101011000101010101110101010000001 Fall 2023 0

LAUNCH

THE VOICE OF VIRTUAL LEARNING IN MISSOURI

CTSOs Go Virtual!

Our new Career & Technical Student
Organizations are open to students statewide

Agribusiness Addition
Launch's first agriculture class is
now open for enrollment

Launch's newest partnership provides all Missouri high school students access to PLTW's STEM-focused courses

Introducing: Launch

From the very beginning, Launch's online courses were designed to stand apart from other online providers.

What is Launch?

Launch is Missouri's virtual school that was created as a solution for our state's course access issues. We understand that all Missouri school districts are not able to offer students equal course offerings, so we made it our goal to create top-notch courses online and make them available to districts statewide. Launch's digital development and curriculum departments partner to create online courses that are aligned to Missouri Learning Standards and delivered to online learners by high-quality Missouri educators. Launch is partnered with schools across the state and serves the needs of thousands of Missouri students.

Where can I learn more?

Our website, fueledbylaunch.com, is the best way to quickly learn more about who we are and what we offer. You'll find a full list of current course offerings and learn course details, and you can even view sample assignments. We can also send a couple of Launch team members to your district to talk to your team and see how we can help your students with course access issues. If you have specific questions you can't find answers to online or would like to set up an appointment, contact our Marketing and Engagement Manager, Savannah Waszczuk, at (417) 523-0417 or savannah@fueledbylaunch.com.

Serving K-12 Learners Statewide

Recently expanded programming allows Launch to serve all Missouri learners.

Elementary

Launch's elementary programming is available for K-5 students and includes live, synchronous daily lessons with teachers. Students also have access to PE, Music, Art and Gifted services. Classes are instructed by a full-time Missouri educator, and class sizes are limited to meet DESE recommendations.

Middle School

Designed for students in grades 6-8, Launch's middle school catalog includes courses in all core areas as well as multiple world language offerings and exploratories. All class sizes are limited to 33:1 with live classes available, and teachers live and work in Missouri school districts.

High School

Launch offers a complete, comprehensive course catalog for learners in grades 9-12. In addition to traditional courses, AP, Honors, dual credit and credit recovery courses are available. Class sizes are limited to 33:1 with live classes available, and teachers live and work in Missouri school districts.



Contents





SUCCESS STORY

Recent Houston High School graduate Andy Durham (pictured above, right) applied to and was accepted by 10 of the nation's most prestigious universities, and he's headed to Stanford this fall. Learn his story.

DISTRICT PROFILE: THAYER

Thayer School District, which has been a Launch partner since the program began in 2017, continues to find new ways to serve its virtual learners.



WHY I LAUNCH

Meet Jonah Swann (pictured left): a Launch AP Physics student, a Central High School, Springfield senior and a new Guinness World Records holder.



LAUNCH + PROJECT LEAD THE WAY

high school students access to PLTW's STEMfocused courses. Learn the details, and get a glimpse inside a course!

LAUNCH INSIDER: CTSOS & CLUBS

Marketing? Teaching? Business? There's a Career & Technical Student Organization for that! Learn about our new virtual CTSOs and clubs, plus find the ways your students can get involved.





THE VOICE OF VIRTUAL I FARNING IN MISSOURI

Staff Poll Science, Technology, Engineering or Math... What's your favorite STEM curriculum, and why?

The Launch Team

Dr. Nichole Lemmon

Director of Virtual Learning & Strategic Planning

We created a virtual school, so Technology, obviously!

Student Services

Dr. Brady Quirk, Assistant Director, Virtual Learning

Jessica Johnson, SIS Coordinator

Hannah Parsley, Coordinator of Student Success

I can't pick just one! STEM provides hands-on learning that students need and fosters creativity and critical thinking skills that are necessary for all areas of life!

David Schuman. Counselor

Jen Shepard, Counselor

Kelsey Valis, Counselor

Tory Zettl, Counselor

Amy Bollinger, Special Education Liaison

Hillary Suttles, Department Secretary

Andrea Hackenwerth, SIS Coordinator

Science is my favorite because I had an amazing science teacher in high school—I'll never forget Mrs. Turner and her fun songs about mitochondria!

Kaleigh Scott, SIS Coordinator

Marie Bakker, Department Secretary

Hannah Brown, Department Secretary

Matt Burke, Graduation Advisor

Jared Dummit, Graduation Advisor

Engagement & Creative Services

Savannah Waszczuk, Manager, Marketing and Engagement

I feel like I have to say engineering because my fiance is an engineer—his timeliness and organization balance out my creative, right-brained world!

Jared Chester, Graphic Designer

Technology! Because it's 2023 and I still don't have a flying car, and one of these kids is going to fix that soon.

Missy Sandbothe, Launch Support Specialist, St. Louis

Development

Dr. Meghan Roe, Assistant Director, Operations

I'm going to go with Engineering in honor of my son. He's 11, he loves building things, and he's been learning at school how to design, build and test his creations. I'm excited to watch a potential future engineer in action!

Linda Ayres, Quality Assurance Specialist

Nicki Dickson, Digital Developer

Amy Jackson, Digital Developer

My most favorite would probably be Math, because everything is just applied math!

Melissa James, Digital Developer

Amy Shaw, Digital Developer

Eric Tran, Digital Developer

Gerri Flint, Digital Developer

Math. I love how it is linear learning with no ambiguity and progressively becomes a powerful toolbox to solving more complex problems.

Ashley Horton, Digital Developer

Technology. It's amazing how far we've come and where we're going! It's constantly changing and becoming an integral part of our lives.

Adam Robertson, Digital Developer

Shannon Mawhiney, Digital Developer

Technology. I love learning about the history of technologies, like comparing phones and movies from 100 years ago to today, or looking at how stereoscopes and virtual reality are alike.

Tyler Hill, Digital Developer



Nicole Herrell, Digital Developer

It's a tossup between science and engineering. When I was an instructional coach, I saw the kids do so many amazing things in both science- and engineering-based PLTW classes!

IT and Support

Darren Rush, Launch Support Specialist

Jay Grawe, Application Specialist

Science, because scientific thinking is what enables us to gain knowledge as a society and as people.

Mark Grant, Software Developer

Ivy Hamilton, Software Developer

I think my favorite would be Science! Writing a computer program that helps an astronomer find new planets or a chemist understand complex chemical structures would be a dream come true.

Curtis Brown, Inventory Clerical

It seems like it's cheating to say Science... exploration and interrogation of the world is humbling and important to ensuring that humanity continues to be a part of it.

Ben Cook, Launch Project Coordinator

I've always had an interest in learning about technology, because often what I learn brings a new and exciting way to do things, or helps me accomplish things I couldn't do without it.

Adam Shawley, Launch Support Specialist

Wendy Arendell, Launch Support Specialist

Michael Hamman, Launch Support Specialist

Robert Tinney, Launch Support Specialist

Tosha Stegall, Launch Support Specialist

Student Services

Dr. Kim Spence, Coordinator, Virtual Learning

Math! Since the myth of the "math person" has been debunked, we can now all safely enjoy this activity without fear of failure.

Helen Williams, Principal

Engineering! It is amazing what people are able to create. It allows for a combination of so many disciplines, from math to science to art

John Mott, Assistant Principal

Engineering. I grew up watching Saturday morning Road Runner / Wile E. Coyote cartoons. My fascination was always with Coyote's elaborate but never-quite-successful contraptions designed to catch his

Billy Gosnell, Assistant Principal

All of the PLTW courses are my new favorite. I'm jealous that I was in administration when they came out—if I wasn't, I would have been super excited to be teaching these!

Mary Edgerton, Assistant Principal

Jason Bradley, Assistant Principal



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Can we build it online? Yep! Dr. Lemmon shares how Launch continually says "yes" for kids.

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Our Launch teachers are really great—get the details first-hand from our students!

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SPS Superintendent Dr. Grenita Lathan shares how Launch is creating student connections.

BY THE NUMBERS

See a summary of our summer sums + find a list of fascinating figures from our fall semester!

WHAT'S ONLINE

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Student Success Coordinator Hannah Parsley wears many hats—each one helps students succeed.

WHAT'S NEW: AGRIBUSINESS

Drum roll please.... We now have an agriculture class online! Learn all about agribusiness here.

MATH HELP FOR ALL

Launch's Math Labs help Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry students improve their skills.

Contact Us

1410 S. Kansas Expy Springfield, MO 65807 (417) 523-0417





Director's **Note**

Launch Director Dr. Nichole Lemmon turns doubt into "Yes!"

