

MORE TO EXPLORE: ADDITIONAL WORLD LANGUAGES AVAILABLE NOW

Fall 2019

ACCESS

LAUNCH

THE VOICE OF VIRTUAL LEARNING IN MISSOURI

PARTNERING TO PROVIDE

When it comes to offering quality virtual course access to all Missouri students, every school district in the state holds a piece of the puzzle. Learn how Launch helps us all unite.

Your Virtual Solution

Learn how Launch fits into Missouri's Virtual Legislation

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 as well as courses in the development process, and you can even view sample assignments. We can also send a couple of Launch team members to your district to talk to your leaders and see how we can help your students with course access issues. If you have specific questions you can't find online or would like to set up an appointment, you can contact our Marketing and Engagement Manager, Savannah Waszczuk, at 417-523-0417 or savannah@fueledbylaunch.com.

Launch: **Three Ways to Learn**

Launch delivers courses multiple ways to meet the needs of all Missouri learners.



Traditional Virtual

Launch's Traditional Virtual courses are perfect for those students who are looking to build flexibility into their schedules or take courses that aren't traditionally offered in their districts. Traditional Virtual courses are NCAA and MSHSAA approved and start and stop with our traditional calendar.



Credit Recovery

If a student has failed a class, they're eligible to make it up online with our Credit Recovery offerings. Credit Recovery offers Missouri learners a way to makeup credit with courses that are MSHSAA approved and have the benefit of flexible start dates. Priority standards are assessed at 80% mastery.



Credit Acquisition

What happens when students want to enroll six weeks into the semester? They can start right away with our Credit Acquisition courses! Credit Acquisition helps students who transfer or re-enter mid-semester and offers credit with a pass or fail grade or a traditional grade. Students get full course content with flexible course dates.

Launch's high school courses are available in the methods listed above. In addition to high school courses, Launch also has a full middle school catalog available.

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The Launch Team

Dr. Ben Hackenwerth *Executive Director*

A friendly staff. Our team members are always available and eager to help anyone, whether it's a partner district liaison or a Launch student.

Dr. Nichole Lemmon *Director, Digital Learning*

We are willing to jump in a car and meet people face-to-face to discuss options, solutions and ways to say "yes" to kids.

Janna Elfrink *Coordinator, Digital Learning*

We make it a point to connect with our partner districts to discover how we can continue to offer the best educational experience for all students.

Christopher Kensinger *Specialist of Student Services*

Missouri teachers. Students across the state have virtual course access delivered by qualified, certified and experienced teachers.

Dave Schuman *Launch Counselor*

Options. I love that we have multiple pathways to get kids to graduation.

Amanda Moskalew *Administrative Assistant, Springfield*

The amazing swag! Launch students love to show off their Launch swag while they learn.

Shelby Blankenship *Launch Registrar*

Tutoring. It makes me really happy to see students excel, and it's great that we can help them along the way.

Shannon Gilliland *Launch Support Specialist, Kansas City*

Our swag, and the way it has helped with brand recognition. No matter where we go in Missouri, people recognize the Launch logo and know they are not alone in what could feel like a faceless online environment.

Missy Sandbothe *Launch Support Specialist, St. Louis*

I appreciate the focus on meeting the needs of students by thinking out of the box and reinventing Launch every day.

Stacey Walker *Administrative Assistant, Kansas City*

As a newbie to Launch, I am loving how helpful everyone is! Whenever I have a question, all I have to do is send an email or make a phone call and I get my questions answered fast.

Creative Services

Savannah Waszczuk *Manager, Marketing and Engagement*

The free marketing materials we customize for partner school districts. Counselors and principals get so excited when they see their mascot or logo printed on our stuff!

Jared Chester *Graphic Designer*

The commitment to making sure students are successful learners either by phone calls, inbox messages or even knocking on doors.

Daniel McDonald *Video Producer*

A staff that truly cares for students and goes above and beyond to meet kids on their level.

Walker Smith *Video Producer*

Quality customer service. Our partners always comment on how helpful our support team is.

Development

Dr. Meghan Roe *Coordinator, Course Development*

We offer quality online courses on a very flexible schedule. Would you rather finish Personal Finance in 8 weeks or 16 weeks? Either one works!

Linda Ayres *Quality Assurance Specialist*

Launch swag! We have some of the best—sunglasses, fanny packs, socks, etc., and our Launch balm is some of the best chapstick ever!

Nicki Dickson *Digital Developer*

The opportunities our program provides, and our customer service.

Justin Thomas *Digital Developer*

Innovative design elements to facilitate a better online learning environment.

Brad Maples *Digital Developer*

I enjoy the celebrations we share in the Springfield office. When our staff announces a new online-only graduate, they can "walk" in our office and are provided a small graduation ceremony that's complete with music, a cap and gown and a spiffy orange-colored Launch tassel.

