



Rural Development • Community Programs • Community Facilities Loan

Innovative Education at Pennsylvania Charter School

Bear Creek Community Charter School at Ten Mile Run in Bear Creek Township, Luzerne County, has such an amazing curriculum that it's attracting students at an astonishing rate. The school is at full capacity and renovation to the old building is not feasible. The current building, an old elementary school, previously housed 240 students. To accommodate the current 439 students enrolled at the charter school, they're creating temporary classrooms in mobile units on the school grounds. Not only is the school currently bursting at the seams, an additional 127 students are on a waiting list, eager to gain entrance to the innovative learning environment.



Bear Creek Community Charter School at Ten Mile Run is building a new school for K-8th grade students.

Photo-an interior architectural rendering of the central commons courtesy of Hemmler and Camayd Architects.

USDA Rural Development provided \$12,834,000 in Community Facility Loans to the Bear Creek Foundation to construct a new 63,000 square foot charter school nestled within 97 wooded acres. The new school will be safer, more conducive to learning, and large enough to accommodate students comfortably. It will provide new ladders of opportunity for rural Pennsylvania students, supporting a robust curriculum and providing hands-on environmental learning opportunities.

Ecology and environmental science are woven into the academic fabric of the school, and each student will receive dedicated instructional time for environmental education. Students will engage in hands-on learning opportunities, participate in field work, and actively participate in school-wide environmental leadership opportunities.

The preliminary plans for the school grounds include an outdoor classroom, interpretive trail, rain gardens, educational stations, and soccer and softball fields. Construction began in August, 2014 and is expected to be completed by summer of 2015. The large project will add construction jobs and attract young families, boosting community development in the rural area.

Obligation Amount: Community Facilities Loans \$12,834,000

Date of Obligation: 8/7/13, 5/28/14

Congressional District: Representative Cartwright, District 17; Senators Casey and Toomey

Partners: \$15,403,456 Applicant Contributions

Demographics: Bear Creek Township, Population: 2,774

Impact: Impact: The construction the new school will provide space for Bear Creek Charter School's increasing enrollment, adding jobs and a modern facility to increase community development.