If I had a dollar for every time I heard someone say, "You can't do that online!," let's just say, I could be retired on a beach by now. This phrase, while becoming more and more uncommon, still enters at least one conversation I have monthly. My response is usually the same and includes some variation of, "While it may look different from a traditional school environment, we can't wait to show you how we can!"

In spring of 2022, we were thrilled to announce our partnership with the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development. Launch Missouri's Workforce opened the door to career education opportunities for students throughout the state in 11 focused areas. Our first year was a huge success, as we exceeded enrollment goals and served over 800 course enrollments across four pathways. And the best part? It was totally free for students and districts!

As we began to plan for the 2023-2024 school year, our goal of providing DESE-approved Career and Technical Education programming to our partners became a reality, and we knew it was time to partner

with the nation's leader in STEM education, Project Lead The Way® (PLTW). Our first call with PLTW started the way most first conversations begin... "How would we do that online?," but it quickly turned to "Let's do this online!"

The rest, as they say, is history. Thanks to the vision of PLTW leadership, in April of 2023 Launch made our biggest announcement to date as we rolled out virtual PLTW programming to the state of Missouri. Starting this fall, students can enroll in Computer Science Essentials, Computer Science Principles, Introduction to Engineering Design, and Principles of Biomedical Science. And we are just getting started.

Can you do STEM education online? Yes, you can. And we can't wait to show you how!

Dr. Nichole Lemmon
Director of Virtual Learning
& Strategic Planning



Launch Letters

Our students love their Launch teachers, and we love to hear about it! Read on to see the latest notes shared with our teaching team.

Mrs. Brummel is the Best

I wanted to let you know that I read the notes you left on previous graded assignments, and they are very motivating. I was always scared of doing online school work because I didn't like the thought of not being able to regularly connect with my teachers-your notes, motivation and genuine comments are helping me out. I know it is only the first week, but I can tell I am going to genuinely enjoy this course in its entirety. I sincerely thank you for being so connected and open with your students, even if it is just through Canvas assignments!

Melia Launch Student

Melia, a student in Mrs. Brummel's Physical Fitness class, shared the above note with Mrs. Brummel. When our students love their summer courses, we know our teachers are doing things right! Thanks to Mrs. Brummel for all of her hard work and dedication!-Editor

MRS. CULLEN GETS SOME LOVE

I just wanted to say thank you for everything you've done for me this semester. I don't think I've ever had a teacher check in as frequently as you did... you checking in on me, and being able to inbox you, has helped me a lot. I've been on Launch for four semesters now, and out of all of the teachers I've had, you've most definitely been my favorite! When I got off the Zoom today for my final, I immediately texted my mom and said, "I'm really gonna miss Mrs. Cullen next semester." So again, thank you for everything!

Lilly Launch Student

This student shared this note with Launch History teacher Shanda Cullen (pictured right). Mrs. Cullen has taught for Launch for four years, and she's well known for building positive relationships with her students.-Editor

ontact **Us**

Do you want to share a positive Launch experience? We would love to hear from you! Contact savannah@fueledbylaunch.com with all questions, comments or visit requests.



High Praise for Mr. Douglas

As my freshman year of high school comes to an end, lingering disappointment is attached to my awaited days of freedom—saying goodbye to my U.S. History teacher, Mr. Joshua Douglas. The most surprising fact about my favorite teacher is that I've never actually met him in person. Being a virtual student gives some people the illusion that there is a lack of personal connection; this could not be further from the truth. Mr. Douglas has brought excitement, curiosity and connection to the curriculum of our United States history class that far outreaches any of my in-person classes. Mr. Douglas's gift of knowledge humor encouragement and assesses. edge, humor, encouragement and awareness has been an essential tool in my learning and newfound interest in history... For me, he will be "that teacher" in which all other teachers are measured against. Please include this letter in Mr. Douglas' work file because, for the first time, I want to give him the feedback he so generously gave me.

Ashtyn Launch student

The above note is an excerpt from a page-long letter that a Launch student, Ashtyn, shared with the Launch admin team to share his appreciation of Launch History Teacher Josh Douglas. As students talk about their favorite Launch teachers, Mr. Douglas' name is always among the top names on the list! We truly appreciate Mr. Douglas and the way he works to build relationships with his students.—Editor





Superintendent's **Note**

SPS Superintendent Dr. Grenita Lathan shares why every child needs a connection.

hen I first became superintendent of Springfield Public Schools in 2021, I started to immediately hear about our Launch program. Both educators and leaders from within the SPS community, and fellow superintendents from across the state, shared how Launch helped to create opportunities for students throughout Missouri. As an educator for over 30 years, I saw the value of face-to-face relationships and connections for students. I was eager to learn more about how Launch could help prepare students in new ways.

High quality virtual learning opportunities take intentional design, and Launch is all about intentionality. Connection and relationships are the foundation of all Launch programming as we seek to hire the best teachers in Missouri to serve our students. Last year, as we introduced our exciting new career pathway programming, Launch Missouri's Workforce, I challenged the team to expand our student organizations to enhance student connections. As we enter the 2023-2024 school year, they have more than delivered.

On page 20, we introduce you to eight student organizations now available to all of Missouri's students. With faculty advisors, these groups are guided to solve real-world problems, compete in competitions with state-wide peers, and most importantly, find community. One of the key beliefs of Launch is that a student's opportunity should not be limited by their zip code. Thanks to our new student organizations, this belief continues to become a reality.

Thenta Lathan

Dr. Grenita Lathan Superintendent, Springfield Public Schools



"High quality
virtual learning
opportunities
take intentional
design, and
Launch is all about
intentionality."

-Dr. Grenita Lathan

BY THE NUMBERS

Check out the fascinating figures that currently consume our world of virtual learning.

362 LAUNCH DISTRICT PARTNERS

737,551

MO STUDENTS WITH ACCESS TO LAUNCH

REVISED COURSES RELEASED IN FALL 2023

22 NEW COURSES RELEASED IF FALL 2023

VIRTUAL
PROJECT
LEAD
THE WAY
COURSES
OPEN FOR
ENROLLMENT

SPRING

40,940

ENROLLMENTS

475

LAUNCH TEACHERS

4,367

SUPPORT FMAILS

7,790

SUPPORT CALLS

4,048

SUPPORT CHATS

SUMMER

20,840

ENROLLMENTS

311

LAUNCH TEACHERS

2,316

SUPPORT EMAILS

4,762

SUPPORT CALLS

1,478

SUPPORT CHATS

RETIREMENT-ELIGIBLE STIPENDS PAID TO MISSOURI TEACHERS IN 2022-2023

Enrolling Made Easy

If your district is a Launch partner, we're ready and waiting for your students! Learn the ins and outs of Launchpad, our custom online enrollment portal, and enroll your students with ease.

Sign up & Sign in

Once your district has a Launch partnership established, your first step is visiting launchpad.fueledbylaunch.com and signing up for an account. You'll simply click "Register Account" under the "Getting Started" tab. Once you have your account, you can log in on the homepage's upper right corner.



Next you'll select "Manage," then "Create Student" and fill out all of the information under the "Register a new student" tab. You will need to complete all of the information in the required fields, including the student's MOSIS number.

Time-Saving Tip: If you've enrolled the same student in the past, you can simply type in the student's MOSIS number and click "Find Existing Student," and all of the remaining required information will populate.

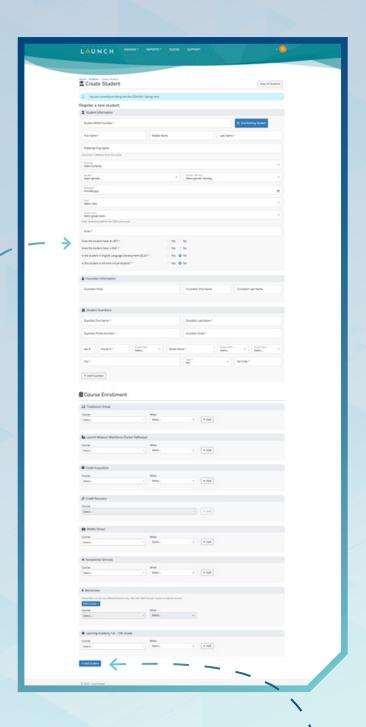


Customize Exceptional - Student Services

After entering the student's information, you will see a field where you can select if your student has an IEP or 504 plan or is in an English Language Development (ELD) course. If you select "yes" to an IEP or 504 plan, new fields will populate that allow you to enter case manager information, upload the plan and select the student's requested accommodations and modifications. If you select "Yes" to ELD, you will have the opportunity to upload their ILP & Access Scores file.

