

2023-2024

Annual Report



From Executive Director

Dear families, partners, and supporters,

As my first year as Executive Director draws to a close, I can't help but reflect on not only the past 12 months, but the entire 48 years Launch has been in operation. We have weathered extraordinary change, shifting community needs, evolving funding landscapes, and adapted to new challenges while remaining steadfast in our commitment to the children and families we serve. When there is uncertainty in the future, I find it comforting to know that Launch continues to show up day in and day out, offering enriching programs and high-quality educational opportunities for our most vulnerable communities.

As an organization, we have marked some big changes over the past year. We appointed a new Executive Director, bid fond farewells to several long-term board members, and welcomed two bright, inspiring, and committed women to the board. We completed the first full year of our 3-year Strategic Plan, opened new classrooms, expanded our services, and welcomed over 800 children into our programs. We continued to adjust our programs to meet the needs of our community, while taking thoughtful and deliberate steps to plan for an uncertain future of Seattle Public Schools.

This year, we are particularly proud of our thriving Launch @ Cascade Vista program. This program came under Launch's umbrella with an uncertain future. We are thrilled to have signed a long-term agreement to ensure the Cascade Vista program can stay open and welcoming to a diverse group of children and families in an area of Renton where the need for quality, affordable childcare is much greater than the available supply. Since moving into our new space, we have increased enrollment by 68% and continue to see the program grow.

We are also incredibly excited to have opened Launch's very first Early Preschool Program at our Miller location! By creating a safe and special space for 2- to 3-year-old children to learn, grow, and develop in our care, Launch continues to lead the charge for brilliant outcomes.

Thank you for your support of Launch and our mission. We remain steadfast in our commitment to advocating for and providing accessible, high-quality childcare programs to all children and families – particularly those furthest from educational justice.

- Laura Nicholson, M. Ed.



"The staff is wonderful and my child comes home happy every day!"

-LAUNCH PARENT



About Launch

Our Mission

Lead the charge to brilliant outcomes for the children of our community by ensuring equitable access to the highest quality learning and care.

Our Work

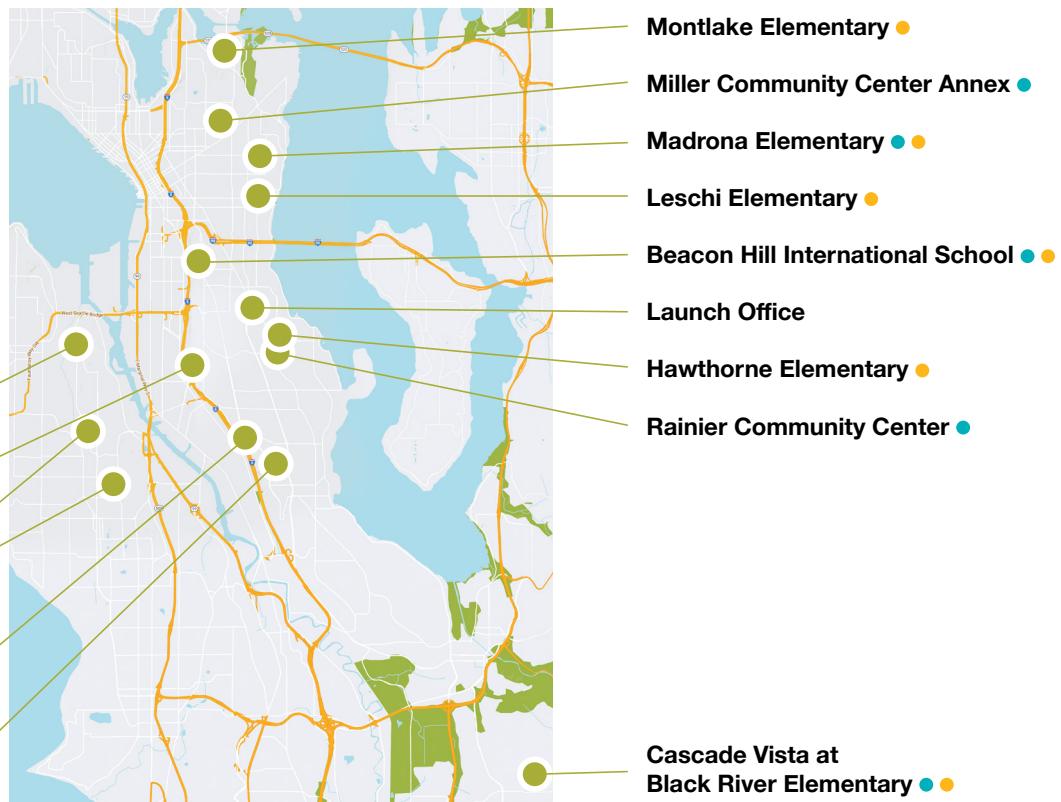
Launch was founded as a nonprofit organization in 1977 by a group of parents who wanted to create a safe and nurturing

