



launch
Learn. Grow. Inspire.

newsletter

Third Quarter 2017

We're opening new preschool classrooms!

We're thrilled to announce Launch has been selected by the City of Seattle to operate 4 new Seattle Preschool Program classrooms at Miller Annex in Capitol Hill. We'll open two preschool classrooms in early 2018, followed by two more classrooms in Fall 2018. When all 4 classrooms are up and running, we'll serve 80 preschoolers!

Miller Annex is part of Miller Community Center and is operated by Seattle Parks and Recreation. We first partnered with Seattle

Parks last October when we opened a preschool classroom at Rainier Community Center. They've been incredibly supportive of our programs and we're looking forward to continuing our great partnership!

We're excited to open this new site and help more children get ready for kindergarten! Stay tuned for more info in the coming months!

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A Note from the Executive Director

When I was a child, summer was filled with so many wonderful memories. I rode my bike, swam with my cousins and hung out at our grandmother's house. We were outside all day, playing with friends, getting dirty, and enjoying the wonders of childhood.

We believe every child deserves a great summer, and we're proud to help them make awesome summer memories by providing a fun and safe summer program where children enjoy rich learning experiences. They discover new interests and talents, make new friends, and maintain the knowledge they gained during the school year.

Summer learning loss is a real issue. A child can lose enough knowledge during the summer, that by the time school starts in the fall they're behind by an average of 2 months in math and/or 2-3 months in reading. When children start school already behind due to summer learning loss, it's

hard to catch up. That's why we work hard all summer to combat summer learning loss through engaging programs that make learning fun.



While children should never stop learning in the summer, they also need learning to look different and feel different. Summer offers a great opportunity for kids to get out of the formal classroom and learn by doing. At Launch, our children explore math, science, art, reading, etc in a hands-on, experiential way. This structure challenges the brain in different ways and appeals to a variety of learners with different learning styles, and allows children to take ownership of their learning. You can read more about the kinds of learning we do during the summer on the next page. And as always, thank you for supporting our work!

Brianna Jackson

Brianna Jackson
Executive Director

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Thank You Seattle Storm!

Our amazing partners help provide additional fun experiences for our children.

Every year, the Seattle Storm provides discounted tickets to games for our children. They've donated tickets to our annual fundraiser, and one year even let our campers sit in the suites!

A special shout out goes to Meridian Mayer, Sr. Manager, Membership Development & Premium Seating at the Seattle Storm. She's super easy to work with, goes to bat for us, and gives amazing service!

Attending Storm games is a big deal for our kids. Some of them wouldn't otherwise be able to afford to attend a game, plus it's also a chance for them to have fun, see powerful, strong women compete, and get inspired to be fit and healthy. Thank you Seattle Storm!

Seattle Public Schools Start and End Times are Changing!

Did you know that Seattle Public School start and end times are changing this fall? The bell times for most elementary, middle, and high schools are shifting.

There will be two tiers of school schedules and the school day will be 20 minutes longer. And every

Wednesday (except the first day of school) will be an early release day. This change will allow more time for student learning and teacher collaboration.

The elementary schools that Launch serves will run from 7:55AM-2:25PM, and on early release days they'll run

from 7:55AM-1:10PM. Launch after school programs go until 6PM, so we'll have lots of time to play outside, get homework done, and do fun learning activities!

If you're not sure when your child's school will start and end, the full list of bell times is on the SPS website.

What's Happening at Launch

Montlake students enjoyed Animals Week! They took field trips to the zoo and aquarium and exercised their creativity by making animal masks out of recyclable materials and birdhouses out of cardboard.

Leschi has weekly visits from the Pacific Science Center's STEM program. Our younger campers are learning about nutrition, while our older kids are learning about sonar and maps, and how to track missing ships in the water. They've gotten really good at finding beepers hidden around the room!

Madrona had Superhero Week, where children designed an original superhero who helps people using their own human gifts, rather than supernatural powers. They created costumes to match their superhero strengths and wrote comics to tell each superhero's story.

