



**Charter Schools Program for
Innovation and Excellence Application Narrative**

Prepared by: Catalyst Public Schools

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Executive Summary

Catalyst Public Schools (Catalyst), a K-8 public charter school operating since the fall of 2020 is applying to the Washington State Charter School Commission to expand to serve students in 9th-12th grade starting in the fall of 2024. This expansion will allow Catalyst to serve approximately 180 scholars in grades 9-12 and will allow scholars the opportunity to graduate not only with a high school diploma, but to also accrue college credits from a local community college via the Running Start Program. The mission of Catalyst is to support our diverse scholars to live full lives and to succeed in college, career, and life. Scholars will find their purpose and passion through our complete K-12 program, so that they can cultivate the critical hope, optimism and leadership essential to be catalysts in their community and world.

Learning in the high school grade levels will be aligned with this mission and will foster scholars' agency via the following design elements:

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) - Cultivating Identity and Critical Consciousness via Social Justice Action Projects
- Data-Driven Instruction and Dynamic Supports - High School Tutorials
- Transformational Leadership Development

Charter School Program (CSP) grant funds will be used to ensure that our high school program has the resources necessary to start strong and stay strong. CSP funds will be used to secure the necessary equipment, furniture, and curriculum needed to support our school launch.

A. Grant Project Goals

The mission of Catalyst is to support our diverse scholars to live full lives and to succeed in college, career, and life. Scholars will find their purpose and passion to cultivate the critical hope, optimism and leadership essential to be catalysts in their community and world.

Everything we do is anchored in our mission and values of belonging, resilience, achievement, vulnerability, and enthusiasm (BRAVE), and our essential school design elements. These elements include anchoring our work in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI); supporting the transformational leadership development of our scholars; providing all scholars with dynamic supports so that they thrive academically and socially; and providing our staff with world-class staff development.

With the Charter School Program (CSP) funds, our primary goal is to ensure that 100% of our scholars graduate from high school ready for college and/or career. Through our high school program, scholars will graduate not only with a diploma, but also with either college credits accrued, an Associate’s degree earned, and/or a career ready credential in hand.

Goal #1: Technology access for all staff and scholars

Justification: Because of limited capacity at our K-8 campus, we will secure additional facilities to expand to serve scholars in grades 9-12. CSP funds will be used to purchase the technology needed to launch our high school program. These expenses are justified as they are directly related to the success of our staff and scholars. These funds will be used to ensure that everyone in our high school grades have what they need to successfully complete their duties and to thrive academically.

Performance Measures	23-24 Targets	24-25 Targets	25-26 Targets
Purchase scholar and staff technology. Scholar technology at 1:1 ratio.	Catalyst staff to research appropriate technology for the high school model.	45 Macbooks or similar for students 9 laptops/iPads for staff	90 Macbooks or similar 3 laptops/iPads for staff

Goal #2: Curriculum, Furniture and Supplies

Justification: Catalyst’s high school grade levels offer an inclusive and innovative model to scholars and families. In the high school grades, the instructional model is scholar centered so that scholars’ agency over their own learning is cultivated. To implement this model, the school needs to acquire furniture, supplies, and curricula that align with the learning activities that are core to the program. CSP funds will be used to acquire furniture that can be used for dynamic, small scholar group work as well as individual work in the self directed learning lab. Funds will also be used to purchase curricular materials that represent the diversity of our scholar population, to support scholars to become critical thinkers and to develop the skills to analyze life and history through multiple perspectives.

Performance Measures	23-24 Targets	24-25 Targets	25-26 Targets
The high school principal will work with the staff and curriculum providers to develop units of study that are aligned to state standards and that represent a variety of perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences.	High school principal and staff will research possible curricula and will select and/or design curricula aligned with the Catalyst mission and instructional model.	9th grade units of study for each class are selected and/or developed that are aligned with the Catalyst mission and instructional model.	10th grade units of study for each class are selected and/or developed that are aligned with the Catalyst mission and instructional model.
The Director of Operations and Finance (DoF) will work with the school principal to identify furniture, supplies, and other equipment needed to effectively launch the high school grades.	Once facility space is secured, the DoF will work with the high school principal to determine specific furniture needs as well as supplies to effectively launch our program.	Acquire needed furniture, equipment and supplies needed for self directed learning lab and 3 9th grade classroom spaces as well as offices and common areas.	Acquire needed furniture, equipment and supplies needed for 3 additional 10th grade classrooms.

Goal #3: Start Up Staff and Training

Justification: One of the fundamental design elements of the Catalyst model is world class staff development. Ensuring that our staff are supported and grown in their professional capacities is vital for mission achievement. Because we are expanding and adding 4 grade levels, CSP funds are needed to cover the cost of additional staff positions and to provide for their professional development and training.