after-school environment with quality programming for their children. Nearly 50 years later, we maintain that high-quality childcare is a crucial pillar of a healthy, equitable, and functioning society. Launch supports working families from all social, economic, and cultural backgrounds with a strong commitment to those furthest from educational justice. Families who enroll in our program enter a network of assistance that strengthens the community – while offering positive, enriching, and expansive opportunities for their children.

Locations

● **PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS (AGES 3 - 5)**

● **SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAMS (AGES 5 - 12)**



New Launch site added in January 2025: **Wing Luke Elementary** (3701 S Kenyon St, Seattle, WA 98118)

Demographics

45%

OF FAMILIES
WERE LOW- TO
MODERATE-INCOME
(household income < 80% of
the King County median)

TOTAL CHILDREN SERVED

FY 23-24

817

SUMMER '23

449

SCHOOL YEAR

632

OF THE
FAMILIES
WE SERVED
DURING FY
23-24

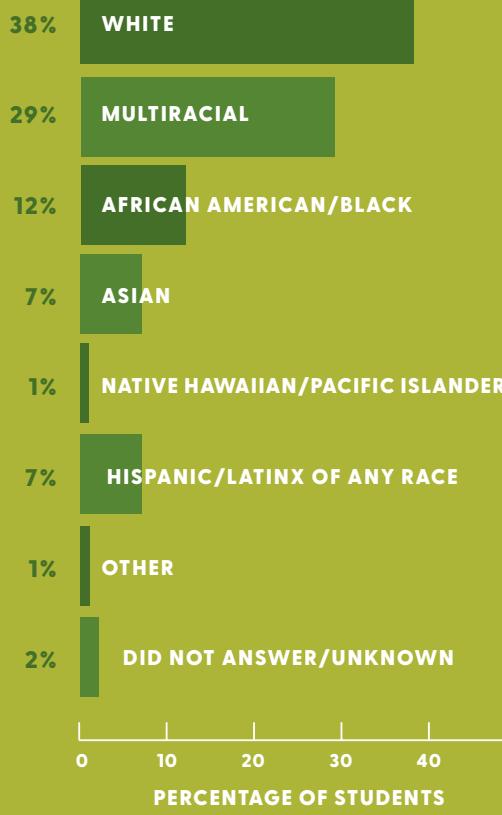
47%
WERE
ESSENTIAL
WORKERS



59%

OF OUR
STUDENTS ARE
CHILDREN OF
COLOR

ETHNICITY & RACE



25%

OF FAMILIES SPOKE A
NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE
AT HOME



5%

OF STUDENTS WERE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE
LEARNERS



29

LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY
LAUNCH FAMILIES

LAUNCH
PROVIDED

\$189,000

IN DIRECT
TUITION
ASSISTANCE
TO FAMILIES

For Teresita, working with children has never really felt like work.

"Every day I come to work I feel happy," she says. "I enjoy being around the kids – listening to their stories, being a part of their daily lives at school, and interacting with their families. This is my safe place to be."

Teresita has been a Program Site Manager for Launch since 2020 – first at Delridge Community Center where she oversaw the preschool program, and now at Highland Park, where she manages both our school-age and preschool programs at the site. She moved to Seattle from Mexico in 1990, met her husband, and has since raised her three children here.

Teresita began thinking about applying for U.S. citizenship about 7 years ago when her work involved helping migrant students and families receive access to resources. A large motivator for her was her commitment to advocating for the children and families she served – many of whom did not have a voice to advocate for themselves.

