHS' students opt to attend a four year college or university after earning their associate degree from CFCC, but there has been an increase in the number of students who choose to pursue a

terminal or technical degree after graduation. Some of our students also choose to enlist in the military. A vast number of both two and four year college programs, in addition to military options, are provided to students (outside of a COVID year) via face to face college and career fairs annually. These fairs are a great way for students to learn more about areas of study with which they have been matched on interest inventories. Additionally, CFCC host tours of specific programs for our students to learn more about specific programs of study they offer such as cosmetology, surgical tech, culinary, etc.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Students at PECHS follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and all high school classes are taught at the honors level. The student's coursework fulfills the North Carolina Future Ready requirements for high school graduation in addition to all requirements for admission to a North Carolina four-year public university. Students are dually enrolled with Cape Fear Community College and begin taking college level courses their freshman year. Upon high school graduation, they may also graduate with an Associate's Degree, certification, or college credits that are transferable to any public four-year college in North Carolina. These credentials are earned at no cost for our students.

Our school offers high school courses in English, mathematics, science, and social studies. All other courses are college courses offered on our campus or at a satellite campus upon which students are provided transportation. Students experience their first college class fall of their freshman year by taking an online College Transfer Success. This course is facilitated by a member of our high school teaching team and helps students examine time management, study skills, goal setting, communication, and diversity in order for them to be successful learners while taking both high school and college level classes.

As an Early College High School, we employ the research-based strategies found in the Common Instructional Framework model to guide our curriculum goals and instructional practices. The six core principles which mold our instruction are student collaboration, discussions for learning, meaningful feedback, questioning for learning, reading for learning, and writing for learning. These learner-centered components inspire our classroom mission of having every student to read, write, and talk daily in each class.

Technology is used schoolwide to aid in instruction and provide students the needed resources to access platforms and programs used for both high school and college courses. Canvas and Google Classroom are used to provide notes, assignments, simulations, and assessments while also allowing communication with teachers, collaboration with peers, and the ability for students to present and create products. Our school is 1:1 by providing laptops to students.

Students follow the pathway of taking four levels of English. They may opt to take a college level English to fulfil their last class requirement. Each level of English focuses on reading comprehension and writing skills that will be used in all high school and college classes. Research papers contribute to success in college classes by helping students develop analytical and technical writing skills. Text analysis to focus on character development, tone, and theme aid in critical thinking that is transferred across all genres of fiction and non-fiction reading. Students are given opportunities to broaden their world view by analyzing various points of view in texts and integrating diverse types of media analysis. A NC End of Course test is administered to students at the completion of English 2 to assess both their ability to read and analyze complex texts and to write clearly and coherently while supporting an opinion or demonstrating understanding of a topic.

Mathematics offers four courses in sequence and students may take a college level course for their final class. Themes for mathematics are interwoven and provide a blended approach that consists of learning Algebra, Geometry, Statistics, Data Analysis, & Trigonometry. Each class pursues an investigative approach with a focus on discovery learning and includes applications to the real world. Using this common core approach also focuses on helping students enhance their problem-solving and reasoning skills while recognizing how to utilize patterns and structure they see in any problem in order to reach a solution. It is the overall goal for each student to be as prepared for success in college-level math classes. Upon the completion of Math 1 and Math 3, students complete a NC End of Course test to demonstrate their understanding of problem solving, abstract and quantitative reasoning, use of mathematical tools, and ability to find and make use of structure.

The science curriculum consists of Earth and Environmental Science, Biology, and either Physical Science or Chemistry. Students may then take college science courses as electives as needed for their specific degree

plan or certification. Each course seeks to develop student's reasoning and problem solving abilities in order to help them succeed in college level science courses. By focusing on science content, science inquiry, and science literacy, along with scientific inquiry and experimental design, teachers challenge students to connect "what" is known in all content areas to "how" it is known. Teachers provide opportunities for students to question, research, and create solutions to scientific problems by reading, collaborating with peers, and creating written or visual products and models. Laboratory experiences provide opportunities to demonstrate how science is constant, historic, probabilistic, and replicable. Emphasis is placed on current scientific discoveries along with discussions centering various scientific debates and ethical ramifications. Students complete the NC End of Course test in Biology

Our social studies curriculum begins with World History then proceeds with Civics and Economics followed by American History 1 and American History 2. Students may take both American History classes as college courses. Each class focuses on essay writing with scaffolding the writing process to teach students structure in order to be successful with their college level social studies courses and later at the university level. Students use college level texts and focus on primary sources to learn how to cite evidence for research papers and discussions. The overarching goal of the social studies content is for students to develop relevant enduring understanding of current world issues and relate them to their historical, political, economic, geographical and cultural contexts.

Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to monitor student progress throughout a course. Science instruction often begins with a guided inquiry activity to highlight students' prior knowledge which allows the teacher to design instruction to more specifically address missing content knowledge and to allow for exploration opportunities of topics outside of the curriculum. In mathematics, students may complete an assessment using the Desmos computer program to model equations. One English class has students create art projects to demonstrate themes around the novel "Frankenstein", while students in social studies collaborate to create model governments while learning about civics. Formative countywide benchmark assessments are given in every course for each unit. This allows teachers to make data driven decisions on pacing and best instructional practices while allowing them to address common student misconceptions and make mid-course corrections for revisiting concepts and differentiating instruction where needed.

On March 16, 2020, North Carolina closed all schools for in person instruction. At PECHS, our first course of action was to call each student and parent or guardian assigned to our advisory class in addition to communicating with every student in each of our content classes. This process allowed us to quickly perform a needs assessment not only to ensure that students had laptops and internet access in order to continue both their high school courses and college classes remotely, but to also inquire about other family needs surrounding safety and daily nutrition. Our district quickly pivoted to provide hot spots for students in more remote areas where internet was not available and to deliver daily meals for every student.

Our students were already well versed in using platforms such as Canvas and Google classroom for daily class assignments and assessments. This enabled our teachers to seamlessly transition in order to provide daily remote instruction via these platforms until the end of the school year in May 2020. Teachers transitioned lessons to a flipped model where students watched teacher created videos of content lessons and then used that information to complete assignments, projects, and assessments. This allowed students to interact with course content at a time that worked best for their family dynamic. Many of our scholars were helping to care for younger siblings, who themselves were also learning remotely and needed assistance with schoolwork, while parents or guardians continued to work outside the home.

Teachers created a weekly schedule of Google Meets so that students received synchronous instruction to support the asynchronous instruction occurring on other days. Virtual office hours were also available for extra tutoring and to address student needs. One teacher recounted that often students would login for virtual office hours just to say hello to classmates and to their teachers as this social element of schooling was missing without being in the school building. Teachers consistently reached out to students to check in and to schedule additional virtual meetings in order to assure their emotional health needs were still being met during remote instruction. Overwhelmingly, teacher expectations and student achievement remained high during this time as the strong instructional framework and close teacher student relationships were already in place prior to the pandemic.

As school resumed in August 2020, our district employed a hybrid plan for secondary schools. Our students were divided into cohort A and cohort B. The first group attended school in person on Mondays and Tuesdays while the latter attended on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Students participated in remote instruction on the remaining days with all students being remote on Fridays. These groups were purposely selected as to align with their once per week face to face college class meeting, if needed, as most college classes were completely remote. This hybrid model allowed for proper social distancing in classrooms and common areas. This plan is still currently in place.

Instruction continued as it had the previous semester with most content and assignments being posted online for student access. Teachers could now focus on direct instruction, appropriate individualized activities, group discussions, and personalized differentiation when students were present two days per week. Certain aspects of the curriculum had to be revised in order to maintain our student's health and safety while in the school building. Science labs where students may have worked in groups or shared materials were now virtual using programs such as Explore Learning Gizmos or pHET. Collaboration activities that previously involved students making a group video commentary on current events had to be rediscovered digitally using tools such as Jamboard. Teachers continued to excel at using the flipped classroom model to expose students to content via multiple means on asynchronous remote days in order to prepare them for discussion and questioning opportunities during face to face instruction. Student achievement was exemplary during this time of hybrid instruction as data from NC End of Course tests in English 2, Biology, and Math 1 taken in December 2020 showed 100% proficiency for Pender Early College High School.

