



INNOVATION & EXCELLENCE

WASHINGTON'S CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT

CHARTER SCHOOL CSP SUB-GRANT SCORE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

School Name: Catalyst Public Schools	Contact Person: Amanda Gardner
Application Type: Expansion	Grant Budget: \$1,250,000
Grades Served: 9-12 (expansion of K-8)	New Seats Created: 136
Total Averaged Score: 102	Application Status: Approved

RUBRIC

A. GRANT PROJECT GOALS

Identify 3-5 grant project goals and justify each goal in terms of its value in supporting the planning and implementation of your proposed school.

Be sure to align your budget to your project and ensure that all planned grant spending, including future revisions to your budget, fit clearly within one of your stated project goals.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 11/12

Reviewer Comments – Grant Project Goals

- Goals for MacBooks, staffing ramp-up and supplies for expansion are reasonable, relevant, directly connected to mission and vision, and school has plan for shouldering the staffing costs after grant from general fund.
- Goals are relevant but expected student outcomes are not evident.

B. EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY, INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES, AND CURRICULUM

Fully describe and justify the design of the academic program in terms of the educational philosophy, instructional practices, and curriculum that will be utilized to meet the school's performance objectives.

Be sure to include key design elements, references supporting its validity and alignment to state and federal requirements, and rationale for why this education model was chosen and how it will produce strong outcomes for the unique community and student population the school will be located within.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 16/16

Reviewer Comments - Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum

- Educational Philosophy, Instr. Practices, & Curriculum: The school's educational philosophy is deeply rooted in DEI to meet the needs of a diverse population. Program is research-based (cites Gardner, Gates Foundation, etc) and embraces customization rather than antiquated one-size-fits-all model. School embraces MTSS model to support student behavior in a way that recognizes the unique characteristics of the school's community and needs.
- Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum: School plans to use technology (1:1 model, MacBooks) including app for student submission of written work, NWEA assessments and more, to customize instruction rather than simply as another tool for generalizing and one-size-fits-all. Technology usage aligns with the school's strong data-driven decision-making culture.

C. TEACHING AND LEARNING

Fully describe and justify the design of the instructional strategy in terms of the educational philosophy, instructional practices, and curriculum that will be utilized to meet the school's performance objectives.

Be sure to include key design elements, references supporting its validity and alignment to state and federal requirements, and rationale for why this strategy was chosen and how it will produce strong outcomes for the unique community and student population the school will serve.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 6/6

Reviewer Comments – Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning: School's instructional strategy is research based and aims to tailor the experience to each student's unique needs. It is modeled in part on the tutor paradigm that comes from Oxford, and cites strong research basis for this choice with the rationale being increased student achievement and strong staff/student connection. School identifies use of technology tools to support their model, and a strong commitment to MTSS and DEI as a basis for how they teach and interact with all students.

D. STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

As an independently governed public school, charter schools need to ensure plans, systems, and tools for strong oversight and monitoring in the areas of academic performance. Fully describe and justify how your school will have rigorous goals and adequate oversight to ensure quality implementation, operation, and accountability.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 9/9

Reviewer Comments – Student Academic Achievement Standards

- Strong plan for data, including behavioral data.
- Student Academic Achievement Standards: The school has a strong culture of systematic assessments such as NWEA MAP and others, and has institutionalized the use of data to drive instruction and make programmatic decisions and modifications. Students have access to a number of tech tools to interact with teachers around submitting and receiving feedback in their assignments in a formative and summative manner.
- The applicant discusses parent survey and groups, but not clear how they will play an on-going role in decision making and educational options are made available.

E. STUDENT DEMAND AND COMMUNITY/LOCAL SUPPORT

Schools funded under the CSP subgrant must ensure they are in tune with their communities' needs and priorities. Describe and justify your school's vitality and long-term sustainability through demonstrating your dedication to developing and maintaining community partnerships and connections.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 11.3/12

Reviewer Comments – Student Demand and Community/Local Support

- The school embodies the term “community-based.” The school’s design and creation stems from a long and deep process of understanding and connecting with the community through a variety of means including a series of 1:1 sessions. The application reflects a deep understanding of the diverse community and its unique needs. School engages with community in numerous ways including in-person events, surveys, weekly tours, etc. There are strong partnerships in place with community groups and non-profits. More than 40 letters of support sent to WA Charters in support of school’s expansion application.