"I love Mexico, but this is the other country that I belong to," she says. "Citizenship was the only thing missing to make myself visible in this society."

Teresita officially became a U.S. citizen on November 5th, 2024 – Election Day.

"I was surprised that I was told I could vote! I didn't think twice – I did it!" she says. "I felt so happy to be able



to express my voice. It's different when you aren't a citizen – you have restrictions. As a citizen I can speak up for the things I know I have to speak up for without feeling like I will be ignored."

Now that Teresita has a stronger voice, she feels her purpose is to continue to advocate and make noise for the children and families that often go unseen, particularly in a time of political and social uncertainty.

"I'm trying to be more conscious about my role in this society," she says. "Being a citizen gives me power and more weight to advocate for my people – for everyone, including my children. Especially now with everything happening - it's scary, but I'm in a different position now. I can stand up for myself, my family, and my people. It was a perfect time to become a citizen."

Teresita's commitment to her students and families at Highland Park is a large part of what makes the site a safe, inclusive, and special place.

"Kids should not have to worry. They are safe here. I am prepared to comfort and help my students and their families, and I feel so much empathy for their situations," she says. "I try to remember every single day to remind my students that they are safe and secure at Launch."

We are so lucky to have Teresita as a member of our Launch family, and stand in awe of her dedication and commitment to the families she serves!

Our Partnerships

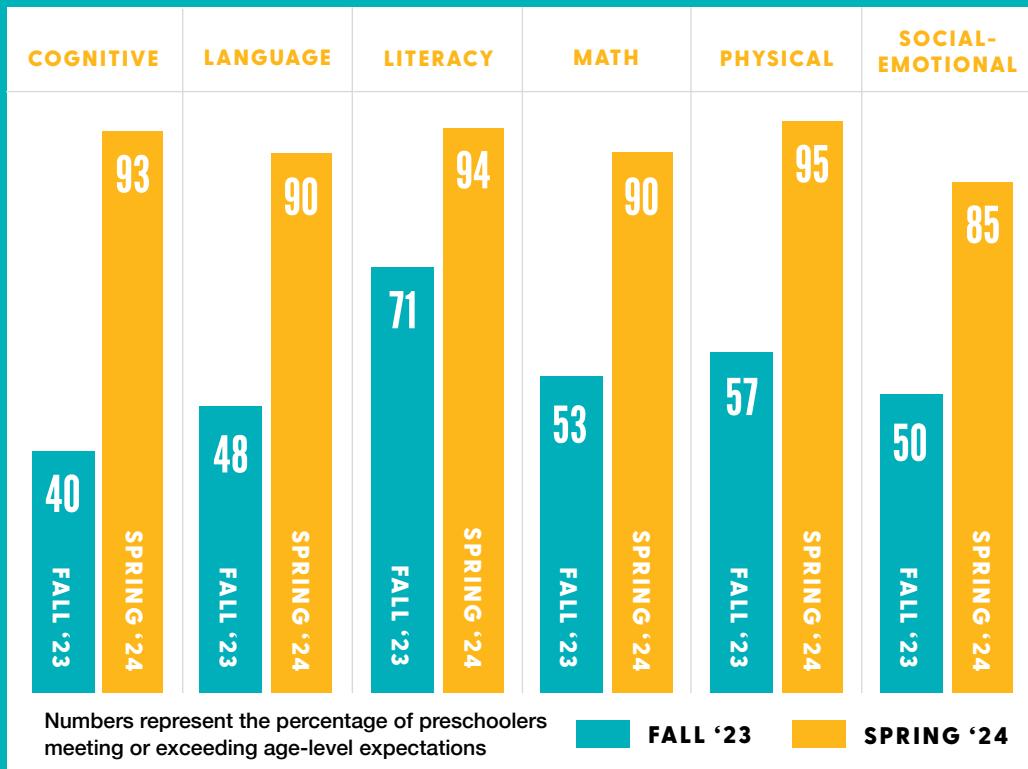
Launch's 2023-2026 strategic plan includes a focus on deepening our engagement with families and communities so that our work is driven by what our students and families tell us they want and need; and strengthening partnerships with other organizations and communities to expand our reach and impact. We put an intentional focus on elevating and centering youth voice and leadership, and partnered with a wide variety of programs to provide experiential learning, fun, and exploration for our students. Our 2023-2024 partners enriched our youth through a variety of mediums and curriculum, and we are grateful and proud to have worked closely with them.