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):

Classes: At PECHS, teachers are responsible for preparing students to be successful in college classes because our students are dually enrolled at CFCC and take classes as early as their Freshman year. All incoming students (all ninth graders and incoming transfers) are required to take Freshman Seminar. This class pairs with the CFCC class ACA. ACA is an online college course that prepares students to take college classes which includes learning study skills and navigating their online accounts at the community college. Students take ACA along with Freshmen Seminar which is a class PECHS created to help students with ACA and also help them adjust to meeting the rigorous Early College expectations.

Teachers are also required to teach ready for college skills within the classroom. These skills include essay writing, class discussions, college level reading, discussion boards, Cornell note taking, and other skills to help students be successful in the classroom. All classes integrate the TPEQEA; topic, point, example, quotation, elaboration, and analysis approach to writing across the curriculum in preparation for college level work.

Students at Pender Early College are also taught character traits to help build good character within our students. In advisory, students explore the 10 character traits that PECHS wants to build with our students. Students will then showcase how they have grown in these character traits in a class called Senior Seminar; PECHS's version of the Senior Project. This course is designed to help students put together a Comprehensive Academic Portfolio (CAP). The CAP is a portfolio where students show evidence that they demonstrate 6 of the 10 character traits that Pender Early College students strive to manifest.. These character traits are showcased through 6 reflections with evidence meeting the 10 character traits. Evidence can be pulled from school assignments and/or other experiences throughout students' high school career. Students also create a living resume that showcases their achievements at PECHS. Students present their portfolios and resume to a panel (consisting of teachers, CFCC Instructors, and community members) who will decide whether or not they have passed the presentation part of the CAP. This course is also designed to prepare students for applying to colleges and career readiness after they graduate.

Additionally, our students' academic progress is monitored by teachers and support staff to determine how best to support students. We have a built in study/tutoring lab for our students by each teacher for students to review concepts not yet mastered or have their teacher available to assist them with current assignments. The community college also offers a math and writing lab and we encourage our students to take advantage of that as they do the study/tutoring time that our teachers offer.

All of our students are required to earn a minimum of 150 volunteer/community service hours, complete a 36 hour internship and complete four educational camps or seminars. The career development coordinator meets with each grade level of students annually to facilitate interest inventories via CFNC.org, mynextmove.org and most recently Majorclarity. Outside of a COVID-19 year, the ASVAB is also given to interested students. Each of these inventories are intended to assist the students in their career exploration. We match their career interests with job shadowing and internship and volunteer opportunities so that they can have a hands on experience and learn more about a specific career(s). If available, some of our students choose to take specific college courses or CTE programs of study at the community college such as Film, Interior Design, CNA, auto paint and body, etc.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Our school offers a variety of artistic clubs on the high school side including crafting club, art club, and drama club. These clubs are offered as enrichment opportunities for our students to participate outside of the core curriculum. Typically our artistic clubs meet on a 2-week rotation. Each of these clubs allows students to express their artistic abilities and interests outside of the classroom. Cape Fear also offers a variety of art courses that students can take on the college side. Some of the courses offered are art appreciation and music appreciation. Any CFCC course that is taken counts as an elective towards their high school diploma and towards their associate's program GPA.

Students are required to take a Health & PE course freshman year as an elective. This course also meets their PE & Health requirement for their high school diploma. We have also offered a sports club during a traditional school year as an opportunity for students to have physical activity during lunch. In the spring of 2020 prior to Covid, we set up an intramural basketball game with other Early Colleges in the local area. Any PECHS student was allowed to participate as a student-athlete. We also had students participate as cheerleaders. For their foreign language requirement, students can take Spanish, German, French, or Sign Language through Cape Fear. Students are required to take 2 levels of a foreign language to meet their high school graduation requirements. These courses count towards both their high school and CFCC GPA.

While our school does not have a traditional media room or library, students have access to a variety of comparable resources. Our school is a one-to-one school for all students. All students are required to have a computer for all courses and most of their high school and college courses utilize them on a daily basis. Students have access to computer labs on any CFCC campus with their student id. They also have access to any CFCC library both online and in-person. Students also have access to the Burgaw public library, which also provides free tutoring services to students.