Enroll in Courses

Once you enter the student's information and you're ready to select courses, scroll down to the "Course Enrollment" section. Pay close attention to the course type listed at the top of each section—you will first see "Traditional Virtual," "Launch Missouri's Workforce," "Credit Acquisition" and "Credit Recovery" options for high school students. The page goes on to allow enrollment for middle and elementary school students, Exceptional Services courses and learning academies. It is very important to make sure you enroll the student in the correct course type!



Elementary Options

As you're enrolling students in grades K-5, you will have opportunities to select any specialized enrollment options. This is the only field you have to choose for elementary—the courses will self populate after you select your intended field.



After you have made all of your selections, click "Add Student" at the bottom of the page to submit the enrollment. Within 24 hours, the student's unique enrollment report and student log in information will be sent to the guardian.



Enrolling Full-Time Virtual Students Through MOCAP

If you have parents in your district who would like to enroll students directly into a full-time Launch schedule via MOCAP, we're here to help! Please direct your parents to fueledbylaunch.com, and have them select the "Enroll Now!" button. They will be taken to our "Enrolling as a Parent" page complete with steps and information on the MOCAP Registration process, our MOCAP Academic & Attendance Policy, Graduation Requirements and more.

FUELED

LAUNCH

Course Catalog

Fall 2023 - Spring 2024

HIGH SCHOOL CATALOG

Electives

A+ Tutoring € ACT Prep ■ 0

Algebra I Math Lab Algebra II Math Lab Driver Education •••

Geometry Math Lab

HiSet Prep €

Outdoor Living & Safety

Outdoor Living

Outdoor

Outdoo

Volunteerism o

English Language Arts

AP English Lit. & Comp. ■ • AP • Contemporary Lit ■ • • Creative Writing I - • • Creative Writing II ■ • • English I 💶 路 💷 💩 🖜 English II English IV = 2 0 Film as Literature I ■ ● Film as Literature II ■ € Grammar & Composition I ■ ● ●

Grammar & Composition II ■ ● • Introductory Speech ■ ● ●

Strategic Reading & Writing (9th Grade) •

English Language Development

ELD Secondary •

Fine Arts

AP Studio Art 2-D Design AP Fine Art Appreciation Art •• • Music Theory I ■ o Music Theory II €

Health & PE

Physical Education I o Physical Fitness •••

Mathematics

Algebra 1A ■ # • Algebra 1B ■ # • Algebra I - • • • Algebra II ■ ● ● AP Calculus AB ■ • AP • AP Calculus BC ■ ● AP ● AP Computer Science A ■ AP ▶ •

AP Statistics ■ • AP • College Algebra ■ • •

College Ready Math •

Foundations of Algebra == \$\mathbb{L}\$

Geometry ■■ • • •

Precalculus • •

Precalculus with Trigonometry ■●

Professional Math ---Statistics • •

Practical Arts

Accounting I ■ ▶ ●

Agricultural Science I – Agribusiness • • Computer Applications ■ **©**

Computer Science Essentials Fly • Computer Science Principles AP LPUW •

Hospitality & Tourism Management ■ ▶ I ●

Hospitality & Tourism Management II • Human Development I • Introduction to Business ••

Introduction to Engineering Design Purw

Marketing I ■ ▶ ● Marketing II ...

Personal Finance •••••

Principles of Biomedical Science Plu •

Teaching as a Profession I > • Teaching as a Profession II ■ 🔌 •

Web Design €

Science

AP Physics ■ • AP • Astronomy = • • Chemistry = • •

Earth Science **Earth** Science General Biology **III** ••• Introductory Biology = \$ •

Introductory Chemistry ■● Physical Science *** ** • • •

Social Studies

American Baseball History • • American Civil War • 0 AP European History • AP • AP Psychology ■ • AP •

AP US Gov. & Politics I ■ ● AP ● AP US Gov. & Politics II ■ ● AP €

AP US History I ■ • AP € AP US History II ■ ● AP ●

AP World History AP

Black History o Economics • 0

Government •••

Liberty & Law ■ 0 Psychology = • •

Psychology of the Holocaust ■ ● ●

Sociology • •

World Geography = • •

World History ■ 🖴 💵 👁 •

World Language

French I-IV ■ • • German I-II . lapanese I-II ● ● Spanish I-III ■ • •

Special Education Services

Algebra IA Strategies • Algebra IB Strategies • English I Strategies • English II Strategies • English III Strategies • English IV Strategies •

Foundations of Algebra Strategies •

Catalog Key

Honors Available

Credit Acquisition Available

■ Credit Recovery Available

■ Dual Credit Available

Launch Missouri's Workforce

PLTW Project Lead The Way

NCAA Approved

AP Advanced Placement

♣ Co-Taught Course

Launch Live Course

● 0.5 Credit Course

1.0 Credit Course



MIDDLE SCHOOL CATALOG

ELA

ELA (6th Grade) **LIVE** ELA (7th Grade) **LIVE**

ELA (8th Grade)

Reading Middle School

Strategic Reading & Writing (6th Grade) Strategic Reading & Writing (7th Grade) Strategic Reading & Writing (8th Grade)

Health & PE

Health (6th Grade)

Health (7th Grade) Health (8th Grade)

Physical Education (6th Grade) Physical Education (7th Grade)

Physical Education (8th Grade)

Science

Science (6th Grade) Science (7th Grade)

Science (8th Grade)

Mathematics

Accelerated Math (7th Grade)

Algebra I Geometry

Mathematics (6th Grade)

Mathematics (7th Grade)

Mathematics (8th Grade) Strategic Math (6th Grade)

Strategic Math (7th Grade) Strategic Math (8th Grade)

Social Studies

Social Studies (6th Grade) Social Studies (7th Grade)

Social Studies (8th Grade)

World Language

French I Spanish I

English Language Development

ELD Secondary

Exploratories

Discover Computer Coding I

Discover Computer Coding II Music Journeys I

Music Journeys II

Music Journeys III Outdoor-U

Visual Arts I Visual Arts II

Visual Arts III

Gifted Education

Mission to Mars (Fall) Entrepreneurship (Spring)

Special Education

ELA Strategies (6th Grade)

ELA Strategies (7th Grade)

ELA Strategies (8th Grade)

Math Strategies (6th Grade)

Math Strategies (7th Grade)

Math Strategies (8th Grade)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CATALOG

Kindergarten - 5th Grade*

Homeroom

English Language Arts Mathematics Science Social Studies

Health

Specials

Physical Education Music Art

English Language Development

ELD Elementary

Learning Academies

Launch into Math Launch into Reading

*Elementary students are required to be enrolled full time.

Launch LiftOff

Grades 1-3:

Ouarter 1: Americana

Quarter 2: Wonders of the World

Quarter 3: TBA Quarter 4: TBA

Grades 4-5:

Quarter 1: Citizen Scientist Quarter 2: Around the World Quarter 3: Microcosmos Quarter 4: Myths & Legends

Visit **fueledbylaunch.com** for full course details.



Breakout Room BFFs

After becoming friends in their Launch class, fourth grade students Bristol Michael and Josi Walker have talked every day and they've even met multiple times in person. Learn what the two have to say about life, Launch and maintaining a friendship while living 100 miles apart.



Bristol Michael Sedalia 200 School District



Josi Walker Park Hill School District

How did you Learn about Launch?

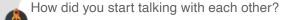
Me and my mom were trying to decide if I wanted to go back to seated school after COVID or if I wanted to do virtual... My mom heard about Launch and did some research, and I decided I wanted to try it.

My home school district set me up with it. I started Launch because of COVID, and then decided to stay online full time instead of going back to traditional school.

What was it like to go from learning in a school building to learning online?

At first it was challenging to get used to being home all day, but after a few weeks I got the hang of it, and it became normal for me. Once I got used to it, I really liked it.

It wasn't too hard for me. I liked that I got to be home in my bedroom with a blanket while I was doing my work. And I also really liked my teachers—everyone was so nice!



It was spirit week, and Josi and I both dressed up as 80s girls for one of the dress up days.

Bristol was like, 'Oh my goodness, she's dressed for the 80s, too!'

Ever since then, we've been chatting every single

What was it like to meet in person the first time?

We met at the park in my neighborhood.

At first we were both really nervous and excited at the same time, because we had never met each other in person!

She went to Panda Express before we met, and she got a little Panda to give me.

We played for about an hour and a half, and when we had to go we were both really sad!



The second time we met up, I made matching bracelets for us.

How do you stay in touch when you're not hanging

We play games online, and we play games and talk through approved apps.

We can FaceTime and text each other.

We like to play a game called Roblox together.











How would you describe one another?

She's funny, she's smart, she's kind, she's pretty, and she's really athletic!

Smart. Beautiful. Amazing. My BFF!

What are your hobbies?