- Coyote Central
- Double Dutch Divas
- STEM Paths Innovation Network (SPIN)
- Seattle Kids Yoga
- JAZZED
- Pacific Science Center
- Latino Civic Alliance
- Generation Skate
- Reading Rover
- Mode Music Performing Arts (MMPA)
- Raising a Reader
- Seattle Public Library
- Seattle Farm to Preschool

Special shoutout to Mermaid Edelina - aka Edelyn Thaves – one of Launch's school-age instructors who has been with the organization for more than 13 years! She delighted our youth with surprise mermaid encounters – an experience they won't soon forget.

Outcomes

PRESCHOOL



PRESCHOOL PARENT SURVEY

96%

Likely to recommend Launch

97%

Launch was a support for their family

100%

Child was able to build relationships with diverse children and staff

100%

Child and family's diverse identities are affirmed at Launch

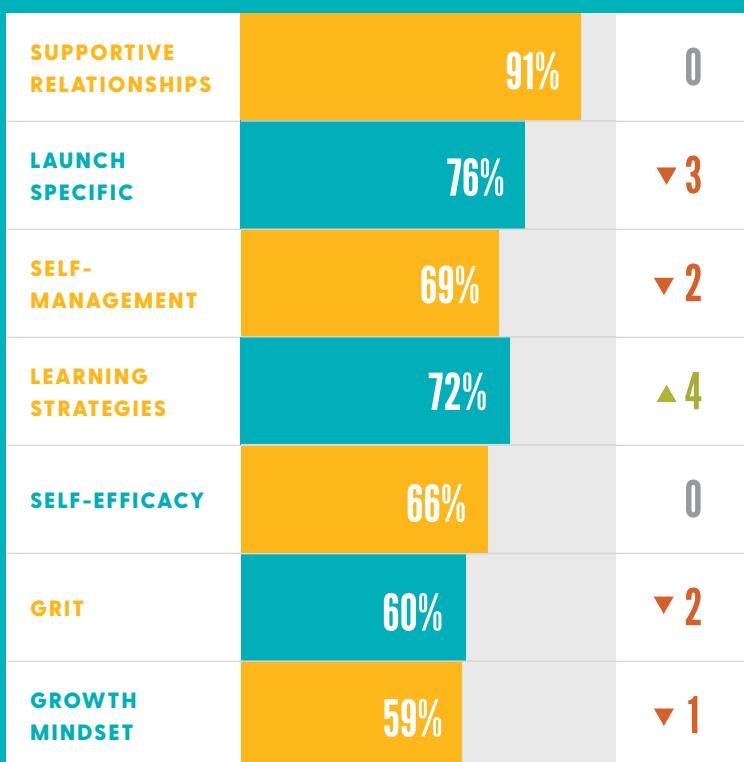
100%

Child was developing social skills like sharing and following directions

SCHOOL AGE

Percent Favorable

Change since Fall 2023



SCHOOL AGE PARENT SURVEY

97%

Satisfied with their Launch experience

99%

Child was able to build relationships with diverse children and staff

99%

Satisfied with the quality of the teaching staff

100%

Child was safe at Launch

96%

Likely to recommend Launch

92%

Launch supported their child's social and emotional development

91%

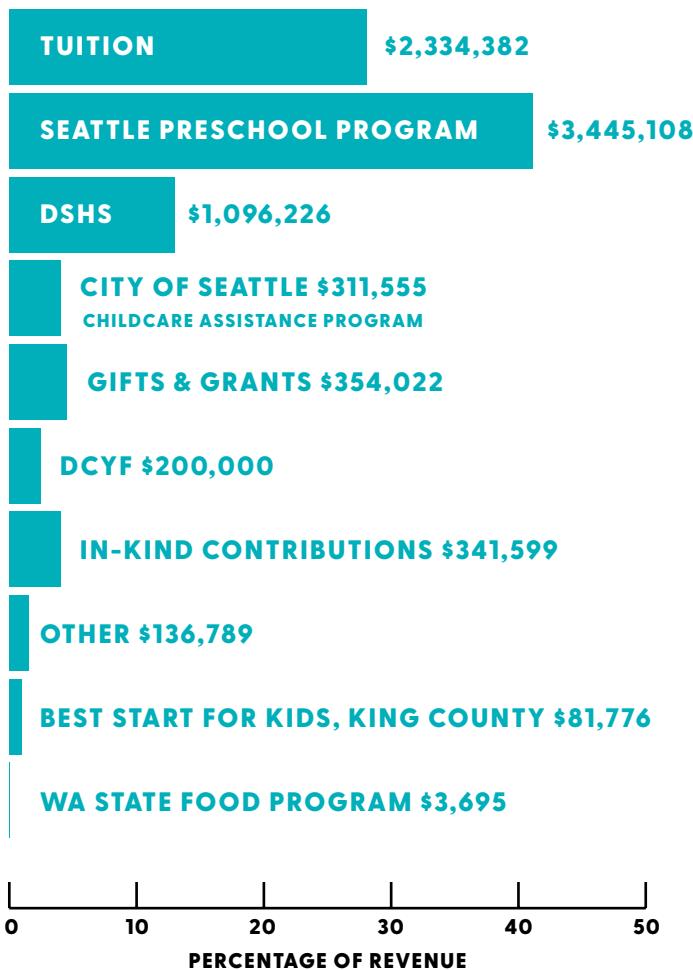
Child and family's diverse identities are affirmed at Launch

99%

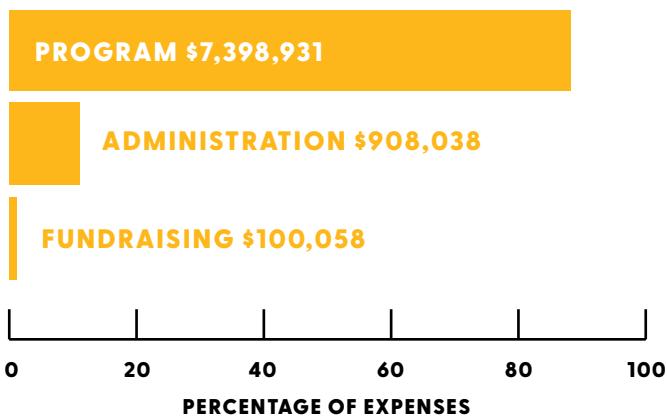
Launch was a support for their family

Financials

Revenue: \$8,305,151



Expenses: \$8,407,027



Reserves were utilized in 22-23



"I understand my feelings more and take responsibility for why I choose to do something."

-LAUNCH STUDENT



Help Us Make an Impact

"I have to say, your staff has meant a lot to us as a family!"

-LAUNCH PARENT