F. EFFECTIVELY SERVING ALL STUDENTS

Charter schools are obligated to take specific actions to ensure an open, fair, non-selective method of attracting and enrolling students, and all charter schools need to be ready to serve the group of students that choose to attend. *Fully describe and justify your plan to offer a continuum of services for all types of students, including those that are educationally disadvantaged (such as low-income, special education, English learners, homeless, migrant and other at-risk students) and gifted and talented.*

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 11.7/12

Reviewer Comments – Effectively Serving All Students

- School has a sound nutritional and transportation plan, based in equity, humanity and compliance. Public transportation will be the backbone of the school’s plan based on school’s location. All students will eat for free. The school is committed to the authentic use of MTSS as a framework for supporting all students at their various levels of need, with a recognition of special education, MLL, etc and serving these latter groups thoughtfully and with dignity in the appropriate settings.

G. STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

As independently governed public schools, charters are fully responsible for ensuring quality financial management practices and ongoing financial stability. Fully describe your school’s plan to be compliant, strategic, and responsible with finances and business services.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 4/4

Reviewer Comments – Staffing and Professional Development Plan

- Strong PD plans – like the incorporation of the annual evaluation cycle.
- School’s leadership to identify staffing needs a year prior (strong forward thinking approach). Recruitment ongoing across a variety of platforms. Multi-step hiring process includes increasing levels of screening culminating in day-long in-person session including demo lesson. School has strong and reasonable plan for professional development that is ongoing and connected to mission/vision

H. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN

A competent, trained governing board is essential to the success of a public charter school. Fully describe how your school has developed a strong governing board with a diverse set of skills. Be sure to include how board members understand their roles and responsibilities and have developed a transition plan and ongoing professional development to maintain board strength going forward.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 7/7

Reviewer Comments – Financial Management and Monitoring Plan

- School has a strong track record of accurate enrollment projections (always falling within 5% of target) which is fundamental basis for ongoing fiscal stability and programmatic excellence. School has systematized financial operations to ensure long-term viability, and enlists the support of third party financial services entity in that endeavor. The school has a sound facilities plan that budgets for annual facilities costs that are aligned to the local market and seem realistic.

I. BOARD CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Fully describe how your school has developed a strong governing board with a diverse set of skills. Be sure to include how board members understand their roles and responsibilities and have developed a transition plan and ongoing professional development to maintain board strength going forward.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 10/12

Reviewer Comments – Board Capacity and Governance Structure

- Board has an engrained culture of self-reflection, with plans for regular Board self-evaluation. Board member resumes reflect board and deep experience ranging from private sector, charter school, public sector, etc. Board uses monthly organizational health rubric to stay on track. Staff keeps list of prospective new Board members to assist with succession/turnover. Application reflects careful identification of Board member areas of strength/expertise (see matrix).

J. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Fully describe and justify the intended leadership structure of your school and demonstrates a strong leadership and staffing plan that ensures high-quality implementation and sustainability of the school.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 10/10

Reviewer Comments – School Leadership and Management

- School has leaders with deep experience in educational leadership, strong technical skills in respective areas, and understanding of their areas of responsibility. Two key staff leaders divide academic and operations areas of expertise and complement each other.

OVERALL COMMENTS

- This is a very strong application with justification for the expansion to 12th grade & alignment to mission throughout.
- Overall excellent application, with all key elements addressed superbly. Goals aligned to school's mission and vision in addressing authentic needs of the community (all students and also intentional focus on those most underserved). The school combines a clear philosophy and student-centered approach with sound planning and thoughtful projections for future needs.
- The applicant covered all of the required criteria but was not always clear the process for implementation of the criteria.

APPLICATION TOTAL POINTS		
Rubric Section	(AVERAGE) Points Awarded	Points Possible
A. Grant Project Goals	11	12
B. Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum	16	16
C. Teaching and Learning	6	6
D. Student Academic Achievement Standards	9	9
E. Student Demand and Community/Local Support	11.3	12
F. Effectively Serving All Students	11.7	12
G. Staffing and Professional Development Plan	4	4
H. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan	7	7
I. Board Capacity and Governance Structure	10	12
J. School Leadership and Management	10	10
STANDARD POINTS AWARDED	96	100
Priority Points: 3 Additional Points may be awarded for schools that focus on the development of the whole student (college and career academic readiness and social-emotional development). Applicant must demonstrate a strong instructional and social-emotional focus that supports students toward both educational goals and positive relationship and identity development (including but not limited to mentorship, restorative justice practices, and whole-school college readiness or entry goals).	3	3
Priority Points: 3 Additional Points may be awarded for schools with an explicit focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Applicant must demonstrate that its staffing, educational model, community and family engagement strategy, and overall design process are responsive to community input, provide ongoing opportunities for learning for school staff, and have planned evaluative measures to help drive diversity, equity, and inclusion through school culture and climate.	3	3
Priority Points: 3 Additional Points may be awarded for schools that recruit from rural or unincorporated regions. Applicant must demonstrate that it intends to locate in or near rural or unincorporated regions and how it intends to meet the unique needs of the student population that it recruits from there.	0	3
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED	102	109