Performance Measures	23-24 Targets	24-25 Targets	25-26 Targets
High school design team works to finalize the expansion plan for grades 9-12	Meetings held frequently as part of our Family Action Network with design team stakeholders to garner feedback for the high school grade level expansion application and school design.	High school design team gathers data on the efficacy of the model being implemented in 9th grade and begins making adjustments as needed to plan the expansion to 10th grade. Design team begins	High school design team gathers data on the efficacy of the model being implemented in 9th-10th grades and begins making adjustments as needed to plan the expansion to 11th grade. Design team continues

		exploring Running Start pathways for scholars for 11th and 12th grades.	exploring Running Start pathways for scholars for 11th and 12th grades.
Addition of a high school principal to lead grades 9-12	The principal for grades 9-12 will lead the development of the educational model and recruitment efforts. This includes the selection and creation of curricula and working in the community to generate interest and applications from current and future families.	The principal for grades 9-12 will manage the day to day instructional leadership of the 9th grade. They will ensure that the school’s mission and culture are tightly aligned with the program. The principal will deliver and curate the professional development content for the current staff. The principal will begin design work, hiring, and recruitment to expand to 10th grade the following year.	The principal for grades 9-12 will manage the day to day instructional leadership of the 9th grade. They will ensure that the school’s mission and culture are tightly aligned with the program. The principal will begin design work, hiring, and recruitment to expand to 11th grade the following year.
Addition of lead teachers in Implementation Years 2 and 3	High school principal will begin drafting job descriptions and begin the recruitment process to hire the founding team.	CSP funds will be used to add 2 lead teaching positions for the 9th grade. Professional development will be provided to onboard and continually develop these teachers.	CSP funds will be used to fund the same 2 lead teaching positions, in addition to continued professional development opportunities, based on needs of staff, scholars, and the school community.

B. Educational Philosophy, Key Design Elements, and School Culture

Educational Philosophy and Key Design Elements - The Catalyst model features flexible and innovative design elements that foster scholar success and satisfaction among scholars, staff, and families. By taking advantage of the autonomies and flexibilities granted to charter schools under state statute and ESEA § 4310(2), we create programs that support the needs of our diverse scholars.

At Catalyst, our educational philosophy is that all scholars, regardless of background or circumstances, can thrive when schools do two things. First, we believe that students learn best when provided with targeted, small group instruction where they have agency to lead their own

learning. Second, we believe that students are best prepared to thrive when schools cultivate their critical consciousness to become leaders in their communities.

In the Catalyst high school program, this philosophy is enacted via small group, data-driven and co-taught high school tutorials and Harkness tables, as well as through the cultivation of scholar identity and critical consciousness via Social Justice Action Projects.

A one-size-fits-all approach to education is antiquated and leaves behind many scholars, especially those who are traditionally marginalized. At Catalyst, scholar learning is personalized and scholars move through academic and emotional support as they are ready, based upon data. This type of personalized, mastery-based learning was envisioned by Benjamin Bloom in his work *The 2 Sigma Problem*, where he found that students learning in tutorial-like environments outperformed 98% of peers in a traditional classroom environment. He also found that 90% of these students achieved academic levels that were only reached by the highest performing students in traditional classrooms¹. Similarly, in Todd Rose's book *The End of Average: How We Succeed in a World that Values Sameness*, Rose explains his research shows that when students have control or learning at their own pace with individualized support from teachers acting as coaches and mentors - that they achieve at remarkably high levels².

In the high school expansion, each grade will serve approximately 45 scholars, in a co-taught setting with one lead teacher and two Social-Emotional Learning Coaches. This staffing ratio allows scholars to work in flexible groups of no more than 15 for core content classes and allows us to achieve personalized, mastery based learning as Bloom and Rose have described.

¹ Bloom, B. S. (1984). *The 2 Sigma Problem: The Search for Methods of Group Instruction as Effective as One-to-One Tutoring*. Educational Researchers.

² Rose, T. (2017). *The end of average: How we succeed in a world that values sameness*. HarperOne.

In grades K-8, scholars participate in Sunrise and Change Maker Space (CMS) projects related to issues of identity that are aligned with the school’s BRAVE values. In high school, they continue this work and participate in deeper social justice action projects that provide opportunities for scholars to work on a local issue about which they are passionate (e.g. housing shortage, substance abuse, mental health supports) and work through both a design thinking process and a cycle of community organizing to build support to lead for meaningful community change. Through these projects, scholars cultivate their critical consciousness, which is the ability to identify, navigate, and challenge forces of oppression that are at work in our own lives and the lives of others. Focusing on scholar’s social-emotional and leadership development in these ways is the cornerstone of our model. Other elements of our high school model that exemplify our philosophy include:

Design Elements	Description and Connection to Mission and Vision
Self-Directed Learning Labs (SDL)	<p>Students collaborate in multi-grade, interdisciplinary learning studios each day. When not in the SDL, scholars will work in small group tutorials with teachers or will be working on projects and learning activities with their peers.</p> <p>The SDL allows scholars to master content in a self paced manner and includes guided time with a teacher, independent practice time that is self-directed, collaborative practice time, and practice using technological supports.</p>
Oxford Style Tutorials and Harkness Tables	<p>Catalyst will implement small group instruction via Oxford style tutorials and Harkness tables. These approaches have been used for years at prestigious institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge and, more recently, have been modified and used in American schools such as Oxford Day Academy, the Khan Lab School in the Bay area of California, as well as Phillips Exeter Academy and the Acton Academies.</p> <p>Tutorials are opportunities for students to present miniature oral defenses of their work. instructors help students identify questions and issues that are most meaningful to them related to their academic courses and support students to research solutions to their chosen learning challenge.</p> <p>Harkness tables are small, student-led discussions about the content at hand. This teaching method is used by Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. Since 2014, Phillips Exeter has been working with public schools, such as the Noble Network of charter schools in Chicago, to modify the approach to use with public school students.</p>

Running Start	Following the eligibility requirements of the Running Start program, scholars will be able to attend courses at Olympic College during their 11th and 12th grade year. This partnership provides access to electives and academic courses that scholars can complete for both college and high school credit simultaneously. Scholars can finish high school with enough credits to also complete an associate's degree, but this is not required.
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Electives and enrichment opportunities are described in detail in Section E.