I like to play basketball and softball. I also do gymnastics and cheer, and I like to play with my dogs-they're very fun! I like to play outside. I have a friend who lives in my neighborhood, and I play with her a lot. I also like playing with my family. We'll play board games and card games when it's rainy outside, or we'll watch movies together.

Playing with Bristol is a big one, and playing with all of my other friends. I also love playing with my cats and hanging out with my family—we love to play games and watch shows. We really like to watch TikToks!

Do you have any pets?

I have two dogs. One is a Havapoo named Benny. He's very tiny, but he's super feisty and athletic, too! Then I have a big dog, a Great Dane, named Truman. When he was a puppy he was pretty athletic, but now he's pretty lazy. He doesn't really want to do stuff anymore, except for sleep and eat.

I have four cats. Two of them are tuxedo cats—an old man named Jazz and a kitten named Ace. Then I have Plato. Mrs. Schmitt said he looks like he has a toupee on his head, and now that's all I see! And my last cat is Titan.





What's your favorite book series?

Clementine by Sara Pennypacker. I like how funny she is!

My favorite book series is *Diary of a Pug* by Kyla May.

What's your dream job?

I want to be a cosmetologist or a gamer.

I want to be a veterinarian because I love animals.

And I also want to work alongside Josi. I want to be her assistant!

What's your favorite thing about learning with Launch?

Well, I love my teachers and I love my classmates. I've made a lot of friends! I also love typing, and we get to do that a lot-most of our assignments we have to type, and I love that!

I like being home with my family, and of course I like being able to finish earlier than I would have to if I went to school in person sometimes. Also, my teachers were so nice!



Building the Teachers of Tomorrow

Launch Family & Consumer Science Teacher Jenny Cummins shares her passion for teaching about teaching.

have a passion for teaching. I really love being creative, and I love having fun with it. I grew up in the classroom—not only being in school, but also because my grandmother was a remedial reading teacher and taught Spanish. I would spend my summers as a child in her classroom, getting to set up her things. I was that kid who had the chalkboard and my dolls set up in my room, teaching them. I taught my brothers to read, too.

I started my teaching career at a very small school in Lone Jack, Missouri. They were rewriting all of their curriculum, so I had to develop my own courses. That was a great place for me to start, because for me, the joy and the passion comes from what I get to create and do to meet student needs. I don't think I've ever taught a lesson the same way twice.

I started teaching for Launch in an adjunct position several years ago teaching Child Development. Now I'm full time with Launch, and I teach Human Development and Teaching as a Profession.

I've dreamed about teaching a Teaching as a Profession class for years. I actually brought it up when I was teaching at Central High School. We worked and worked at it, and we were able to bring it in. Then, when I had the opportunity to teach it online, I had to take it.

I love being able to help students all over the state who don't have access to Family and Consumer Sciences courses. And, on top of that, I love that I'm able to teach a course about teaching while the current teacher shortage is going on. I love that



I can reach every student statewide who is interested in becoming a teacher, especially since I was so passionate about it when I was their age.

I like the challenge of teaching online and the challenge of making connections with students who live all over the state. One of the things I do in the beginning, in my original announcement video, is have the students introduce themselves to me with a video. Then, I video back to them. Every single one.

I have had students who were unable to go to a regular classroom due to health reasons, and I was able to be the person who brought education to them. I could bring them a course that they chose to take, like Human Development or Teaching as a Profession, and that's exciting to me. It's also exciting to me when I get students who just work and work and work, and I can help them meet their goals. It's the most rewarding part of this job.

Jenny CumminsFamily & Consumer

Sciences Teacher

Home District: Springfield R-XII

Years in Education: 30

Degree: Bachelor's Degree in Family & Consumer Science Education and Master's Degree in Guidance & Counseling from Missouri State University

Fun Fact: "I recently went on my first cruise!," Jenny says. "It was incredible. We went to the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and the Bahamas."

Behind the Scenes

What's it like to work for Launch? We joined Hannah Parsley, our Coordinator of Student Success, to learn the ins and outs of her evolving role.

7:49 a.m

After replying to a few emails, Hannah pulls up her calendar to review the meetings she has scheduled for the day. "I've been meeting with various Launch teams to learn the ins and outs of how they work," she says, describing her role as Launch's Coordinator of Student Success. "Last year I worked to figure out the barriers that were preventing students from being successful in their courses. This year, we want to improve our intervention processes. My role has evolved into acting as a conduit between students, families and all of the teams at Launch to ensure students have the supports they need to be successful."

10:15 a.m.

While meeting with Launch's counseling team, Hannah pulls up a draft of the credit attainment plan that's been discussed in prior meetings. The group is working on a process that allows them to better serve students who are credit deficient. "We're working to make a plan for them before they even walk through our virtual doors," Hannah says.

12:30 p.m.

After enjoying lunch, Hannah takes a phone call from a parent who is working on their child's MOCAP enrollment. "Part of my job is making sure we understand the individual needs of our students upon enrollment to ensure we have the appropriate services in place and documented correctly on their MOCAP Education Service Plans," she says. "We're really working to better serve all MOCAP students, as well as all students enrolled through partner school districts."

1:55 p.m.

Hannah makes her way to the Launch conference room to meet with Launch's team of secondary principals for her final meeting of the day. "We're meeting to review some grade data from last year," Hannah says. "Our goal is creating an intervention process that helps students succeed as early as possible. We don't ever want the solution to be, "Hey, we're going to have to remove you from Launch.' Our solution is to keep them online and to help them thrive."

3:15 p.m.

Brain break! After typing up a few notes from her meeting, Hannah goes to the kitchen to fill up her water bottle. "I'll have multiple beverages on my desk at any given time," she says. "Diet Coke, coffee and water make a regular appearance."

3:45 p.m.

Before checking out for the day, Hannah works on one final task: She's typing up some notes for tomorrow morning's meeting with Launch's Coordinator of Virtual Learning, Dr. Kim Spence. "Dr. Spence is a great thought partner when it comes to student success," Hannah says. "We're looking at things that can be adapted in the classroom. We're combining what we know about best intervention practices and what we know about teachers and students, and crafting it into something that works for us."



UNCH



Getting Down to (Agri) Business

Do you have students interested in working in the world of Agriculture? Our Launch Missouri's Workforce agribusiness class gives students a jumpstart at their future career.

alling all aggies! Launch has great news for students interested in a career in agriculture: One of our newest Launch Missouri's Workforce courses—Agricultural Science I – Agribusiness—is now open for fall enrollment. "Agriculture is such a big part of life in Missouri," says Launch Assistant Director of Operations Dr. Meghan Roe. "We're excited that we can now offer Agribusiness as a part of our CTE-approved program so that more students can have access to agriculture-related careers they may want to pursue after graduation. Especially since we have so many rural districts statewide who don't have resources to support the program themselves."

Digging in to Semester I

In addition to the basic principles and definitions of agriculture, the first semester of Agribusiness dives deep into Ag Economics. Students learn about supply and demand, allocation, distribution, price elasticity and many more basic economic principles, all as they relate to the business of agriculture. Additional topics include making sound business decisions, keeping savings accounts and record books and more as they relate to farming operations.

Stepping Up in Semester 2

The second half of this year-long course teaches students about agriculture sales and shares information on how to appropriately communicate in the agriculture business world. In addition to covering the basics on written communication and social media dos and don'ts, Semester 2 educates on advocating for agriculture and dives deep into appropriate self promotion. Advice on building resumes, writing cover letters, finding a job, interviewing and even managing time is all a part of the course's curriculum.

The Meat of the Matter

In addition to learning concepts and principles, students are presented with real-world scenarios that demonstrate the major role agribusiness plays in our daily lives. For example, one assignment asks students to make a flow chart of the many agribusiness careers related to a cheeseburger at McDonalds, starting with the beef and dairy cattle and continuing through the burger's final sale and consumption.

Preparing for the Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE)

All students following Launch's Agribusiness pathway will take part in an SAE—a student-led, instructor supervised, work-based learning experience related to Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR). While this agribusiness course prepares students for their SAE, they will begin their SAE in the second level of this pathway.

Future Farmers of America (FFA)

Launch Missouri's Workforce Agribusiness students are invited to become a member of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO).

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

Do you have students struggling with their high school math courses? Launch's Math Labs were designed to help!

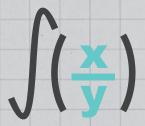
aunch believes all students are Math students, and we are here to help! Created last fall, these specialized Math labs are offered with live tutoring components and provide an Elective credit. Each lab was designed for students to take in conjunction with the traditional version of their class(es), and they're all filled with plenty of resources to help the student's confidence grow and flourish. "These courses are really designed for any student who struggles and wants extra support in those classes," says Dr. Spence, Launch's Coordinator of Virtual Learning. "It's really about providing another level of support and accountability."