Affordable, high-quality, and equitable childcare is not just a benefit for individual families; it is an investment in the future of society. Launch supports working families from all social, economic, and cultural backgrounds with a strong commitment to those furthest from educational justice. We do not offer first-come, first-serve admission. Rather, we prioritize enrollment for students and families who have 2+ risk factors based on socio-economic background, race/ethnicity, English language learners, homelessness, and disability. A 2003 King County cost of care study finds that the true cost of child care in Seattle and King County is significantly higher than families can afford to pay, or than current subsidy rates will reimburse, leaving a funding gap that impacts the stability and sustainability of the child care sector.

We cannot do what we do without the support of our donors and partners!

A donation to Launch helps ensure that:

- Parents, especially mothers, can re-enter the workforce or pursue careers without the burden of unaffordable care costs. This results in overall workforce participation, particularly among women, and helps close gender gaps in employment.
- Low- and middle-income families feel less of a financial strain, helping to lift more families out of poverty and improve their financial security.
- Children in Launch programs can continue to learn and develop social-emotional skills, such as sharing, cooperation, and conflict resolution, critical for success later in life.
- Children from all socioeconomic backgrounds have access to the same quality of early education, helping to bridge the educational gap between children from wealthier families and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**Support Launch's efforts
to build a world in which a child's circumstances
do not dictate their access to safety, opportunity, and education.**

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