Students interested in the sciences are encouraged to participate in the variety of science-based clubs we offer. These clubs include Robotics Club, Science Olympiad, Garden club, Hydroponics club, and SEA Perch. Many of these clubs also include local & state competitions. These clubs are run by the science teachers and our robotics club is run in conjunction with students from Pender High School. The garden and hydroponics clubs provide students with the opportunity to learn how to grow, irrigate, harvest, and care for a variety of vegetables and flowers. These clubs also teach best practices for growing a variety of plants in multiple garden beds. Students also participate in a semi-annual plant sale, one of which is open to the public. Students have the opportunity to participate in Student Government Association (SGA) both at the high school and community college level. If students are interested in holding office, they have to campaign but students are not required to run for an office. The high school SGA plans school dances, volunteer opportunities, spirit weeks, as well as plan other student-led events on campus.

While school looks drastically different because of Covid19, our staff is still working hard to provide extra-curricular activities for our students. All clubs have been moved to virtual participation through Google Meets on Fridays. Students are encouraged to participate, but not required. We have also moved our

advisory assignments to Google Classroom since we are not able to meet with students in our classrooms during lunch. Online assignments focus on character traits decided upon as a staff that we felt were important for success at the Early College Level. They include work ethic and responsibility, respect for self and others, compassion, self-control, open-mindedness, trustworthiness, cooperation, respect for community and environment, commitment and dedication, and fairness and justice. Our staff creates enrichment activities for students to work through to enhance their understanding of and ability to exhibit these skills.

3. **Academic Supports**:

Our staff is very effective at providing academic supports to our students as well as monitoring students' progress. We identify struggling students and determine the best practices to support them with our Wolf Den meetings. Counselors and the college liaison meet with every student at least each semester to talk about academic progress and degree plans. We utilize WOLF lunch to assist students with tutoring and are available for video tutoring on Fridays. The staff has contacted each student to offer support during extreme events such as Hurricane Florence and the Covid-19 pandemic.

At Pender Early College HS, teachers, counselors, TAs, the college liaison, and the principal meet monthly to discuss our Wolf Den students. Staff members add students to the Wolf Den when a student has below a 70 in a course as well when there are social/emotional concerns. All of the students' progress and intervention/supports are entered to a Google Sheet throughout the month. During the monthly meetings, staff members discuss concerns, give updates to student progress, and determine strategies to help each student improve in their target areas. Common interventions include making a structured plan for WOLF Lunch, scheduling a parent teacher conference, and providing the student with specific advice (organization, self-monitoring, emotional support etc.).

Our school has a forty-minute lunch period called WOLF lunch. WOLF stands for work, organize, learn, fun. Students are able to choose where they eat lunch and can work on make up work or receive tutoring from a teacher. Our clubs also meet weekly during this time. This extended lunch period allows students to receive academic support. Students are required to attend at least two tutoring sessions/ office hours for every class they are enrolled in each quarter. WOLF lunch provides our students with flexibility to get help because they are usually unable to after school due to having students from all over Pender County.

In addition, we utilize the Pre-ACT results from our 10th graders to identify any subjects where students may need extra support. Since every 10th grader takes the Pre-ACT, we can help them improve in certain areas before they take the ACT in 11th grade. This is one of the reasons why over 95% of 11th graders achieved a ACT composite score of 17 or higher.

Since Pender Early College HS is an accelerated learning program, prospective students must apply to attend our school and demonstrate good academic performance, maturity and independent learning. As a result, all of our students are performing at or above grade level.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. **Engaging Students:**

Our school is unique in many ways, and the main difference between us and traditional high schools is that we do not have sports teams as an opportunity for students to socialize and work together outside of school, so we make up for this by offering many other activities. Every teacher hosts at least one club, and these range from academic interests to creative pursuits to physical fitness. Clubs are student-driven, which means that the students choose what they would like to participate in and then find a teacher to sponsor it. Some examples of clubs we host include: Science Clubs (Science Olympiad, ROCAME, Garden Club, Robotics, Sea Perch), Creative Clubs (Creative Writing, Film, Crafting, Art, Music), Student Government, and Sports Club. Student government hosts dances, spirit weeks, bonfire and movie nights, talent shows, and coffee house performances to allow students to showcase their talents and enjoy each other's company outside of school hours.