Amy Jackson *Digital Developer*

We do school when and where you need it. Want to travel the world? Want to practice to compete in the Olympics? We got your classes!

Melissa James *Digital Developer*

The snack wall in our Springfield office. Students who come in can receive tutoring and unlimited M&Ms!

Darren Rush *Launch Software Developer*

The logos and animated images we create for every new partner district.

Adam Shawley *Launch Help Desk*

Our ability to answer phone calls late into the night (sometimes with bonus train horn sounds in the background)!

Tyler Gray *Launch Help Desk*

Flexibility for all students. Also, the way we work with individual students to ensure that they have every opportunity to succeed.



4 DIRECTOR'S NOTE

With Launch, every student matters. Learn more from Dr. Nichole Lemmon.

5 WHAT'S ONLINE?

Our website is filled with dozens of Launch facts and figures. Explore at your leisure!

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By working together, Missouri school districts can provide the best solution to course access.

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Launch's digital development team does much more than build online courses. We follow Nicki Dickson for a glimpse of the action.

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Can you speak German? Our students will be able to thanks to our expanded world language offerings! Also, learn how our ACT Prep course helps students on the college entrance exam.

20 LAUNCHING OUR QUALITY

Launch partners with Quality Matters to ensure its online classes are the very best they can be.

Contact Us

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support@fueledbylaunch.com

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🐦 twitter

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Grain Valley High School junior Tyler Hagan uses Launch to keep up on his school work as he competes in BMX races nationwide.

PARTNERING TO PROVIDE ↑

Launch has united nearly 200 school districts statewide. Learn the inner workings of the purpose-driven program, which provides Missouri students with quality virtual course access.



“While there has been exponential growth in our organization, we are still focused on the individual students we serve and their individual needs and stories.”

—Dr. Nichole Lemmon

Director's **Note**

As Launch continues to grow and now serves the needs of thousands of Missouri learners, our team continues to focus on the importance of every student.

Lots of numbers come to mind when I think about the start of the second year of Launch:

- **196:** the number of Missouri school districts partnering with Launch
- **22,600:** peak enrollment for summer 2019
- **22:** the number of Launch staff now on board to support virtual learners across the state
- **3:** the number of Launch offices now open in Missouri
- **180:** the number of courses now available to middle and high school students statewide

And while all of these numbers are important, for me, the most important number of all is one. While there has been exponential growth in our organization, we are still focused on the individual students we serve and their individual needs and stories.

This spring I was reminded of the importance of one when we watched Sophya Batista (pictured with her family, right) graduate from high school. If you've been following her journey, you know she was featured in Access Launch in summer 2018 as a fighter in every sense of the word. As her life zig-zagged her across our country, high school graduation seemed impossible. That's where Launch came in. We got to know Sophya as a regular in our office, a brave and bold young adult who was determined to graduate. On May 8, she did it. Through tears and hugs, we congratulated her and encouraged her to take the next important steps. Sophya will start Ozarks Technical Community College this fall with the goal of becoming an occupational therapist. She is still boxing and still pursuing her dreams, but now with a high school diploma fueling her way.



I'm often asked how big Launch could get. While lots of numbers fly through my brain, my answer is simple: we will continue to work until each student in Missouri has access to high-quality online courses.

See you online,

Dr. Nichole Lemmon
Director, Digital Learning

What's Online

Our website shares a wealth of Launch information, and our liaison portal ensures a smooth enrollment process for partner districts statewide.



LAUNCHPAD

A Simplified Enrollment Process

Launchpad, Launch's exclusive liaison portal, makes it easy for partner districts to register and enroll students. Once you register for an account and enter the student's enrollment information, the student can begin working within 24 hours!

Support Along the Way

The Launch team created guidebooks for liaisons and students to use as a resource during their time in Launch courses. The guides feature information on getting started, navigation tips, information on how to be a successful student and more.

Let's Get Technical

When it's time for Launch students to get started with their online course work, we don't want them to have any hiccups. Our external content whitelist was created to help with the process. Partner district liaisons should share our external content whitelist with their district's tech departments to ensure all links and external tools are good to go on the first day of class.

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Launch Course Catalog

Launch's course catalog features 180 high school and middle school courses! Learn more about our virtual offerings, see sample assignments and find each course's Major Topics & Concepts by unit online.

The Launch Blog

Extra, extra—read all about us! Every week, we share the stories of Launch students and teachers from partner districts on our blog. Get a glimpse inside of Launch's virtual world, and stay up to date with announcements and the latest breaking news!

Frequently Asked Questions

Our website includes answers to the most common Launch-related questions we hear from school districts, parents and students. Are you wondering the cost of a Launch course? Are you curious about how we hire our teachers? Are you wondering about A+ eligibility or dual credit opportunities? You'll learn these answers and much more with our online FAQs!