School Culture - The Catalyst school culture is rooted in our BRAVE values which guide all elements of our practice across our educational program. In our high school program, we make strategic changes to our school culture that are developmentally appropriate for older scholars and we leverage the student agency, independence, and teamwork cultivated in the elementary and middle school years to ensure that scholars are able to lead their own learning. Our school culture is centered on restorative and anti-racist practices, the fundamental pillars of which revolve around fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all scholars and staff. Restorative practices are deeply ingrained into the school's fabric, promoting healing and resolution rather than punitive measures. Conflicts and disciplinary issues are approached through dialogue, empathy, and understanding; allowing students to learn from their mistakes and grow as individuals. Such practices include:

- Restorative Circles: These circles bring together scholars, teachers, and staff in a safe and open forum to discuss various topics, such as conflict resolution, community building, and social-emotional learning. Circles allow everyone to have an equal voice, fostering a sense of belonging and connection among the school community.
- Conflict Resolution: When conflicts arise, restorative practices focus on understanding the root causes and impacts of the issues involved. Rather than resorting to traditional punitive measures, restorative conferences are held where those affected by the conflict

come together to discuss the harm caused and collectively determine appropriate resolutions.

- **Restorative Consequences:** Instead of punitive punishments, restorative practices focus on repairing harm and fostering growth. When students make mistakes, they are given opportunities to take responsibility for their actions and engage in activities that contribute positively to the community. This approach encourages personal development and reduces the likelihood of repeat offenses.
- **Curriculum and Learning:** Restorative practices extend to the classroom setting with teachers facilitating open discussions about social issues, promoting critical thinking about diverse perspectives, and creating a safe space for students to voice their opinions and concerns.
- **Professional Development (PD) and Knowledge Building :** Faculty and staff participate in ongoing training to deepen their understanding of restorative practices and anti-racist education. This ensures a consistent and committed approach throughout the school, creating a unified and supportive community.

These restorative practices promote a culture of empathy, accountability, and respect. By addressing conflicts and incidents of harm in a holistic manner, these practices create a nurturing and empowering environment where all members of the school community can thrive and find satisfaction - academically, emotionally, and socially.

C. Curriculum, Instructional Strategies, and Technology

Curriculum Overview, Choices, and Selection - Courses at Catalyst ensure that scholars leave the 12th grade with 21st-century skills required to participate in our ever-changing global

economy³. Courses are aligned with the intent of the relevant OSPI State Superintendent's priorities and are aligned with the Washington State K-12 Learning Standards. All curricula adopted will be modified by our instructional team to align with the teaching methodologies described in Section B. Specific outcomes for courses are outlined below:

Subject	Standards	Curricula
Humanities (Integrated History and English)	Washington State K-12 ELA and History Learning Standards	<p>We will adopt and/or create integrated units of study that cover both History and English standards. A focus of the Humanities curricula will be to support the writing development of scholars in informational, argumentative, and narrative writing.</p> <p>Grade level foci include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9th - World Literature and World Geography ● 10th: American Literature and US History ● 11th: World Literature and Ancient Civilizations ● 12th: English 12 and AP Literature and Composition
Math	Washington State K-12 Mathematics Learning Standards	We will adopt Kendall Hunt's Illustrative Mathematics for grades 9-12. This curriculum is highly rated by EdReports for focus and coherence, rigor and mathematical practices, and usability.
Science Biology (9) AP Environmental Science (10)	Washington State K-12 Science Learning Standards/Next Generation Science Standards	For Biology, we will adopt Kendall Hunt's BCBS Biology - Understanding of Life. This curriculum is highly rated by EdReports for alignment to the NGSS science standards (to which WA state standards are aligned) as well as coherence and scope and usability.
History WA State History (9)	Washington State K-12 History Standards	<p>*See Humanities section for more detail</p> <p>Scholars in 9th grade will take Washington State History and we will adopt the curriculum from Educurious, which is aligned to state standards.</p>
Elective Courses, including Foreign Language	Elective course offerings will be aligned to the appropriate	Elective course curriculum will either be created internally by teachers or we will utilize online courses via Red Comet or a similar platform. All elective courses will be standards aligned to Washington state standards.

³ Partnership for 21st Century Learning: A Network of Battelle for Kids. (n.d.). A Vision for 21st Century Learning [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.battelleforkids.org/learning-hub/learning-hubitem/engaging-communities-around-a-vision-for-21st-century-learning>

	standards, whenever available	
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Technology -In the high school grades, technology will be provided for each scholar (1:1). Each scholar will be issued a MacBook computer or similar device and will have access to a variety of online tools to complete assignments, take online courses, and conduct research. Scholars will utilize the Google suite for email, calendaring, and the creation of assignments. In addition to computers, scholars will access various displays to cast their work to present it to peers and teachers. Scholars will also complete assessments for the courses we offer using technology, including platforms that prepare scholars for the format of standardized assessments that they may complete in the future. Technology will be used to access content both at school and at home and to learn personal computing skills such as typing, word processing, using spreadsheets and creating presentations via slide decks and graphic arts platforms. Beginning in the 4th grade, all Catalyst scholars have access to take computer science and coding courses which will continue in high school where scholars will have the opportunity to learn advanced coding. Providing technology at this level has been a part of our budgeting since our founding for students in middle school and older so it is sustainable for the organization in the long term.

D. Assessment and Data

Catalyst Public Schools places a strong emphasis on data-driven instruction as a cornerstone of our commitment to educational excellence and continuous improvement. We believe that data, when collected, analyzed, and used effectively, empowers educators to tailor instruction to meet the unique needs of individual students.