As a staff, we created a student learning and needs survey that was given to all students at the beginning of the year. This survey asks students to describe their learning styles, home life/challenges, family support, preferred pronouns, favorite subjects, hobbies, and more. Each teacher has access to the survey results so that we can learn more about our students and tailor educational and extracurricular opportunities for them, with the intention that our understanding of the "whole student" helps us help them succeed. To celebrate student achievement each quarter, we host a celebration day. In a normal school year, all students go to the cafeteria to socialize and have some kind of special treat. This year, we have provided ice cream and candy to the students in their classrooms on the last day of each grading period.

This school year, we had to modify, cancel, and add activities to help students remain a part of activities while remote or hybrid. For example, the science clubs were not viable due to social distancing rules, so we are offering virtual clubs that include photography, crafting, and science fiction. In the crafting club, students decide what activities they want to do and then we meet on Fridays for a tutorial and crafting time. Student Government has remained active virtually and has made a tremendous effort to improve morale through spirit weeks, both virtual and in-person, and other student engagement activities.

By providing these social opportunities, as well as rewarding students for meeting our high academic standards, we are helping students take ownership of their learning and their school community, which makes our small school atmosphere feel more like a family where everyone supports each other.

2. **Engaging Families and Community**:

Our school provides many opportunities for students to form stronger bonds with their community. Each year, students go on college tours of Cape Fear Community College, UNCW, and other college campuses. One highlight at UNCW was the "safe relationships" seminar where the students learned about respectful relationships and how to identify them. As a whole school project, we participated in a local celebration of North Carolina's Mountain to Sea Trail, a section of which runs through our campus. We have also visited the Sea Turtle Hospital to learn about the endangered species and human impacts and picked up trash on Topsail Beach.

Our students volunteer all over the community, including the Sea Turtle Hospital, Pender Regional Hospital, animal shelters, farms, schools, summer camps, and more. These opportunities allow them to connect with the larger community and learn more about themselves and others. After Hurricane Florence, our students hosted a Halloween costume drive for community families and then a "Trail of Treats" on our campus. People donated candy for us to pass out, and it was a time of celebration and fun for the entire community after a really difficult recovery from the storm. Through a grant from the Golden Leaf Foundation, our PTA was able to purchase mattresses and bedding materials that were distributed to students and their family members who lost homes during the aftermath of the storm.

Each year, in order to reach out to prospective students and families, we host "open campus" and

recruitment activities. Once students are accepted to our school, they attend "shadow day" where they shadow an upperclassmen for the day and make contacts and friends for the next school year. During remote learning, we had a virtual open house for students and a separate one for parents and families. We also have a dedicated PTA that has continued to meet virtually to plan fundraising events in order to award student achievement with scholarships.

By giving families and community members access to our school, and having our students play an active role in their community, our school provides a bridge between Pender County Schools, Cape Fear Community College, the Town of Burgaw, Pender County, and all those who live here.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers at Pender Early College High School have embraced the challenge of our hybrid learning model. Our students have been in our building for two out of five school days and are at home for distance-learning on the remaining days. All teachers have implemented distance learning tools through cooperation with colleagues. These tools have included, but are not limited to the following list:

1. Canvas

2. Google Classroom

3. Edpuzzle

4. Khan Academy

5. Quizizz

6. Padlet

7. Remind

8. Flipgrid

9. Pear Deck

10. Screencastify

11. All Google Sites

Our staff has led professional development on using Canvas and Pear Deck from the list above. These two have focused on using Canvas as a learning management system and using Pear Deck to engage students in content presentation (with built-in assessments) whether in the classroom or remote. Canvas professional development has been completed through the guidance and help of NCCAT (North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching).

