



The Academy at Charlemont

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2024-2025 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 100 students in grades six 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 80% of its students. The school provides a rigorous 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, though we do allow students to take Advanced Placement courses through accredited online providers.

The Academy is a school community based on values such as self-reliance, industry, integrity, and compassion. As such, we encourage the 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, eight 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 local hill-town and Pioneer Valley populations, as well as a small number of international students. 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 9 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) and by the Association of Independent Schools In New England. The school holds memberships in:

- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- Association of Independent Schools in New England
- National Association of Independent Schools
- 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 and may opt to more seriously pursue painting as an academic elective 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 or a winter sport.

Our Spanish teacher resigned prior to the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year. As a result, we partnered with OneSchoolhouse to offer Spanish II-V online. Students could opt to take this course as P/F.

The Academy does not offer AP courses, though a small number of our students take AP courses online. When this is the case, students earn a P/F on their transcript.

Courses Offered

Full Credit (yearlong or yearlong equivalent)

World Literature I, World Literature II, American Literature Philosophical Viewpoints

World History I, World History II, American History, Global Perspectives

Biology, Environmental Science, Chemistry, Physics, Advanced Physics

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

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

Foundations in Art (9)

Studio Art (10, 11, 12)

Half Credit

Latin I

Studio Block Options

Art	Music
Ceramics: Wheel Throwing	Indie Pop 2K
Ceramics: Advanced	Blues Ensemble
Figurative Clay Sculptures	Rock and Soul
Creative Writing	Chorus
Cartooning	Sound Recording
Queer Poetry Appreciation	Stadium Rock
Analogue Photography	Jazz
Digital Photography	Bluegrass Ensemble
Mixed Media	Songwriting
Acrylic Painting	Women Who Rock Ensemble
Chess	American Roots
Dungeons and Dragons	Select Chorus

Senior Graduation Requirements

Four years of English and four years of History
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 language¹
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.

¹ Our Spanish instructor resigned on the first day of school in the 2022-2023 school year. As a result, we partnered with OneSchoolhouse to provide Spanish for students. We allowed students to take the course for regular credit or pass/fail.

Grade Distribution Profile for the Class of 2024

Final Course Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F	Total # of Students
11th Grade	7	10	6	9	8	1	5	1	1	2	1	3	11
10th Grade	7	18	10	4	8	3	0	1	4	0	0	1	11
9th Grade	14	18	9	11	6	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	9

A+ = 97-99 B+ = 87-89 C+ = 77-79 D+ = 66-69
 A = 93-96 B = 83-86 C = 73-76 D = 63-65
 A- = 90-92 B- = 80-82 C- = 70-73 F = 0-64

College Matriculation – Classes of 2020-2024

100% of the last four graduating classes have gone on to college. They have matriculated at the following colleges and universities:

- Amherst College
- Bard College
- Bowdoin College
- Bryn Mawr College
- Clark University
- Colorado School of Mines
- Greenfield Community College
- Grinnell College
- Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey
- Ithaca College
- Kenyon College
- Macalester College
- Oberlin College
- Sarah Lawrence College
- Skidmore College
- The New School
- University of California - Santa Cruz
- University of Chicago
- University of New Hampshire
- University of Rochester
- University of Vermont
- Vermont State University - Castleton
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Washington and Lee University
- Westfield State University
- Worcester Polytechnic Institute