We have a comprehensive approach to gathering, analyzing, and using formative and summative data to inform student supports and practice. Teachers gather formative data from

scholars at the end of every class via exit tickets that can be analyzed and used to create small group tutoring plans. We also utilize an app called EdLight which allows students to upload their paper-based assignments so that teachers can grade and annotate their work digitally and return it to students' portals where they can review it and make revisions. EdLight allows school leaders to choose work samples to review with teams during weekly data meetings. We also administer the NWEA Map Growth assessment in Math and Reading three times per year and administer the NWEA Map Reading Fluency test 4 times per year to scholars in grades K-4 or until the data deems is unnecessary. Students' Map Growth data is used to determine whole group and small group reteaching plans and to track student growth and teacher performance over time. In humanities and mathematics, we leverage mid and end of unit benchmark assessments provided by the curriculum that we utilize. Teachers analyze the data from these benchmarks and share results with school leaders during weekly or bi-weekly data meetings. We participate in annual standardized testing via the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and the Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science, and this data is used to monitor proficiency to core instructional standards.

Subject and Standards	Interim Assessments	Summative Assessments
English Language Arts	NWEA MAP (Winter) Unit Assessments	NWEA MAP (Spring) End of Course exam and Smarter Balanced Assessment
Math	NWEA MAP (Winter) Unit assessments	NWEA MAP (Spring) End of Course exam and Smarter Balanced Assessment
Science	Unit Assessments	Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science or end of unit projects/end of course exam.
History	Unit Assessments	End of course exam

In addition to instructional data, school leaders at Catalyst gather and analyze multiple forms of data to inform management decisions across the school. We gather and analyze school culture and behavioral data via a program called DeansList which allows us to disaggregate data by many different markers to see if there are any populations of scholars who need additional social-emotional support. Similarly, we survey staff, families, and scholars frequently and use this data to determine satisfaction rates as well as other information.

Tiered Service Model - Catalyst provides tiered services to ensure that all scholars receive appropriate supports. We follow a model of tiered intervention which is described in detail on OSPI's website under MTSS Components⁴. At Catalyst, specific research-based interventions include modifications to course scope and sequence, modifications to daily schedule, and utilization of student and family support staff at each tier of support are summarized in the chart below.

⁴ OSPI MTSS Components:
<https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/support-programs/multi-tiered-system-supports-mtss/mtss-components-and-resources>

Tier	Academic	Behavioral	Social-Emotional
1 (Universal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigorous, standards-aligned instruction • Data driven small group instruction/academic rotations • Daily goal setting and reflection • Daily reading and math practice and direct instruction • Culturally relevant curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School wide PBIS system for behavior management • Restorative discipline practices and approach • Common behavior expectations and consistent staff practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly leadership and social-emotional courses for scholars • Frequent family communication • Social-Emotional Coaches to work with scholars and families
2 (Targeted)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated intervention during tutorial and self-directed learning time • Push in support for scholars with disabilities and Multi-language learners • Additional small group instructional time • Instructional accommodations • 1:1 instructional time with staff members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiated behavior plans • Additional check-ins with staff and family • Behavior review and analysis with related action plan • Differentiated support and coaching for teachers around management with specific scholars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social skills groups • Affinity group meetings on specific SEL topics • Group meetings with SEL coaches
3 (Intensive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized instruction via online playlist • Individualized learning plans with action plans • Specialized supports from Education specialists and other service providers • Modified curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan • Individual time with trained staff members • Connection of family to support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual time with trained staff members • Connection of family to support services

Teachers will meet together to review collected data at least weekly. The data reviewed will be a combination of academic, behavioral and social-emotional. Teachers will use this data to create dynamic groups that are flexible and responsive. Tier 2 and 3 instruction will be reserved for those scholars that need it, based on the data collected. Teachers will also use data in the moment from digital programs and in-the-moment collected data to create intervention groups on the spot inside of the classroom. Teachers will receive training on how to utilize all available staff members in the classroom in order to effectively use the tiered model system and all elements of co-teaching.

E. Effectively Serving All Students

Supporting “Educationally Disadvantaged” Students - The student body at Catalyst is incredibly diverse: approximately 51% of our scholars qualify for free or reduced lunch, 40% of our scholars identify as members of the global majority, and 20% of our scholars are on IEPs or 504 plans. We also have several scholars designated as Multi-Language Learners (MLL), are

involved in the foster care system, are homeless, and/or are involved with the United States military. We know that all of our scholars, especially those with unique circumstances and learning needs are capable of meeting the highest of academic standards when they are provided with the support they need.

Throughout the school year, Catalyst's frequent internal assessment program and RtI process provide efficient means to identify scholars who are struggling academically, in compliance with the Child Find requirements of IDEA. Students who are struggling will be referred to the school's Coordination of Services Team (COST) and pre-referral interventions will be provided to the scholar. The COST team will use interim assessment data as well as other data to determine the type of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional interventions that would be most appropriate. If initial interventions are not successful, the parents/guardians will be asked to attend a meeting and additional interventions and supports will be implemented. In this process, parents also have access to their right to request an assessment at any point in time. The next step in this identification process could involve the school psychologist and begin the process for a possible 504 plan or a possible IEP. All WAC codes, Federal and state guidelines, as well as federal and state timelines will be followed during this process.

For multi-language learners, background information will be gathered through the home language survey. The appropriate screeners will be completed if necessary, and assessments will be given accordingly. Any other scholar identified in another possible subgroup of diverse learners and at-risk groups will be provided the appropriate and necessary support through the same processes as our K-8 portion of the school.