Two of our senior teachers have held curriculum coach roles in the past at our school in an effort to improve within our school and grow as a community. Common instructional tools/frameworks/protocols in all of our classrooms provide the consistency that students need to boost their achievement. Each of our teachers followed this teacher-led professional development by operating peer rounds. In these peer rounds, our teachers visited each other's classrooms to observe successes and challenges, as well as offer constructive feedback.

There is a population of students at PECHS who participated in AIG (Academically or Intellectually Gifted) programs at middle schools around the county. All of our teachers make it a priority to foster the development of these students and prepare them for success in rigorous courses at Cape Fear Community College. We have staff who have attended AIG conferences and received unique training towards our goals.

Technology has been utilized throughout distance-learning but it is a tool for the everyday classroom in any school year. We have had teacher-led professional development in the following technological resources:

1. Google

2. Digital Break-outs

3. Augmented Reality

4. Virtual Reality/Google Expeditions

5. Book Creator

6. Coding

7. Creating lesson videos for our students while they are at home for distance-learning including:

a. Greenscreen

b. Flipgrid

c. Graphic Design

i. Canva

ii. Smore

Professional development is a focus at PECHS each year through the county-wide renewal process. It is something that all faculty and staff continue with each school year. During the previous school year before the Pandemic, our entire staff attended workshops throughout that year at the Friday Institute in Raleigh, NC. These workshops were designed to develop a student-led curriculum and education where each child was put at the forefront of their learning.

Our math department has attended a "Math Teacher Drive-In" where instructors from numerous schools in eastern North Carolina came together to share and introduce new resources for teaching their shared classes in Math 1-4 & Precalculus. Other PD opportunities included the following:

1. Alignment Study - NCEXTEND1 Math – Grades 6–8 & Math 1

2. 2019 SEA Summit (present and attend)

3. 2020 SEA Summit (presenter)

4. Student-Teacher Mentor

5. Making Math Moments That Matter Summit

6. presented at the NC BOLD virtual summit

The social studies department has been investigating time each week over the recent past to develop a new Personal Finance Literacy course and curriculum. They will seek to implement this in our students soon as an offering to underclassmen.

Our science department has adapted various clubs for students to interact with real-world science in our school and community-at-large. These include Science Olympiad, Robotics, and others.

Overall, our staff creates a professional and welcoming environment for our students and their families. We maintain consistency for everyone each Quarter, Semester, & School Year. Our staff comes together each month to have a full-staff lunch that is essential for team-building and group success.

4. **School Leadership:**

The leadership philosophy demonstrated in Pender Early College High School is democratic, or shared leadership. The principal is the only administrator at the school. The principal believes the democratic style of leadership will generate followers with high morale, who are motivated to generate creative solutions. PECHS has an atmosphere of cooperation and team spirit. The school is small, which encourages team involvement, participation and involvement by all staff members.

The entire staff serves on the school improvement team, which allows each staff member to have direct input in the decision making process for our school. The principal makes sure that policies focus on student achievement by focusing on the individualized needs of each student. For example, the principal meets with all students that are not successfully completing a course, at least once per semester. The principal encourages the students and offers them strategies for improvement. The principal makes sure that programs focus on student achievement by reviewing the results of any program implemented. Through collaboration with the staff, the principal will modify the program to ensure effectiveness. The principal consistently informs the students and parents of resources, such as tutoring options, internships, community activities, etc.

For example, all students meet with our counselor and college liaison at least once per semester, to ensure that their schedules are accurate for them to complete their programs of study. All schedules are unique based on student interest and their requirements for completing our program.

Throughout Covid-19, the role of the principal has been enhanced by assisting in various capacities. The principal has shared all policies and procedural expectations with the staff. They have worked together to determine most effective methods for maintaining student and staff safety. The principal has been a support for all staff by making sure that all necessary materials, such as cleaning spray, wipes, and masks, were consistently available. Staff had everything to ensure safety throughout the school.