Algebra I Math Lab

Students who need extra support in Algebra I are invited to enroll in Launch's Algebra I math lab for hands-on tutoring—instructors host live sessions every week, and students are invited to attend and ask questions on topics they find troublesome.



Algebra II Math Lab

Launch's Algebra II math lab features weekly lessons that are built around the corresponding traditional course's homework assignments. Students are free to reach out with questions and set up a live time to chat with their teacher.



Geometry Math Lab

Created for students who would like additional live support in their Geometry Launch course, this class focuses on supporting assignments and activities as well as additional instruction on pre-requisite skills needed in Geometry and beyond.



Building the Buy-in

Since Launch's math labs rely heavily on student questions, each teacher's initial goal is simply building a relationship with the students. "Once you have buy-in, you'll have success," says Launch Algebra I teacher Alycia Johnson. "But it's creating that buy-in that can be a challenge. I work to do this by connecting to the students by relating to their lives, and I do a lot of cheering them on to build confidence."

Finding the Gaps

Once relationships are established, Launch's math lab teachers help students identify any learning gaps that may exist in the child's skillset. "If a student doesn't understand that the square root of 4 is 2, they're not going to be able to find the square root of 160," Alycia says.

Live Lessons Required

Although students may be enrolled in the asynchronous version of Launch's Traditional Virtual Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry classes, their accompanying lab courses require live attendance. In fact, a portion of the student's grade is earned by attending lessons.





Growing Together

Thayer School District, which has been a Launch partner since the program began in 2017, continues to find new ways to serve its virtual learners.

hayer Superintendent Mrs. Tonya Woods has worked in the world of education for 26 years, and she's witnessed a plethora of changes and developments along the way. Among these changes—and perhaps one of the most impactful—was the start and growth of Launch.

"Believe it or not, I was there when Launch was just an idea," Tonya says. "I was the representative for small schools at a regional education meeting in Nixa. We were discussing the ways we may be able to showcase the great teachers in our area, and how we could make those teachers available to students beyond our own buildings."

Springfield Public Schools stepped up to the plate. The district already had an online learning platform in place; it started serving its own students with online classes developed by SPS staff in 2011. The goal was to make SPS Online courses available to neighboring partner school districts, and Thayer—along with 17 additional southwest Missouri school

districts—pledged their commitment. SPS Online rebranded to become Launch, and the group of 19 schools pooled their resources to best serve the students in their corner of the state. "We've been committed from the start," Tonya says. "But I had no idea it would blast off the way it did."

Over a decade later, and Tonya continues to look to Launch to help fulfill a variety of student needs in her district with every new semester. "When we started, I was just looking for advanced classes—we only had two AP courses at the time," Tonya says. "But it has become so much more than that."

Meeting District Needs

Not long after Thayer began using Launch to expand its course catalog, the district also started using the program to help get students back on track for graduation. "Launch's credit recovery program has been a game changer for us," Tonya says. "We hired a distance learning teacher—Tommy Lowry—to oversee all of our virtual students."

Photos courtesy Thayer R-II School District

"I admire the way Launch continues to grow, and the good that it brings to all of us, statewide."

-Tonya Woods, Superintendent

Mr. Lowry serves as a virtual learning coordinator. He helps students with everything from course enrollment to assignment questions, all while monitoring the classroom where students work on their Launch courses during the school day. "Tommy has been a Godsend for us," Tonya says. "He even checks in with our students who take credit recovery courses during the summer months. Putting someone in charge of your virtual learning is a definite must."

In addition to advanced offerings and credit recovery, Thayer uses Launch for one additional major component of its course catalog: foreign language. "When Launch first started, we had a foreign language teacher, so that idea wasn't even in my view," Tonya says. But after the district lost its foreign language teacher a few years ago, it turned to Launch for all of its language needs. "Now, all of our students are able to take more language classes than we were ever able to offer, all with the help of Launch."

The Student Experience

Thayer junior Atley Woods has taken two classes with Launch—Spanish I and Spanish II. "I took Spanish I over the summer, which meant it moved at a really fast pace," Atley says. "I really had to work to keep up with it. But I had a really good teacher, and it ended up working out really well for me."

Kaden Vardell, a senior student at Thayer High School, also took Spanish I, but she took it during the school year. "I would say my favorite thing was that I was able to work on things at my own pace," Kaden says. "I liked that I could work ahead, or even take more time on certain assignments."

Classmate Matthew Pierce agrees. "I liked working at my own pace, and I liked the amount of help I could get if I



The Thayer school district, which currently uses Launch to serve many world language and credit recovery students, will offer high school student's PLTW courses through Launch in Fall 2023.

needed it," Matthew says. "Whether it was by video or it was just by messaging, my teacher always scheduled times where they could help."

The addition of Project Lead The Way

After Launch announced its partnership with Project Lead The Way in Spring 2023, Tonya Woods was among the first Missouri superintendents to reach out. "We've had a Project Lead The Way option at our elementary school for at

least six years," Tonya says. "And we were able to start a junior high program, too. The kids just eat it up—they love it! But we haven't been able to offer it to our high school students because we haven't had the teachers."

This will change starting Fall 2023, as Thayer plans to allow high school students to enroll in Launch's new Project Lead The Way courses. "This is going to give us the opportunity to offer PLTW to our high school students, which we've wanted to do forever," Tonya says. "It's just another way we are able to benefit by working together. I admire the way Launch continues to grow, and the good that it brings to all of us, statewide."

THAYER AT A GLANCE

K-12 Enrollment: 760

High School Population: 370 MASA District: Southwest School Colors: Green & White

Mascot: Bobcats

Fun Fact: Thayer, Missouri, is situated on the Missouri/Arkansas border alongside Mammoth Spring, Arkansas. "We're really just one big community with a state line that runs in between us," Tonya says.





CTSOs Go Online

Learn how Launch is helping connect students to other students—and to their future careers—with our clubs and Career & Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs).

ver the years, we've occasionally met parents who are hesitant to allow their child to become a full-time virtual student—they worry that they won't have interaction with other students, and they become concerned about them developing social skills. Our teachers work to alleviate these fears from becoming a reality by creating opportunities and connections in their classrooms, and we constantly look for ways to help build a sense of belonging and community outside of the school day, too. Thanks to our growing number of student clubs and CTSOs (Career & Technical Student Organizations), those opportunities are now more available than ever. Read on to learn the many ways that Launch is helping connect students to other students—and to their future career industries—with our clubs and CTSOs.

Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA)*

For virtual students interested in a future career in marketing or any of its related fields, DECA is a must. As one of Launch's newest CTSOs, the program prepares future leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management by giving them the opportunity to network, learn and compete. In addition to providing students a wealth of real-world experience, DECA's competitive opportunities also allow students to practice their communication, presentation and public speaking skills. And of course, the projects, guest speakers and other interactive experiences students enjoy through DECA help them make real-world industry contacts and connections.

Educators Rising

During the first year of Launch's Educators Rising CTSO, many of the organization's student members attended a fall training at Missouri State University to learn more about the education industry, receive information on scholarships and compete. "We also had several guest speakers last year, including Rachelle Peak, a current Launch teacher and former elementary school librarian," says Jenny Cummins, Launch Family & Consumer Science teacher and Educators Rising faculty advisor. "Our chapter also provided live, virtual meet and greets for students so they could learn more about the teaching profession. We're really looking forward to providing even more opportunities this year!"

Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA)*

Nurses. Doctors. Dentists. Surgeons. When you think about your students, you can likely name a few who dream of having a "Dr." title listed before their name one day—Launch's HOSA CTSO is a great first step. The mission of the organization is to empower future health professionals to become leaders in the global health community through education, collaboration and experience, and Launch helps HOSA students do just this by providing them with real-world information, education and experiences. HOSA is available to students enrolled in Launch Missouri's Workforce Health Science pathway.

^{*} This CTSO was pending DESE Approval at press time

Photos courtesy Jeremiah Robertson; Bethany Laws

Future Farmers of America (FFA)

Launch has had many requests for agriculture courses over the years, which makes our 2023 debut of our agribusiness class and the approval of Launch's Future Farmers of America (FFA) CTSO that much more exciting. (Learn more about Launch's first agriculture class, agribusiness, on p. 16) Students who take part in Launch's FFA can expect the same experience they would have if they participated in the organization at a school building-we'll prepare members for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture.