Catalyst is committed to ensure that all scholars in need of services are identified as early as possible. We are equally committed to ensuring that scholars are not over-identified or

misidentified. As such, no single test or other factor will be used in isolation for determining if a scholar is eligible for services. To ensure our staff is properly trained to support all learners with a variety of needs, we will continue our partnership with the True Measure Collaborative. We will ensure that all aspects of our partnership are dynamic and responsive to data collected across the school. Our 9th-12th grade expansion will largely include scholars that attended their previous year(s) at Catalyst, so it is anticipated that many of the necessary supports for these groups of scholars will already be in place and these plans will continue into the high school grades.

Catalyst continuously monitors the academic, behavioral, functional, and social-emotional growth of all enrolled scholars via informal and formal assessments to monitor growth related to academic standards and the scholar's IEP goals, when applicable. All scholars will participate in the appropriate state assessments, and receive any accommodations as listed in formalized IEPs and 504 plans. Scholar progress on academics, behavioral, and social-emotional growth will be shared with families during conferences. Scholars will also review this data with their social-emotional coaches and other school staff and will participate in coaching around credits to ensure that they are on track to complete all high school graduation requirements.

In addition to academic support, we also offer a tiered system of support for scholars behavior and social emotional growth. Our school-wide BRAVE values are foundational to the culture of high expectations that we cultivate and we have a schoolwide positive behavior incentive system by which scholars receive feedback daily and a BRAVE report, outlining successes and challenges of the week, is sent home to families to review. When scholars need additional support or have behavior goals written into their IEPs, our support services and special education staff create behavior plans and trackers that are used at school and at home. We also

offer social skills support groups and have a schoolwide social emotional learning curriculum that can be modified to meet individual student needs.

Behavioral data is reviewed monthly to identify any disproportionality of discipline implementation and to identify if any specific behavioral consequences are being overused. This data is shared with the school's board of trustees monthly and is reviewed frequently throughout the year with staff. Alongside behavioral data, we also review student attendance data and enrollment data to ensure that students are present and successful.

Supporting Students with Disabilities and Students with Gifted/Talented Needs - Catalyst provides the diverse supports that students with special needs and those who are identified as highly capable need to thrive and meet high academic standards. Our high school model has been designed to allow scholars to master content at their own pace and with significant support, as was described in Section B.

All special education services and highly capable services are provided by our support services and special education staff. We also contract with the Educational Services District 114 (ESD 114) to provide ancillary services and we have a full time, on-site school psychologist. We will also continue our partnership with the True Measure Collaborative to provide additional training to our support service staff, as well as all staff. Catalyst staff and contractors follow all federal and state reporting guidelines for students on IEPs and they closely monitor student progress throughout the year.

Students who are identified as highly capable are identified via the CogAT, which is currently given as a universal screener to all students in the 5th grade. Prior to that, scholars can be assessed based on teacher or family recommendation. Universal screening is a practice that is known to reduce bias during the highly capable identification process. Scholars who are

identified as highly capable received academic enrichment during the school day. In the high school, the principal will work with teachers to ensure that appropriately challenging activities are planned for these students and that their growth over time is monitored. Whenever possible, the highly capable activities are aligned with core instruction to extend and deepen knowledge around the content that scholars are learning.

Meeting Nutritional Needs and Providing Transportation - Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, Catalyst has qualified for free meals for all. This means that any student, regardless of income, is eligible to receive free breakfast and lunch. We have partnered with the Bremerton School District to provide meal service and an advantage to this partnership is that families do not have to order meals in advance. Any day that students are at school, they can opt into meal service. Our operations team is currently working to learn more about the high school requirements for meal service and to ensure that practice is aligned. Reimbursement claims are handled by our Manager of School Operations and WINS compliance.

For our K-8 program, Catalyst has its own bus fleet. For the high school we plan to provide Kitsap Transit cards so that scholars can get to school via public transportation. These bus passes are reimbursable through the state and will not only provide scholars access to school but also to other areas of the city, such as public libraries, that would benefit their education. Additionally, for scholars who are homeless or have transportation services written into their IEPs, we will utilize buses from the Catalyst fleet. Our bus fleet will also be used to transport students to extra curricular activities at the local high school.

F. Staffing and Recruitment

Catalyst is committed to hiring a high quality, mission-driven staff that represents the diversity of our scholars. We recruit for staff year-round and leverage the autonomies that we have as a charter school to ensure that only top tier individuals join our team. Each December our senior leadership team determines hiring needs for the next year. Anticipated job openings are posted to a variety of online platforms and our website in January and the selection process begins. Candidates participate in an initial phone screen, a second phone interview, and then a selection day. During the selection day, candidates complete a demonstration lesson and participate in a feedback session with a school leader. They participate in a final interview which includes an equity screen to ensure that all candidates are invested in the importance of discussing how issues of identity and oppression play out in schools. Our five year staffing plan is included with the Appendices.

Professional Development - At Catalyst, we offer world-class professional development (PD) to develop our teachers; we consider it a crucial recruitment and retention mechanism. Meaningful development makes up the foundation of our work and is in direct response to the research which states that teachers across our country describe most PD opportunities as unengaging, a poor use of time, poorly planned, or a combination of all three.⁵ Our PD is constructivist in nature, as we believe that adults do their best learning through discourse, practice, and shared learning experiences.