Follow, Tweet and Retweet!

The best way to keep up to date with [@fueledbylaunch](https://twitter.com/fueledbylaunch) is to connect with us on Twitter! Follow us to see breaking Launch announcements and offerings, learn where we're traveling, request a meeting or learn our latest district partnerships.



Superintendent's Note

By partnering with Launch, Missouri school districts contribute to a greater purpose: providing students virtual courses designed in their best interest.

As educators, we are tasked with ensuring the success of all students. This requires us to provide a variety of learning opportunities that meet the unique needs of all learners. Over the last few years, as virtual education options have become more mainstream, legislation has also required public school districts in Missouri to find quality providers.

As districts seek to find solutions, it is critical that we develop collaborative partnerships through this journey and ensure the partnerships are designed in the best interest of ALL Missouri students.

Two years ago, Springfield Public Schools began offering Launch virtual courses to partner districts across the state. Through these collaborative partnerships, we have committed to work directly with school districts like yours, maintaining a commitment to allow districts to retain full control of their student enrollment and funding while protecting against low quality providers who may be more driven by profit than purpose.

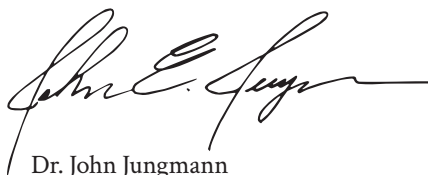
Nearly 200 partners strong, we are proud to remain committed to the same foundational ideas:

- **All Launch enrollments come directly from our partners.** We do not seek enrollments directly from families, nor do we market directly to parents.
- Launch tuition **rates are below the national average** for virtual

courses with the commitment of SPS to invest proceeds into Launch infrastructure and expansion.

- **All Launch courses are built using Missouri Learning Standards** by the Launch course development team, recently recognized by Quality Matters for outstanding course quality.
- All Launch courses are **taught by Missouri certified teachers** who currently work in partner districts.
- Launch has a **comprehensive middle and high school catalog with 180 courses**.
- Launch **credits are awarded through Springfield Public Schools**, a fully-accredited Missouri public school district.
- **Launch meets Missouri Statute 162.1250 as a virtual courseware provider.**

Together, as public schools we are collectively solving course access issues across the state with quality virtual courses, **designed, developed and delivered by Missouri teachers for Missouri students**. Thank you for your partnerships and commitment to all students.



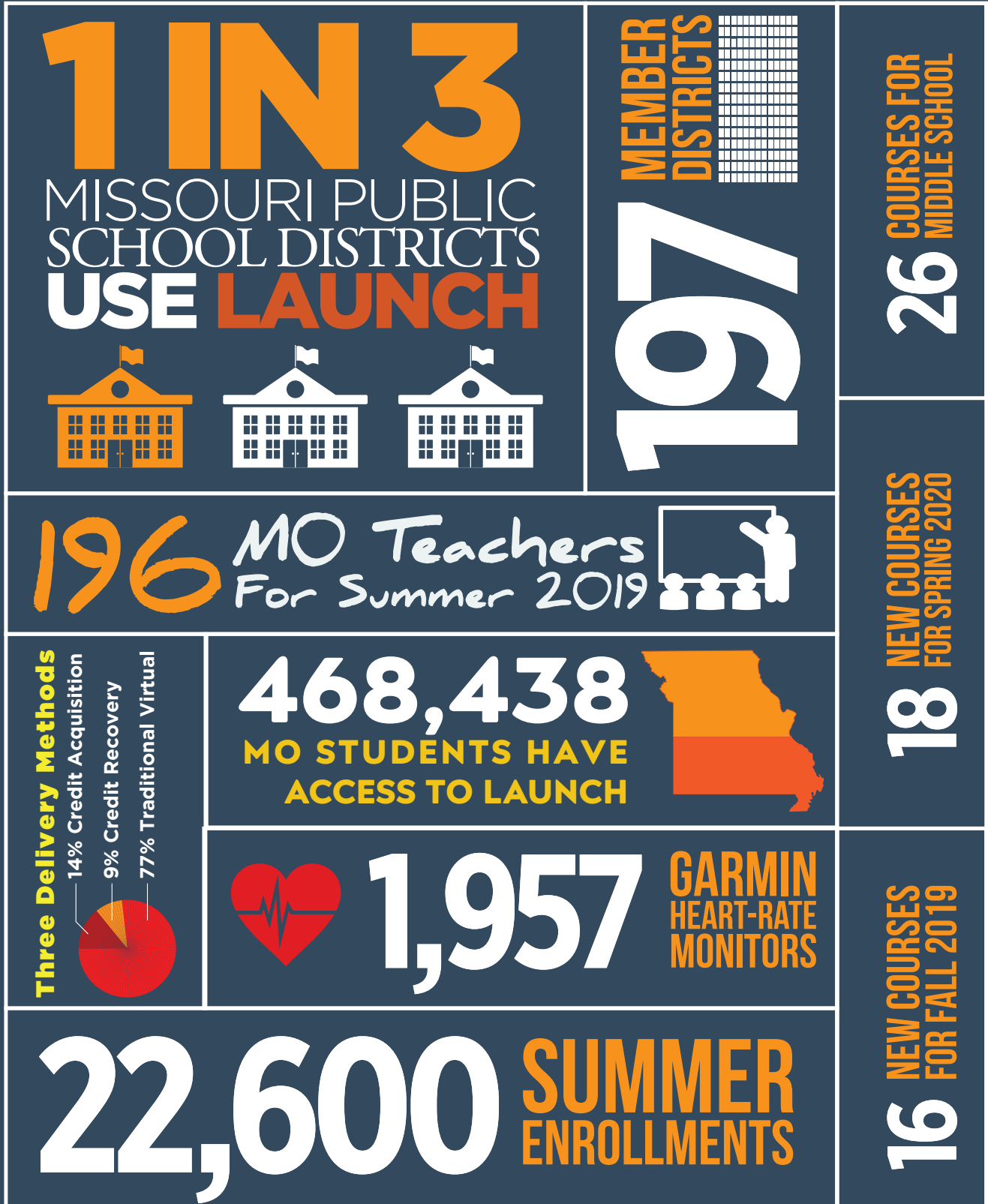
Dr. John Jungmann
Superintendent, Springfield Public Schools