Technology Student Association (TSA)

The goal of Launch's TSA CTSO is to take the study of STEMrelated curriculum outside of the virtual classroom by giving students the chance to pursue challenges among peers with similar goals and interests. "That's really the goal of each of these organizations," says Launch Assistant Principal Mary Edgerton. "They're meant to provide an extension of the classroom curriculum, and to give students the opportunity to compete at district, state and even national levels. They often provide students with scholarship opportunities, as well." Students enrolled in Launch Missouri's Workforce Information Technology and Engineering pathway courses may participate in TSA.

Student Leadership (STAR)

"What if we created an online student council?" After this idea was proposed by a Launch staffer a few years ago, our team immediately got to work-fast forward three years, and STAR, Launch's online Student Leadership organization, is now three years strong and our oldest virtual club to date. In addition to being enrolled in our virtual Leadership course, STAR students meet monthly in student-led teams to plan projects, listen to guest speakers and more.



Launch student Russell Danza (above right) received the Outstanding Member Award at last year's district FBLA competition. Danza is pictured with Launch business teacher and FBLA faculty advisor Bethany Laws.

Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)

Now in its second year, Launch's FBLA CTSO gives Missouri students statewide the opportunity to connect with other virtual students who have similar business-minded interests and career goals. The organization is open to students enrolled in courses in our Launch Missouri's Workforce Financial & Professional Services Pathway: Business Management & Administration sequence. "We had several guest speakers last year, which allowed the students to learn the ins and outs of various business industries," says Launch Business teacher and FBLA faculty advisor Bethany Laws. "They also explored the importance of good communication, volunteerism and resume building."



Brother to Brother

Hosted by the SAAB national leader organization, Brother to Brother is a culturally sensitive club designed to help young men succeed in their education and beyond. "Since it began welcoming Launch students in 2022, Brother to Brother has helped students statewide in fostering a strong sense of camaraderie and support for one another," says Launch Digital Developer and Brother to Brother advisor Tyler Hill. "Our students have built lasting connections with like-minded individuals, all who are united by a common goal of personal and academic growth. Brother to Brother helps them by providing mentorship, building confidence and shaping their character." In addition to providing camaraderie, the organization invites students to participate in various community outreach activities that allow them to give back to society and make a positive impact on the lives of others.

"I would definitely recommend students join Brother to Brother," says Jeremiah Robertson (pictured at left with Dr. Tyrone Bledsoe), a Spring 2023 Launch graduate and Brother to Brother member. "For me, it was a step outside of my comfort zone at first. But once you're in, you become a part of a community full of people who are all the same as you—it doesn't matter where you come from, or your background, or your history-you're going to be accepted into this brotherhood. We become your family."

PLTW While Found with Last scale a

While PLTW works with a handful of fully virtual schools across the US, its partnership with Launch is the first of its kind in terms of scale and student access.



WHAT, WHO, WHEN, WHERE?

Learn the ins and outs of Project Lead The Way (PLTW), and find out why the organization is joining forces with Launch to offer courses online.



What is Project Lead The Way?

PLTW is a mission-driven organization that empowers students to develop in-demand, transportable knowledge and skills through educational pathways in computer science, engineering and biomedical science. The hands-on programming is most traditionally offered in a seated classroom environment and is currently available to millions of students in grades PreK-12 in all 50 states, D.C. and U.S. territories.

Who can take Launch's new PLTW classes?

While PLTW works with a handful of virtual schools across the US, the organization's partnership with Launch Virtual Learning is the first of its kind in terms of scale—PLTW courses are now available to all high school students at Launch partner school districts through the district's Launch partnership, and they are available to every high school student in Missouri through both the MOCAP (Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program) and Launch Missouri's Workforce programs.

When will Launch's new PLTW classes be available?

Starting in Fall 2023, Launch will offer the following PLTW courses: Computer Science Essentials (CSE); Computer Science Principles (CSP); Introduction to Engineering Design (IED); and Principles of Biomedical Science (PBS). Launch PLTW Courses for Fall 2024 are currently projected to include Computer Science A; Cybersecurity; Principles of Engineering; Computer Integrated Manufacturing; Civil Engineering & Architecture; Human Body Systems; Medical Interventions and Biomedical Innovation. Middle school PLTW is also being considered.

Where will PLTW classes take place?

Launch's PLTW classes are offered in the same virtual format as all other Launch Virtual Learning courses, and learning will take place in our online classrooms via the Canvas Learning Management system. In addition to the traditional virtual course components, Launch's digital development team has designed creative ways to portray the hands-on components of the PLTW curriculum into each PLTW course.



PLTW students are more likely to consider careers as scientists, technology experts, engineers, mathematicians, healthcare providers and researchers.

FAST FA

PLTW COURSES ONLINE?

PLTW Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer Katie Mote shares why the STEM-focused organization pose to partner with Launch Virtual Learning

(AND HOW WILL WE DO IT)

s members of the PLTW Executive Leadership Team considered part-Inering with Launch to offer virtual courses to Missouri's students, multiple things caught their attention. "One of the things we admire is the governor's commitment to expanding career programming access, and the work he is doing to make sure that every child in Missouri has access to the education needed to enter the workforce," says Katie Mote, PLTW's Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer. "When Dr. Lemmon reached out and shared some of the opportunities that were available after the latest legislative session, we were thrilled to think about how we might partner with Launch to make sure that PLTW access is available to every child."

As Katie continues, she stresses the goals of the PLTW Launch partnership. "We began to think about how we might partner in a way that honors and preserves seated opportunities—those brick-and-mortar, in-the-classroom opportunities," she says. "Our goal isn't to replace them or compete with them. Instead, we want to reach beyond the boundaries. We want to make sure that things like lack of access to a teacher, or lack of access to curriculum, is not a barrier."

Enter Launch. Now entering our 12th year in virtual education, a key principle of our program is to provide high-quality course access to all students, regardless of their zip code. We have been providing students statewide access to expanded course offerings that otherwise would not exist in their district since 2017, and we're excited to continue doing so with our new PLTW courses.

"We think Launch has a really interesting model and provides a great way to make your most talented teachers available to students, wherever they are in the state," Katie says. And while Launch provides the required certified teachers in the new partnership, PLTW makes its curriculum available to these teachers and Launch's team of digital developers—all who work to design and deliver the content in a high-quality online format.

"An ultimate objective of PLTW is to make sure we have the workforce of the future," Katie says. "The vision that Missouri is casting around workforce readiness—and the way you all are preparing intentional pathways for students—is really exciting. Through this partnership, we're going to increase the number of Missouri students who have access to high quality STEM content by the thousands, and that is really exciting for us."

THERE'S A PATH FOR THAT

Project Lead The Way empowers students to develop in-demand, transportable knowledge and skills through pathways in computer science, engineering and biomedical science.



Computer Science*

Looking for ways to engage your tech-loving students? PLTW's Computer Science pathway is just the ticket. Learners enrolled in Computer Science courses engage in collaborative projects that help them develop in-demand computer science knowledge, all while acquiring transportable skills like creative thinking and communication. And of course, teachers work to show students how their learn-

Courses Starting Fall 2023

Computer Science Essentials

With an emphasis on computational thinking and collaboration, this course provides an excellent entry point for students to begin or continue the Launch PLTW Computer Science experience. Learners use visual, block-based programming and seamlessly transition to text-based programming with languages such as Python, and they engage in exciting activities such as creating apps, developing websites and learning how to make computers work. In addition to applying computational thinking practices, students build their industry vocabulary and collaborate just as computing professionals do, all while creating products that address topics and problems important to them.

ing in the virtual classroom connects to the real world and their future careers.

Computer Science Principles

Coding, Data processing and task automation—oh my! Students in this Launch PLTW Computer Science Principles course develop programming expertise and explore the workings of the internet. Using Python as a primary tool, they'll learn the fundamentals of coding, data processing, data security and task automation, all while learning to contribute to an inclusive, safe, and ethical computing culture. Projects and problems include app development, visualization of data, cybersecurity and simulation. PLTW is recognized by the College Board as an endorsed provider of curriculum and professional development for AP Computer Science Principles (AP CSP).

Projected Courses Starting Fall 2024

Computer Science A; Cybersecurity

*LMW Pathway: Information Technology

Grades: 9-12

Engineering*

PLTW's Engineering pathway helps students adopt a problem-solving mindset by presenting them with assignments that require analytical thinking and collaboration. Courses engage students in interdisciplinary activities like working with a client to design a home, programming electronic devices and even exploring algae as a biofuel source! Engineering students graduate with skills in engineering, problem solving, critical and creative thinking, communication, collaboration and perseverance.

Courses Starting Fall 2023

Introduction to Engineering Design

Calling all future engineers! In Introduction to Engineering Design, students explore engineering tools and apply a common approach to the solution of engineering problems, all which is a part of the engineering design process. Learners progress from completing structured activities to solving open-ended projects and problems that require them to plan, document, communicate and develop their professional skills. They also dig deep into the engineering design process and learn to apply math, science and engineering standards to the course's hands-on projects.