To keep teachers grounded in our mission and vision, we build and maintain an environment where everyone can cultivate the hope and optimism necessary to continue to

⁵ Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. (2014). *Teachers Know Best: Teachers' Views on Professional Development*. Retrieved from <http://k12education.gatesfoundation.org/download/?Num=2336&filename=Gates-PDMarketResearch-Dec5.pdf>

improve and grow. To that end, we ground all of our PD and whole-staff time in practices that attend to diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural humility. Using the Green Line framework developed by Margaret Wheatley, we make time at each gathering to build relationships of trust, share information, and make meaning together.⁶ In doing so, we are better able to work together in service of our scholars.

We ensure that development opportunities are energizing, supportive, personalized, and include multiple rounds of practice. Every Catalyst teacher has a supervisor who coaches and mentors them. This includes a bi-weekly coaching session to ensure personalized goal setting, observation, feedback, and attainment for each teacher.

Catalyst teachers hold expertise in a variety of aspects of teaching and learning and their experience drives our PD programming. Each year, our data-driven PD program includes the following annually:

- 15 full days for returning teachers and 20 full days for new teachers dedicated to PD
- 30 afternoon sessions dedicated to PD
- 15 data meeting collaboration opportunities embedded in teachers' weekly schedules
- 18 1:1 Coaching meetings

Over the course of a given school year teachers participate in approximately 250 hours, the equivalent of 30 days for returning teachers and 35 days for new teachers, of staff development.

There are components of professional development at Catalyst, all of which are delivered internally. Professional development is executed by the school founders, principal-in-residence, instructional support roles, and teachers with expertise in topic areas. Staff have the opportunity

⁶ Zuieback, S. (2012, December 15). Below the Green Line - Theory to Practice. Retrieved January 28, 2019, from <https://www.stevezuieback.com/blog/below-the-green-line-theory-to-practice/>

to learn outside of Catalyst when an opportunity for Personal Growth Plan-aligned development is available.

The chart below shows elements and topics of professional development that are in place for our current school as well as those that will be implemented upon expansion:

	Mission + Vision	School Culture	DEI	Curriculum + Academics	Instructional Practice	Running Start	Beyond High School Planning	Discipline + Restorative Practice	Teen + Adult Relationships	Data Collection, Analysis + Planning	Tutorials and Harkness Tables
Personal Growth Plan Quarterly	X		X	X	X			X			
Launch 3 weeks before start	X		X	X	X		X	X	X		X
PD Weekly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Coaching Meetings BiWeekly	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	
Grade Level Meetings Weekly	X	X	X	X	X					X	X
Non-Scholar PD Days Quarterly	X		X	X		X		X	X		X
2 by 2 Quarterly	X	X	X					X	X	X	
Instructional Leadership Meetings BiWeekly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Data Meetings Every 3 Weeks	X		X	X	X		X	X		X	X

We believe that all staff working to serve our scholars must commit to personal growth in areas of Mission + Vision, School Culture and DEI. As such, non-instructional staff, such as school operations staff, participate in much of the whole school PD offerings. As we believe in personalized learning, we delineate time for operations staff learning concurrently with academic team learning, using school operations-related data in place of academic data. The Director of Finance and Operations, with support from a Co-Founder, will be responsible for developing data analysis acumen and leading data reviews for non-instructional staff.

As in grades K-8 we continually gather data related to staff growth, satisfaction, and effectiveness. Data gathered includes teacher surveys and analysis of classroom observations

and coaching action steps, as well as analysis of performance evaluations. All staff members are evaluated annually. At the beginning of each school year, managers meet with staff members to set professional goals. Instructional staff are observed at least once every 2 weeks and have coaching meetings with their manager to debrief the observation and determine action steps. Coaching meetings, observations, and other data are used when writing annual performance observations. For novice teachers, the coaching framework of Getting Better, Faster is used. For more veteran teachers the Center for Educational Leadership 5D framework is used. Evaluation conversations occur in the Spring of each year as well as conversations about recommitment for the following school year.

G. Operational and Financial Capabilities

Since our founding, Catalyst has had strong operations and financial leadership. Our School Co-founder and Director of Operations and Finance coordinate with our external support providers to ensure that both long and short term budgeting are complete and are approved by the school's board and submitted to the state according to requirements. Our full K-12 budget and budget narrative are submitted with this application and shows the ways in which we leverage our charter school autonomies to run our program in a sound financial manner. Our submitted budget shows the \$850,000 of private grants we anticipate receiveing from WA Charters, New Schools Venture Fund, and Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF).

Facilities - The high school grades at Catalyst will begin with approximately 45 scholars in the 9th grade and will grow one grade level per year, until scholars are seniors. We anticipate enrolling 45 freshmen and sophomores and anticipate that 50% of these scholars will matriculate into the Running Start program for their junior and senior years, with the other 50% staying at Catalyst. To accommodate this programming we will need approximately 10,000-15,000 square

feet which will include 4-6 new classrooms, some of which will be designed to provide space for elective classes such as art, music, and for science laboratory space. Additionally we will need pull out spaces and office space to provide services to students with diverse learning needs and for space for our administrative team to work. In addition to physical space, dedicated drops for wireless access are needed. To ensure the highest safety of scholars and staff, security features will be considered upon identification. In addition, because outdoor space is important, our ideal facility will include exterior space for recess, physical education, and to play sports (or other elective activities). Kitchen space will support the food program and adequate storage space will be used to maintain clutter-free learning environments.

We have identified 4 possible facilities for grades 9-12 and each is located within the boundaries of the city of Bremerton and the Bremerton School District. Each of the possible sites that we have identified would require some level of construction and renovation. As has been the case with our current school building, we have engaged Rice, Fergus, Miller - a Bremerton-based architecture firm - to complete an initial assessment of the possible facilities so that we can better understand the scope of the work required. From there, we will work to secure funding for facilities renovation from lenders.