Beacon Hill campers had a visit from bunnies. They got to hold rabbits and learn about them, and some students now want to adopt a bunny! They also took a field trip to the Arboretum, where campers sailed boats they had made earlier in the week out of popsicle sticks, string, milk cartons, corks, and pool

noodles. We also saw otters, deer, and baby ducks!

Hawthorne enjoyed their annual Camp Olympics, which included sack races and 3-legged races. The

Olympics led to a great discussion about teamwork and doing your best. Hawthorne Leap Aheaders also had a visit from the Woodland Park Zoo, which brought in reptiles and cockroaches, shared fun facts, and even let our kids touch them!

Kimball campers got to learn landscape photography from Program Director Jo Hamer, who's a talented photographer. They learned about composition and lines and got to use film cameras to take photos. Once the photos are developed, they'll make a collage out of them. They also had a great sports day with **Beacon Hill** students. They taught each other new games, made friends, and practiced sportsmanship!

Maple dove into "Early Exploration" with a visit from the Seattle Aquarium to learn about the life cycle of Pacific Salmon and their journey from egg to spawning. They also had the Lego man visit and bring ocean-themed Legos. And during the heat wave, they cooled off at Georgetown Spray Park.

Highland Park campers visited MoPOP where they got to see the Jim Henson exhibit. They even got to design their own muppet! During STEM week, a scientist visited and campers made solar panel circuits that made a RC helicopter fly!

Sanislo enjoyed "Games Galore Week" - they constructed marshmallow catapults, fidget spinners, paper airplanes and then finished off the week with bowling. They've also been having weekly visits from the Seattle Public Library, which is doing STEM activities and giving free books to take home.

We also hosted a **Leap Ahead Family Literacy Night**. Our teachers read books to children, plus we enjoyed stories from a Seattle librarian. Each child got to choose a book to take home. We also were incredibly lucky to hear a story shared by Native American storyteller Understanding Israel. She told us "Salmon Boy," a story gifted to her by the well-known Coastal Storyteller Johnny Moses. We were the first group to EVER hear a story inside of her gigantic Salmon Tent!

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Youth Voice in Summer Camps

Long before summer began, our teachers were trained in how to support youth voice while planning for our Summer Camps. Youth voice & choice empowers children to make decisions in a safe space with teacher support. Rather than choosing weekly summer topics, teachers plan with their students. That's why each site can have very different activities and themes- they reflect the unique interests and needs of our children!



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Register for Fall!

September is almost here, which means school is starting soon! Did you know that every Wednesday this school year is an early dismissal day? Launch can help! We offer afterschool programs onsite at 9 Seattle elementary schools.

Kids get time for free choice, outdoor play, homework completion, plus they get to do fun, hands-on enrichment activities that keep them learning!

We also offer full-day preschool programs and full-day care during school closure days.

To learn more or register, go to www.launchlearning.org.

Meet Kristopher Green, our Board Secretary

Kristopher grew up in Minneapolis before pursuing an English degree in Detroit. He originally planned to be a teacher, and while he loved working with children, he found the structure of public schools, the pressure on teachers, and the overemphasis on testing to be challenging.

After moving to Seattle, Kristopher found that he enjoyed working in youth development and felt that he made a difference. He says that to successfully connect with children and families and create a quality educational experience, you need to develop strong relationships. The key is to create genuine connections: “my approach with education is just to be an authentic person.”

During his career Kristopher has worked at Seattle elementary and high schools, was a Student and Family Advocate for Seattle Public Schools, and is currently a Program Manager at East African Community Services working with middle and high school students.

He says what first drew him to Launch was our approach and willingness to look at education differently than other institutions, especially concerning racial equity. As a board member, Kristopher looks forward to developing partnerships and educational opportunities for youth, serving more children, and creating a student and family advocate role.

In his free time, Kristopher loves any and all sports including basketball (which he played in college) and football. He even hosts a sports-related podcast!