Projected Courses Starting Fall 2024

Computer Integrated Manufacturing; Civil Engineering & Architecture

*LMW Pathway: Engineering & Manufacturing



Grades: 9-12



Students enrolled in PLTW's Biomedical Science pathway courses are immersed in activities that utilize state-of-the-art techniques used by professionals in hospitals and labs every day. Course work is both engaging and exciting as it invites students to investigate crime scenes, practice suturing and much more, all while developing knowledge and skills like problem solving, critical and creative thinking, communication and collaboration.

Courses Starting Fall 2023

Principles of Biomedical Science

Students in Principles of Biomedical Science become engaged from their very first assignment, which invites them to investigate a crime scene and its many components. The course goes on to provide foundational knowledge and skills in fields such as biology, anatomy & physiology, genetics, microbiology, and epidemiology, all while sharing how such content can be applied to real-world situations, cases and problems. In addition, students explore how connections to other disciplines such as computer science and engineering shape the future of medicine, and they practice collaboration techniques that will help them connect with professionals across any field.

Projected Courses Starting Fall 2024

Human Body Systems; Medical Interventions; Biomedical Innovation

*LMW Pathway: Health Science



and creative thinking & professional communication and collaboration skills

BRINGING VIRTUAL LEARNING TO LIFE

One of the biggest components of developing PLTW courses in a virtual format is finding a way to simulate the hands-on experiences. Launch Digital Developer Melissa James shares an example of how we tackle such tasks with the following Murder Mystery assignment, which is given to our Principles of Biomedical Science students on their first day of class.



Case Debrief:

It's your first day at your new job. You hoped your degree in biochemistry would land you your dream job with the PLTW Forensics Laboratory, and it has. Success! You have always been intrigued by how forensic scientists work to investigate evidence that may be linked to a crime, so you are excited to start your training. However, you never expected to work a case so soon! You've just been called to an urgent meeting. Apparently, the police commissioner is calling in to talk to the entire forensics team about a body that has just been found. In this lesson, you will brainstorm and discuss ideas to solve a mystery.

Task:

Solving the Murder of Anna Garcia, a fictional girl who was found dead on her college campus. Her death was considered suspicious, so the class was assigned to look into it.

Investigating the Scene

"On the first day of class, students go into a 'sketchy scene' as they learn how to investigate the scene of the crime," Melissa says. When the class is taught in a seated environment, teachers are able to stage a crime scene in their classroom and let students investigate—online, students are able to explore the crime scene virtually by working their way through a 3D-simulated space. Thanks to technology, students can thoroughly examine the entire room and zoom in to investigate questionable evidence.

Collecting Evidence & DNA

Students note their evidence in an evidence log, which can be used in a court of law to help solve crimes. This evidence includes fingerprints, hair and more that are found at the crime scene, and students look at the items under a magnifying glass. "This lesson really dives into details," Melissa says.

"Students learn about the various arches in fingerprints and how they are deciphered. They also use a drag-and-drop simulator to learn how to decode a strand of hair."

Investigative Interviews & Detecting Deception
During this lesson, students re

During this lesson, students review the skills it takes to perform investigative interviews and learn how to read and decipher polygraph results. They also utilize beating heart simulators to learn how to detect deception.

Blood Typing

"The class also dives deep into blood typing," Melissa says. In this lesson, students look at blood typing to figure out whose blood was at the scene. "All of the lessons use real-life scenarios and have the students explore life-like data," Melissa says. "The courses are so well written—it really makes them come alive."



DESTINATION: LEGISLATION

Does your district need help meeting the newest DESE computer science course requirements? We have great news—Launch PLTW computer science courses are compliant!

Beginning July 1, 2023, state law requires all high schools to offer computer science courses taught by certified teachers using approved content. Course offerings can meet practical art, science or math credit. (See legislation to learn more). And while this is great for our students, there's one big problem many of our state's school districts are facing—they don't have certified teachers to instruct these newly required courses.

The Project Lead the Way curriculum for the Computer Science Essentials course, Project Lead the Way Computer Science Principles course and AP Computer Science A are all compliant with the new DESE computer science requirements," says Launch Assistance Principal Mary Edgerton. "So if a district doesn't yet have courses that qualify, or if their teachers aren't qualified to teach it, we can help."

All students at Launch partner school districts can enroll in Launch Computer Science courses through the district's Launch partnership. If you need help on enrolling, reach out to the Launch enrollment team at **enroll@fueledbylaunch.com**. If your district is not yet a Launch partner and you would like information on the process, or you have additional questions related to our Computer Science courses, email Ms. Savannah Waszczuk at **partners@fueledbylaunch.com**.

Quest for Success

Recent Houston High School graduate Andy Durham applied to and was accepted by 10 of the nation's most prestigious universities—including four in the Ivy League—and he's headed to Stanford this fall. Learn how Launch helped him with his goal of continuing his education with the elite.

Andy Durham started making plans for his college education back when he was in elementary school. "I was probably in fourth or fifth grade," Andy says. "I went to a space camp at Missouri S&T, and I thought, 'Wow, this school is fantastic." Andy loved it so much, in fact, that he made plans to return. "I had my mind made up," he says. "I was going to S&T, and I wanted to do something involved with space."

Fast forward to sixth grade, and Andy learned some news that made him reconsider. "I took the ACT through the Duke Talent Identification Program," Andy says. "It's a program that was designed to help identify talented middle school kids. I ended up getting a 25." This news was impressive to both the school and Andy's parents, and it made Andy realize that his post-graduation plans could likely land him a bit further away from home. "It broadened my college search beyond just state schools," Andy says.

Half a decade later, Andy was on track to graduate as a Valedictorian in Houston High School's Class of 2023. He was enrolled in three Launch AP courses, had multiple STEM Competition and Quiz Bowl championship titles under his belt, and was busy applying to 13 colleges and universities nation-

wide-including a majority of the Ivy Leagues and sev-

eral other distinguished institutions. "I got into

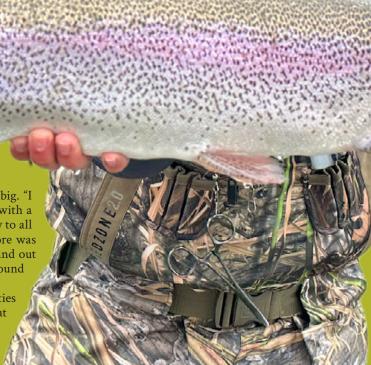
10 of the 13," Andy says. And once Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth, Wash U and several other renowned schools all said "Yes,"
Andy took time to tour his top picks and make a decision. "I visited Columbia. Vanderbilt

a decision. "I visited Columbia, Vanderbilt and Stanford last April," Andy says. "I'm going to start at Stanford in the fall."

Applying to the Elite

When it came time to apply for college, Andy knew he wanted to go big. "I took the ACT four or five more times after sixth grade and ended up with a 34," Andy says. "Once I got a 34, I knew I had the baseline score to apply to all of the top universities in the world." But having this top-tier ACT score was only half of the battle—Andy knew he also needed to find a way to stand out among the competition. "There are a ton of schools in Missouri and around the country where students are getting 34s, 35s and 36s," he says.

Andy applied to the majority of his desired colleges and universities through the Common App—a non-profit college access organization that allows students to complete a single application form and apply it to any of its thousand-plus affiliated schools. Through this process, he was able to use his Common App essay to set himself apart. "To me, it all came down to the unique perspective and experience I had as a rural student," Andy says.





Sharing his Story

In his Common App essay, Andy shared his story of growing up as an academically gifted student in the Ozarks—and just as prevalent—he shared the many challenges that came with this. "I'm incredibly competitive, and my school hasn't always been able to bolster that," Andy stated in the piece.

He continued by explaining how he found ways to challenge himself throughout the years. "I began to spend my free time studying, not just to be the best at my high school, but to be the best I could be," Andy wrote. "I spent hundreds of hours making

study guides and reading novels and poetry—Candide to Cosmos."

Andy's essay went on to defend the Ozarks region by describing the rich pride he grew to have in his heritage. And he also paid homage to his now alma mater,

Houston High School. "In absence of college prep classes, my school made new classes for me so I could maximize learning," he wrote. And he wrapped it all up by sharing how his work paid off, noting the personal records he bagged in regional STEM competitions

and sharing how his leading Scholar Bowl score helped Houston win its first state championship in 83 years. "My community gave me their best education, and I put it to use by being the best I could be," he said.