Catalyst understands that annual facility costs for the first year will be roughly \$300,000, based on average rent from existing schools in the region. The budget assumes costs for routine maintenance, janitorial, and technology and wiring upgrades. The planning year budget allows for real estate services needed to secure a facility that is compliant with all state regulations and codes. The facility (including parking spaces and bathrooms) will comply with all codes, acts, and requirements, including Americans with Disabilities Act, fire, health, and structural safety. We plan to secure long-term financing to cover the costs of any renovations needed for the

facility. Currently, facilities cost is projected to be 11% of revenue, well below the 20% threshold.

Sufficient Resources for At-Risk Support - At Catalyst we dedicate a significant amount of our budget to support services for our students with special needs and with other diverse needs. See Section E for demographic information of our students. To meet the needs of traditionally underserved students, we have 3 education specialists, 1 school psychologist, 3 social emotional learning fellows, and utilize a co-teaching model so that there are 2 adults in each classroom for the majority of the day. As we expand to high school this level of support staffing will continue. We will add a full time education specialist to the high school staff and many of the support services staff will support students in grades K-12.

Catalyst has seen strong enrollment with significant waiting lists in most grades since our founding. To mitigate any loss in enrollment or other financial issues we have a strong cash reserve with over 90 days of cash on hand.

H. Board Capacity and Governance Structure

Board Capacity Governance and Structure - Board Members develop and maintain an understanding of Catalyst Public Schools' mission, vision, and values. Board Members advance this mission and see it realized. Board members act in accordance with the bylaws and financial policies and procedures and act in accordance with the charter contract the board holds with the Washington State Charter Commission. Board Members understand that they are responsible for the health and well-being of the organization.

Catalyst has a seven person Board currently. An eighth member will be appointed and likely approved by the Board in September 2023. Below is our Board Matrix depicting where our strengths and expertise are.

As we vet and build board membership, we have developed roles and expectations which we address with prospective Board Members. Both Co-Founders and at least two Board Members meet prospective member(s) before bringing them forward to the Board for vote and approval. The Board discusses Board Membership and prospective members annually. We keep a curated list of prospective Board Members with whom we are in conversation either via Catalyst staff or Board Members. Catalyst: Bremerton has enjoyed Board Member stability in its tenure to date. Over the past four years we have engaged in self-evaluations two times. As we bring on an eighth Board member, we plan to conduct another self-evaluation in the 2023-24 school year.

Position	Mission + Vision Alignment	School Leadership + Admin	Curriculum, Instruction, + Assessment	Performance Management + Human Resources	Cultural Competence + DEI	Family + Community Engagement	Special Populations	Strategy, Finance + Operations	Governance	Facilities + Real Estate	Legal
Co-Founder and Head of Middle School Amanda Gardner	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Co-Founder and Head of Elementary School Tatiana Epanchin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Board Chair Julie Kennedy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Board Vice Chair + Secretary Amy Kiyota	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Board Member Blake DiMarco Herrera	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	
Board Member Ken Riley	X				X	X					
Board Member TyKera Williams	X				X	X	X				
Board Member Shaylynn Houston	X				X	X					
Board Member Jeff Flood	X			X		X			X	X	
Board Member Katie Chang	X	X		X	X			X	X		X

To ensure that our Board has strong oversight, we share a monthly comprehensive dashboard including data on key indicators of organizational health. Built into our agendas is time for discussion, highlighting, and constructive conversation. Catalyst staff ensure that each

Board Member complies with timely financial disclosures, training on OPMA, and charter contract review.

Catalyst built and utilizes a policies and procedures tracker that we use to ensure that our Board work and business is aligned to the expectations of the Washington State Charter Schools Commission as well as to State level expectations. Staff, with support from the Board Chair, plans development opportunities as needed with the Washington State Charter Schools Association, the Washington State Charters Schools Commission, and with training available to public schools through the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

I. School Leadership and Management

Leadership and Administrative Roles - There are 2 Co-Founders at Catalyst. One leads the elementary school and oversees the work with the board of directors, staff recruitment and hiring, staff development, and is the leader of the academic program. The second school leader leads the middle school team and manages the Director of Operations and Finance and oversees the executive functions of the school including fundraising, facilities, legal issues, etc. Once we expand these roles, responsibilities will shift such that one co-founder becomes the Chief Academic Officer of the organization and the other becomes the Chief Executive Officer. At this point, the day to day leadership of the school will be passed to 2 principals - one for grades K-8 and one for grades 9-12. The K-8 principal will also have 2 assistant principals to support the leadership of those grade levels. Our Director of Operations and Finance will shift into the Chief Financial and Operations Officer and we will add a school based Manager of Operations at the high school level. As mentioned previously, we contract with the ESD 114 for ancillary special education services and financial services and with Joule Growth Partners (JGP) for back office support. The anticipated K-12 organizations chart is included in the Appendices.

School co-founders report directly to the board of directors and are evaluated annually. An evaluation tool created by Board on Track is utilized in the evaluation process. The president of the Board of Trustees oversees the annual evaluation, which includes analyzing student achievement data as well as scholar, staff, and family satisfaction data. The process also includes opportunities for the board to hear feedback directly from the staff via a survey. The President of the board shares the Co-Founder evaluations with the full board at an annual meeting. The school principals will report directly to the school Co-founders, as represented in the organizational charts.

Leadership and Governance Capability - Catalyst has thoughtfully hired a team that has the range of skills and mindsets needed to lead all functional areas of the organization. Specific capacities are outlined below.

