



1359 Route 2 • The Mohawk Trail • Charlemont, MA 01339 • 413.339.4912 • Fax 413.339.4324 • www.charlemont.org

2021-2022 School Profile
CEEB: 220552
Neale Gay
Co-Head of School

The School

Founded in 1981, the Academy at Charlemont is a small independent day school enrolling approximately 85 boys and girls in grades seven through twelve. The Academy draws primarily from a rural population in the poorest county in Massachusetts, and the school serves its commitment to a diverse student body by offering financial aid to 74% of its students. The school provides a rigorous and traditional college preparatory academic program for all students, a diverse arts and music program, and athletics. We do not calculate class rankings. The Academy believes that innovative teaching works best without Advanced Placement preparation as the goal of an entire year's course.

The Academy is a school community based on values such as self-reliance, industry, integrity, and compassion encourages development of intellectual and social standards that reflect those values. These values are supported in the curriculum, particularly in our four unique Studio Block periods each week in which professional artists and performers work shoulder-to-shoulder with students, sharing their passions and providing windows into these broad areas of expression. Affirming the uniqueness of each individual and at the same time insisting that individuals subscribe to a set of commonly held standards – civility, respect, concern for others – produces a healthy tension that helps students learn, grow, and become productive citizens.

Making positive contributions to school life is an integral part of Academy culture. The school fosters a close and mutually respectful relationship between students and faculty. Students regularly support the school through meal preparation, cleaning chores, six volunteer councils, and other meaningful activities. School governance is based on all-school meetings and an honor code; there are no elected class officers, except for one senior who is elected to represent the student body to the Board of Trustees. There is a Student Advisory Board led by students that meets regularly with school administration.

The Students

Academy students represent a broad cross section of the local hill-town and Pioneer Valley populations. Their parents work in a wide range of occupations that support and enrich the greater community: from farmers to artisans to physicians. Their households range from lower to upper income.

All students are strongly influenced by the rural nature of this community. Students are more acutely aware of their connection to the land, the rhythms of the seasons, and the sources of their food. Many students live in communities without cellular phone service, without cable television, and where supermarkets are a 20-minute drive away. In a world where instant access to everything is becoming increasingly common, these students live with greater awareness of the essentials of family, community, and purpose.

The Faculty

There are 10 full time faculty, all holding advanced degrees. There is one part-time faculty member, our music director, who has experience as a professional musician.

Accreditation and Associations

The Academy at Charlemont is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). The school holds memberships in:

- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- National Association of Independent Schools
- Association of Independent Schools of New England
- Franklin County Chamber of Commerce
- Shelburne Falls Area Business Association

Curriculum

The core curriculum provides a broad common ground on which students with different views, interests, goals, and backgrounds can come together and form an intellectual community based on shared knowledge and common purpose. At the same time, opportunities to pursue independent scholarship and unique intellectual interests are offered in every course as well as required by the capstone Senior Independent Project.

Specifically, every semester students are engaged in the study of English and History through their Humanities courses. Students are also required to take Math and Science every semester, and they also typically study either French or Spanish. Students participate in Studio Block courses, with most students filling their schedules with unique opportunities in the arts and music. First year Latin and Foundations in Art are both required for the 9th grade. Students may continue to take Latin throughout their high school career, and may opt to more seriously pursue painting and photography as academic electives after their freshman year. Senior students engage in a year-long independent project of their choosing. All students must participate in fall and spring sports. About half of the student body participates in winter drama.

Enrichment

The Academy created an avenue in the 2017-2018 school year, called Enrichment, through which students driven by curiosity in the Humanities and/or the Sciences could engage in additional intellectual pursuits. In the 2018-2019 academic year, Enrichment offerings became available in Mathematics, Humanities, Romance Languages, and Sciences. Enrichment work is driven by a love of learning and not by grades or competition. Enrichment work does not affect the final course grade or GPA. Students who complete all of the Enrichment work assigned throughout the year to a level deemed satisfactory by the instructor have “[Course] with Enrichment” denoted on their transcript. We have suspended our enrichment program for the 2020-2021 academic year due to Covid-19.

Covid-19 and the Class of 2022

Covid-19 continues to deeply affect our community. At the height of the pandemic, Franklin County had the highest number of deaths per-capita in Massachusetts. Many of our students come from this county and from the more heavily populated Hampshire County, which houses UMass Amherst, Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, and Smith College. We began a period of remote learning on March 24th of 2020, which coincided with the end of our spring break. We continued to be remote until February of 2021. This resulted in students not missing any days of school in order to accommodate faculty preparation. The small size of our school afforded us the opportunity to continue our academic programming through a synchronous online platform.

As a result of the COVID-19, we allowed students to take courses on a pass/fail basis for the 2020-2021 school year. Many students opted to do this in some of their classes. This is reflected by a P or F on their transcript.

Courses Offered

Full Credit (yearlong or yearlong equivalent)

2016-17 — 2018-19: Humanities (9, 10, 11, 12, counts as two credits, addressing both History and English)

2019-present: World Literature I, World Literature II, American Literature Philosophical Viewpoints

2019-present: World History I, World History II, American History, Global Perspectives,

Biology, Environmental Science, Chemistry, Physics, Advanced Physics

Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and Trigonometry, Algebra III, Statistics, Pre-Calculus, Calculus

French and Spanish I, II, III, IV, V

Latin I

Foundations in Art (9)

Practice of Painting (10, 11, 12)

Half Credit (one semester or yearlong equivalent)

Photography (I, II, III)

Latin (II, III, IV)

Studio Block Options

Art	Music
Sashiko Sewing	Chorus
Poetry Workshop	American Roots
Illustration	Classic Soul and R&B
Ceramics: Sculptural	Audio Collage
Ceramics: Functional	Blues and Jazz
Ceramics: Advanced	Off the Grid
Analogue Photography	Vocal Performance
Digital Photography	Film Scoring
Mixed Media	Songwriting
Watercolor Painting	Back in the Garage
Stitching and Soft Sculpture	Funk Band

Senior Graduation Requirements

Four years of English and four years of History, taught as a double Humanities class until 2019-2020
Three years of Laboratory Science
Mathematics through Algebra II and Trigonometry
Four years of Mathematics
A fourth year of Science
Four years of a modern foreign language
Latin I
Foundations in Art
Senior Independent Project

Semester and Grading Systems

The Academy operates on a 16-week semester system. Most courses are yearlong, one credit classes. Half-credit courses meet for either the full amount of weekly classroom hours but for only one semester, or half of the number of weekly hours for the whole year.

Academic courses are graded using the letters A+ through F. Studio Block art and music classes are graded on a pass/fail basis and do not carry credit value. If a student studied elsewhere, then a separate transcript is attached. Students are not ranked.

College Matriculation – Classes of 2017-2021

97% of the last four graduating classes have gone on to college. They have matriculated at the following colleges and universities:

Amherst College
College of the Atlantic
Barnard College
Bridgewater State University
Carleton College
Clark University
Goucher College
Greenfield Community College
Holyoke Community College
Lewis & Clark College
University of Maine
Massachusetts College of Art and Design

University of Massachusetts - Amherst
University of Massachusetts - Lowell
Mount Holyoke College
University of New Mexico - Main Campus
Northeastern University
Northwestern University
Oberlin College
Pitzer College
SUNY at Purchase College
Rhode Island School of Design
University of Rochester
Saint Anselm College

Sarah Lawrence University
SUNY College at Geneseo
Tufts University
Vassar College

University of Vermont
Warren Wilson College
Washington and Lee University
Wesleyan College