After clicking submit, Andy didn't know what to expect. "I was applying to schools alongside kids who had perfect ACT and SAT scores—and who had 20 AP classes—and they were still getting rejected from a lot of the top schools," he says. But once he got a likely letter from Yale last February, his confidence grew. And soon after, he received more good news: Andy was accepted to Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Dartmouth, Duke, Vanderbilt, Stanford, Rice, Missouri S&T and Washington University in St. Louis. And that's when he learned that sharing his personal journey paid off. "These schools aren't necessarily looking for

students with perfect SAT or ACT scores," Andy says. "They're looking for students who have done the very most that they could with the opportunities and resources that were presented to them."

Launch Plays a Role

Andy first discovered Launch when he took a Spanish III class his junior year. "I was doubled up in Science classes and taking an AP class that was only offered once a day, so I couldn't take Spanish any time in my school," he says. "They suggested I try Launch. It worked well."

This experience led Andy to discover Launch's wide variety of AP courses, and he added Launch's AP English Literature, AP Statistics and AP Computer Science Principles courses to his upcoming fall course load. "It ended up being great for me," he says. "And not just because of the AP classes—due to the flexibility of Launch, I was able to take time out of my schedule last April and tour universities all across the country without incurring tons of missing assignments. I was able to do those assignments remotely. This allowed me a lot more autonomy in my college decision."

And Andy isn't the only one excited about his Launch experience. "In fact, it worked so well that my school is going to look at what I've been able to do with Launch and try and implement it with other gifted students when they're even earlier in their school careers," Andy says. "It's just so great for kids like me—kids who are from very rural areas, but who are capable and want to learn more than what they're able to learn at their own school."





Member District Directory

Below are the Missouri school districts who are partnered with Launch to help give all Missouri students equal course access.

Academie Lafayette • Adair Co. R-II • Adrian R-III • Advance R-IV • Affton 101 • Al Salam Day School • Albany R-III • Allen Village • Alton R-IV • Appleton City R-II • Arcadia Valley R-II • Archie R-V • Ash Grove R-IV • Aurora R-VIII • Ava R-I • Awaken360 Academy • Bakersfield R-IV • Belton 124 • Bevier C-4 • Blair Oaks • Bloomfield R-XIV • Blue Eye R-V • Bolivar R-I • Bowling Green R-I • Branson R-IV • Braymer C-4 • Brentwood • Bronaugh R-VII • Brunswick R-II • Bunker R-III • Butler R-V • Cabool R-IV • Calhoun R-VIII • Camdenton R-III • Cameron R-I • Campbell R-II • Cape Girardeau 63 • Carl Junction R-I • Carrollton R-VII • Carthage R-IX • Caruthersville 18 • Cassville R-IV • Center 58 • Centerville R-I • Central R-III • Centralia R-IV • Chadwick R-I • Chilhowee R-IV • Chillicothe R-II • Clarkton C-4 • Clayton • Clever R-V • Clinton Co. R-III • Clinton School District • Cole Camp R-I • Cole Co. R-I • Cole Co. R-V • Columbia 93 • Community R-VI • Concordia R-II • Confluence Academies • Cooper Co. R-IV • Couch R-I • Craig R-III • Crane R-III • Crawford Co. R-II • Crocker R-II • Dadeville R-II • Delta C-7 • Delta R-V • Desoto 73 • Dexter R-XI • Diamond R-IV • District • Dixon R-I • Doniphan R-I • Drexel R-IV • Dunklin R-V • East Carter Co. R-II • East Newton Co. R-VI • El Dorado Springs R-II • Elsberry R-II • Eminence R-I • Everton R-III • Excelsior Springs 40 • Exeter R-VI • EYC Academy • Fair Grove R-X • Fair Play R-II • Fairfax R-III • Fairview R-XI • Fayette R-III • Ferguson-Florissant R-III • Festus R-VI • Fordland R-III • Forsyth R-III • Fort Osage R-I • Fox C-6 • Francis Howell R-III • Ft. Zumwalt R-II • Fulton 58 • Gainesville R-V • Gallatin R-V • Gasconade C-4 • Gasconade Co. R-II • Gideon 37 • Gilman City • Glasgow • Glenwood R-VIII • Golden City R-III • Grain Valley R-V • Grandview C-4 • Green City R-I • Green Forest R-II • Green Ridge R-VIII • Greenfield R-IV • Greenville R-II • Greenwood Laboratory School • Grundy Co. R-V • Guadalupe Centers Schools • Halfway R-III • Hallsville R-IV • Hamilton R-II • Hardeman R-X • Hardin-Central C-2 • Harrisonville R-IX • Hartville R-II • Hawthorn Leadership School for Girls • Hayti R-II • Hazelwood • Henry Co. R-I • Hickory Co. R-I • Higbee R-VIII • High Point R-III • Hillsboro R-III • Holliday C-2 • Hollister R-V • Houston R-I • Howell Valley R-I • Humansville R-IV • Hume R-VIII • Hurley R-I • Iberia R-V • Independence 30 • Iron County C4 • Jackson R-II • Jefferson C-123 • Jefferson City • Johnson Co. R-VII • Junction Hill C-12 • Kansas City 33 • Kearney R-I • King City R-I • Kingsville R-I • Kipp St. Louis Public Shools • Kirbyville R-VI • Kirkwood R-VII • La Monte R-IV • Laclede Co. C-5 • Laclede County R-1 • Ladue • Lafayette Co. C-1 • Lakeland Behavioral Health System • Lamar R-I • Laquey R-V • Lathrop R-II • Lawson R-XIV • Lebanon R-III • Leeton R-X • Leopold R-III • Lexington R-V • Liberal R-II • Liberty 53 • Licking R-VIII • Lift for Life Academy • Lincoln R-II • Lindbergh Schools • Logan-Rogersville R-VIII • Lone Jack C-6 • Lonedell R-XIV • Louisiana R-II • Macks Creek R-V • Macon Co. R-I • Macon Co. R-IV • Madison C-3 • Malta Bend R-V • Mansfield R-IV • Maplewood Richmond Heights • Maries Co. R-I • Marion C. Early R-V • Marion Co. R-II • Mark Twain R-VIII • Marquand-Zion R-VI • Marshall • Marshfield R-I • Maryville R-II • Maysville R-I • McDonald Co. R-I • Meadow Heights R-II • Meramec Valley R-III • Miami R-I • Mid-Buchanan Co. R-V • Midway R-I • Milan C-2 • Miller Co. R-III • Miller R-III • Moberly • Momentum Academy STL • Monett R-I • Moniteau Co. R-I • Montgomery Co. R-II • Montrose R-XIV • Morgan Co. R-I • Morgan Co. R-II • Mound City R-II • Mountain Grove R-III • Mountain View-Birch Tree R-III • Mt. Vernon R-V • Naylor R-II • Neelyville R-IV • Neosho School District • Nevada • New Bloomfield R-III • New Franklin R-I • New Haven School District • New Madrid Co. R-I • Newburg R-II • Newtown-Harris R-III • Niangua R-V • Nixa • Nodaway-Holt R-VII • Norborne R-VIII • Normandy Schools Collaborative • North Andrew Co. R-VI • North Davies R-III • North Harrison R-III • North Kansas City 74 • North Mercer Co. R-III • North Nodaway Co. R-VI • North Pemiscot Co. R-I • North Platte Co. North Shelby • North St. Francois Co. R-I • Northeast Nodaway Co. R-V • Northeast Randolph Co. R-IV • Northeast Vernon Co. R-I • Northwest R-I • Northwestern R-I • Oak Grove R-VI • Oak Hill R-I • Odessa R-VII • Orchard Farm R-V • Oregon-Howell R-III • Orrick R-XI • Osage Co. 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R-II • South Holt Co. R-I • South Iron Co. R-I • South Nodaway Co. R-IV • Southern Boone Co. R-I • Southern Reynolds R-II • Southland C-9 • Southwest Livingston Co. R-I • Southwest R-V • Sparta R-III • Spokane R-VII • Springfield Catholic Schools • Springfield Private Schools • Springfield R-XII • St. Charles R-VI • St. James R-I • St. John Vianney High School • St. Joseph • Stanberry R-II • Ste. Genevieve Co. R-II • Steelville R-III • Stewartsville C-2 • Stockton R-I • Strafford R-VI • Strasburg C-3 • Sturgeon R-V • Success R-VI • Sullivan • Summersville R-II • Sunrise R-IX • Sweet Springs R-VII • Tarkio R-I • Theyer R-II • The Arch Community School • The Biome • The Goodwill Excel Centers • Tipton R-VI • Troy R-III • Union R-XI • University City • Valley Park • Van Buren R-I • Van-Far R-I • Verona R-VII • Victory Academy • Walnut Grove R-V • Warren Co. 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