Capacity	Details	Responsible Parties
Academic Excellence	Ensuring that all scholars are prepared to access college and career. This includes selecting rigorous courses and materials, and supporting all students to reach their full potential	Co-Founders (CEO/CAO), Principals, Assistant Principals
Financial Strength	Ensuring that the program has the funds, resources and planning necessary to guarantee a high quality program for staff, scholars, and families.	Co-Founder/CEO, DOF, JGP, ESD 114
High School and Beyond Support	Ensuring that all local, state and federal requirements are met so that scholars are able to meet graduation requirements and graduate with accrued college and/or career credits/certifications.	Co-Founders, High School Principal

Operational Capacity and Compliance	Ensuring that all of Catalyst’s operational components run seamlessly so that the majority of the focus of our daily energy can be on improving outcomes for our students. This includes efficient transportation, rich food/nutrition program and that Catalyst remains in compliance with all local, state and federal requirements.	Co-Founder/CEO, DOF, MSO
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J. Student Demand and Community/Local Support

Community Need and Demand - Catalyst’s recruitment efforts support the goal of serving historically marginalized groups and communities, students from economically disadvantaged families, and students attending underperforming schools, as well as military families. Catalyst has a comprehensive marketing and recruiting plan in place for community outreach and student enrollment.

We have captured data from scholars and families to gauge their interest in continuing at Catalyst: Bremerton for high school. In a survey given to our current 8th grade scholars in the spring of 2023, 40% of students stated that they would continue their education at Catalyst for high school and an additional 47% stated that they would consider attending, but would need additional information. Families of these scholars answered similarly. 63% of families expressed that they would want to have their children continue at Catalyst and an additional 33% stated that they would consider attending but would need more information. We have used these metrics to determine our enrollment targets for our high school program.

Enrollment targets for grades 9-12 are based on this data, as well as historical enrollment trends in our middle school. The typical grade level size of a Catalyst middle school is between 45 and 56 students. Because of this and the data from surveys, we have set

the target class size for each grade level at 45 students, acknowledging that some students will want to opt for a more comprehensive high school experience.

Catalyst has consistently been within 5% of enrollment targets each year and our waiting list often has 200+ students on it, depending on the time of year. To glean this success we have utilized the following strategies:

- School tours. We offer school tours three times per week. On tours prospective students and families get to see classrooms in action and meet school staff.
- Social media campaigns and web presence. We have a comprehensive website that provides detailed information about the school's mission and programs and has all the resources that families need to apply and enroll at the school. Families can also contact us for support with this process if needed for language assistance or other reasons.
- Community events. Catalyst has a full time community organizer who leads our Family Action Network (similar to a PTO) and our Power of Parents (POP) group which leads advocacy efforts. Our organizer is also responsible for attending community events both to recruit for Catalyst, but also to show our alignment with other youth organizations in our community.
- Outreach to Family Support Organizations. Our partners include local non-profit organizations and churches that interact and support traditionally marginalized populations of the city. These organizations, such as the Marvin Williams Center, the Backpack Brigade, and the Kitsap Immigration Assistance Center, have strong connections with the community and we have found partnering with them has been effective for recruitment.

We will continue these strategies throughout the school year to recruit a diverse student population that mirrors the diversity of our current school community. We anticipate that the demographics of grades 9-12 will be similar to that of our overall population, as described previously in this application in Section E.

Community Based School Design - Catalyst is a school that was built with community. In January of 2018, Catalyst co-founders held one to one meetings with families and community leaders to understand the educational landscape in Bremerton. This work morphed into the founding Catalyst design team which met regularly throughout the school's planning years and created many of the foundational elements which operate within the school today. The school's mission, core values, and core programmatic elements were all co-created with our community during these meetings.

During design meetings, the team explored how certain factors will impact the future of our city's graduates. The design team explored how and for whom traditional public schools in the United States have been created and the types of outcomes that have typically been achieved. They then explored how schools need to make significant changes to be able to prepare students to thrive in a rapidly changing and uncertain world. Even in these early meetings, the design team began considering the idea that expanding the school to include a high school would be a fundamental part of this work.

During the 2022-2023 school year, Catalyst 7th graders, who would be the founding 9th graders when we expand, participated in a Change Maker Space unit about the history of public education in the United States. During this unit, scholars explored how, when, and for whom our nation's public schools were originally created to serve. They also explored the ways that high schools, in particular, have traditionally been designed and they analyzed the pros and cons of

these design elements. The culminating project of the unit was for scholars to design elements of their own high school, including the mission, the educational program, and the school schedule and staffing model. The insights that scholars have brought to this vision are incorporated into this application. Additionally, families had the opportunity to attend several Family Action Network meetings focused on the high school design and had the opportunity to provide feedback on elements of the school design. Families and scholars were also invited to complete a survey where they expressed what was most important to them in a high school and had the opportunity to provide additional feedback about our educational program.

We have also partnered with several non-profit and educational organizations to glean feedback on our proposed educational program. One local partner in this work has been Olympic College, our local community college. The staff at Olympic College have expressed their excitement to learn more about our high school model because of the close alignment between the missions of our organizations and our shared commitment to ensure that all students have access to high quality post secondary education. Other organizations we have worked with and learned from include Transcend Education, New Schools Venture Fund, Pinnacles Prep, and Spokane International Academy.

Approximately 40 letters of support from families and community members were submitted with our expansion application. Since then we know that approximately 50 public comments have been submitted to the Washington State Charter School Commission urging them to approve our expansion.