



newsletter

Fourth Quarter 2022



Excited for Back to School Season? We Are!

Launch students are already halfway into their first quarter: they are wide-eyed and eager to do hands-on learning, make friends, and play!

As we continue further in the school year, our incredible teachers will provide students with robust, high-quality STEM, arts, physical education, and social-emotional learning opportunities.

Students have been experiencing enriching activities from local vendors, fun art activities, and opportunities to build peer-to-peer

and peer-to-adult relationships!

Moreover, Beacon, Madrona, and Maple sites have been offering specialized programming from Stem Paths Innovation Network, Double Dutch Divas, and Coyote Central. Our partners are dedicated to supporting the needs of the whole child, focusing on the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of every student.

We hope all Launch students are as excited as we are to be back in school!

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A Note from the CEO

As a mother of four, I've watched my children learn, grow, and mature with the support of our school system. As Launch's CEO, I've seen students with big smiles on their faces as they interacted with diverse peers and teachers!

Every day, I witness teachers making a difference. Teachers take the time to patiently engage each student in learning. Teachers inspire students to be kind to others, learn from their mistakes, and dream big. Teachers care for each student and believe in them, every step of the way.

That's why it was important to hear teachers' voices when they strike, such as recently with the Seattle Education Association: teachers need higher wages and more support to care for their students. Without our teachers, the youth wouldn't have the resources they need to thrive. They nurture our

youth, who hold our future in their hands.

At Launch, we are committed to serving children and families. That means taking care of our staff, so they have the support they need to provide high-quality learning and care for the children in our community.



We trust that students are in good hands as they head back to school. Teachers work extremely hard to provide children with social-emotional learning, STEM skills, enrichment activities, and so much more.

Next time you see a teacher, please take a moment to thank them for what they do. We appreciate them!

Dr. Angela Griffin
CEO

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Pints for a Purpose!

On September 21st, Launch held its third annual Pints for a Purpose event at Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center. We had a fun night of chit-chat and mingling, brewery tastings, and a surprise trivia. Over the chatter of conversation, we shared laughter and drinks, made new friends, and said "cheers!" to Launch.

Through our shared experience, we had collective kinship over a shared purpose: providing kids in our community with equitable access to the highest quality learning and care. We hope you left the night more connected to the community and aware about what Launch does!

Thanks to Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center and our gracious beverage sponsorships for making this night possible!

We Acknowledge That Teachers and Students Deserve Better

We stood by the Seattle Education Association: teachers deserve living wages, training support for special and language needs students, and sustainable workloads. Teachers are critical to reducing the disparity of quality programs for students furthest from educational justice.

At Launch, our mission is to eliminate opportunity gaps in the early learning environment. To make full-day preschool and school-age childcare accessible to all, teachers need our support. As preschool and school-age providers, we know that teachers are often asked to do

more with fewer resources. Launch is also dealing with significant staff turnover and multiple vacancies throughout schools and programs. To better serve our communities, we strive to increase teacher hires and our capacity to offer high-quality preschool and school-age care.

Madrona Student: Meet Emmy!

Emmy is a fifth grader. She's been at Launch since kindergarten! In her free time, she loves to do DIY crafts. She aspires to use her creative talents to become an interior designer!

Launch: What do you love to do in your free time?

Emmy: I love crafting! When it comes to crafting, I'm all in for it. And like, I LOVE glue! Glue is so easy to just build a house with cardboard. And I like cardboard, because you can make it into pretty much anything.

L: Cool! At Launch, do you get to design and build things?

E: Over the summer, me and my friends made a miniature house with cardboard and glue. I'm not going to lie, I think mine was the best! We used construction paper for wallpaper. My walls were pinkish. I wouldn't live in a room with that much pink. Maybe I added a little too much pink! Also, I made a bed with cardboard. And the pillows were made with cotton balls, fabric, and staples!

L: There is an interior designer in you! What are you looking forward to in the upcoming school year?

E: I'm looking forward to doing a lot of DIY stuff because there's a lot more cardboard here than at home!