5. **Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

Here at Pender Early College High School, we believe having a diverse and culturally aware learning environment is essential to meet the needs of every student. We attempt to incorporate cultural awareness and diversity into school-wide projects and events for students and staff to participate in. We have had advisory teams study different countries and celebrate the diverse cultures of the countries. This ended with a banquet that included all of the advisories making a traditional dish from the culture they studied, and sharing them collectively as a school. Also, the school has traditionally sent classes of students to see the Cucalorus Film Festival in Wilmington. The films shown to students represent an array of social issues as well as cultural and racial differences. The students and teachers have always enjoyed this trip because of the unique mix of education and art. We had teachers present social issues of the time to students and offer them opportunities to have their voices heard in the community with peaceful protests, clubs that focus on contacting government officials in a professional manner about concerns, and with charitable volunteer opportunities.

It isn't enough, however, to incorporate cultural awareness and diversity during special occasions. These qualities must be part of a student's educational experience daily, and our school has found different ways to do so. Over the years, our school has made strides in creating a student needs survey, which allows teachers and staff members to gain better insight to the different needs of our students. These needs may be driven by their own culture, ethnicity, learning needs, social

abilities, or other facets of a student's complex make up. Teachers are then able to ingest this information and use it for the improvement of the students' experience and success in the program. Another way we approach cultural awareness and diversity is through clubs offered at our school. Our clubs change yearly, according to student interest, and this has made it possible for clubs like K-Pop (Korean Pop Music) club, Ukulele Club, Japanese Anime Club, the Tea Party (Historical Club with interest in England, Scotland, and Ireland), Film Club, Book Club, and many others to come to life and provide a safe and inclusive outlet for students to enjoy these topics as a group.

Lastly, here at Pender Early College, each teacher makes it a priority to incorporate cultural awareness and diversity into the curriculums we teach. Math teachers discuss the theorems and proofs of mathematicians' discoveries throughout history. English teachers teach novels written by writers of all races, creeds, genders, and nationalities. History teachers educate students on the different cultures, historical events, and civilizations from around the world. And Science teachers discuss important scientists and their discoveries with respect to the individual, including the nationality, gender, and culture of the scientist. As a school, Pender Early College values cultural awareness and diversity, and we will continue to develop in these areas for the benefit of students and staff alike.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The past year has brought many challenges and changes, and education is one of the sectors of society that has truly had to pivot to support the academic and socio-emotional needs of students. Here at Pender Early College, the one practice that has been the most instrumental to the school's continued ability to successfully educate and support students since our school closed in March 2020 is our "Wolf Den" student support meetings.

The name "Wolf Den" comes from our school mascot, the Seawolf. As part of our Wolf Den practices, teachers, counselors, our college liaison, and teachers assistants (who monitor students enrolled in North Carolina Virtual Public School classes) update a Google Sheets spreadsheet on a regular basis. Students are added to the spreadsheet if their grade goes below a 70 or if the staff has other concerns about the student, such as socio-emotional concerns.

Teachers, counselors, TAs, the college liaison, and the principal then meet monthly to discuss our Wolf Den students. All of the students' progress and intervention/supports are entered to the Google Sheet throughout the month. During the monthly meetings, staff members discuss concerns, give updates to student progress, and determine strategies to help each student improve in their target areas. Common interventions include making a structured plan for WOLF Lunch, scheduling a parent teacher conference, and providing the student with specific advice (organization, self-monitoring, emotional support etc.). Our lunch period is called "WOLF Lunch" because it includes extra time so that when students are done eating, they may receive remediation or tutoring from teachers, work on homework, get together with groups for projects, and participate in clubs. As part of our Wolf Den interventions, students may receive a WOLF lunch schedule, where they are required to be in certain teachers' classrooms on certain days to complete assignments or receive remediation or tutoring.

Our Wolf Den is something that we have done for several years. One way that it has had to change due to the circumstances of the pandemic is that our meetings now happen virtually through Google Meet. We have also had to deal with different stressors on students as we discuss our concerns, as the pandemic has definitely had an emotional toll on many of our students.

Wolf Den has allowed us to closely monitor and discuss student success with their online learning, another new change since March of 2020. Our students are currently virtual three days a week, with many students being enrolled in online and hybrid high school and college classes. This shift to virtual learning has challenged many of our students, and Wolf Den has allowed us to monitor these challenges and address them in a timely manner.