Sanislo Students: Meet Ysabella and Shy!



Shy (left) and Ysabella (right, current president) are fifth graders. They have been friends at Launch since kindergarten! Their friendship began when Ysabella asked Shy to be her friend, and Shy said, "Yes!"

Together, they like to make leprechaun traps (they have caught one before!), do egg drops from high places, go on field trips, and make sweet treats!

Launch: I heard you are great friends! What are your favorite qualities about one another?

Shy: That she's really nice, funny, and makes me smile a lot!

Ysabella: I like that she makes me laugh every single day. She's never one of those fake friends — she's like a real friend to me. And I love her with all my heart.

L: Sweet! Does Launch teach you how to be a good friend and treat each other kindly?

Y: Yeah. At Launch, there's like this Launch store. When you are president, you can buy stuff with our Launch bucks to put in there.

S: And how to get Launch bucks to buy things is to be kind and nice to others!

L: That's a great system! What are you looking forward to at Launch?

S: I'm looking forward to doing the leprechaun trap! We know there is a leprechaun but we have to make traps to try and catch it.

Y: Teachers save boxes and put it on the tables and then there are cups, bowls, tape, and straws that we can use!

S: It's one of the stuff that helps us work together. There's usually 2-4 in a group that builds a leprechaun trap together. Everyone likes to build it together!

Y: Also, we can't really see the leprechaun. Let's say we made it today and tomorrow it's all gone. We would only know we trapped it if the leprechaun left a trail of glitter and it was *caught on camera*!

Join the Launch Team

Are you passionate about providing the highest quality learning and care for diverse children in our community? We invite you to join our Launch family! We invest in our staff, have competitive wages, and are purpose-driven. We are hiring for enrichment teachers (a \$750 sign-on bonus!), a Payroll Specialist, and a Director of Finance Administration. Please contact the HR team at hr@launchlearning.org if interested! Thank you!



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Sign Up for Program for Early Program Support

Development milestones. Parenting past midnight. It's all super overwhelming! Are you looking to connect with parents & caregivers who can relate to you?

Join Launch for a facilitated parent support group for ages 0-3 where parents and caregivers can share their knowledge with each other and explore topics like feeding, sleep, and discipline!

This FREE program runs once a week in the evening for eight weeks at Yesler Community Terrace. Meals will be provided!

Questions? Contact Nahyeli Mendivil (habla español) at nahyeli.mendivil@launchlearning.org or Ruth Diaz at ruth.diaz@launchlearning.org.

Meet Florence Combs, a Preschool Lead Teacher 1 at Launch!

Florence Combs joined Launch in 2005 as a Preschool Teacher when Launch was expanding its scope to preschool students! In the last 17 years, she has cherished her experiences with preschoolers at Sanislo, Highland Park, and Beacon Hill. For fun, Florence likes to read, visit bookstores, sing, dance, and make art — passions she can also bring into the Launch classroom!

Launch: What do you enjoy about working with preschoolers?

Florence: I like to watch them learn and grow. Sometimes, they would come in crying, but then I will see them progress. By the end of the year, they can say goodbye to their parents. Or they would start the first day of school scribbling. Then, they will leave the year making faces with eyes, ears, and mouths! Some preschoolers aren't potty-trained when they come to Launch. Yet, seeing their peers helps them to learn. Our preschoolers grow a lot!

L: How does Launch help preschoolers to grow?

F: First, caring teachers! Second, Launch cares about the holistic child and their families. We will go the distance to help families in need. If we feel like a child will need extra assistance, we are always willing to put that in place. For instance, if a child is really aggressive, needs help

academically, or has health or hearing problems, we want to address that. We have city trainers, public health nurses, and other supports that help us when we have dilemmas or needs in the classroom.

L: We do! What makes you gravitate towards Launch's mission? You've worked here for 17 years!

F: I love working with kids and enjoy the company of my co-workers. I just love Launch, it's a good fit for me!

L: Love it! Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

F: Launch is a great place to work! Beacon Hill is number one!