“As districts seek to find solutions, it is critical that we develop collaborative partnerships through this journey and ensure the partnerships are designed in the best interest of ALL Missouri students.”
–Dr. John Jungmann

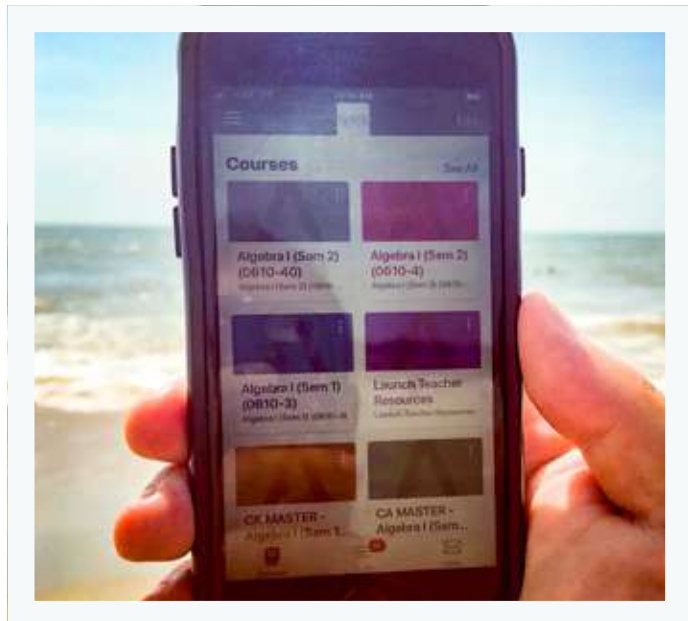
By the Numbers

Check out the latest stats that sum up the summer semester in our world of virtual learning.



Launch Letters

You talk, and we listen! Read on to see the latest notes we've received from Launch teachers, liaisons and students.



Mr. Brian Pyck, Launch's Algebra I instructor, taught some of his courses from the beach at Murrells Inlet, South Carolina, in summer 2019. "I actually graded a lot from the beach, and did some parent contact communication," Mr. Pyck says. Launch worked with 196 Missouri teachers and served more than 22,000 virtual course enrollments over the summer.—Editor

A Teacher Tribute

"I wanted to pass along some very positive feedback regarding Launch teacher Bethany Laws. [We have] a student who is taking Personal Finance for dual credit, and this student had a wonderful experience in Bethany's class. The student highly recommends Bethany to others and says she is very encouraging and supportive. Recently, the student said Ms. Laws took the time to send an email telling the student what a great job she's doing and to keep up the good work. We are very impressed and looking forward to the positive experiences our students will have next year."

Jami McCoy

High School Counselor
Clinton Public Schools

Clinton High School Counselor Jamie McCoy sent this note to Launch after a student had a positive experience with one of our teachers, Bethany Laws, during the spring 2019 semester. Bethany is Launch's full-time business teacher, and she spent more than six years in post-secondary education before she started working for Launch. Today, one of Bethany's favorite things about her job is building relationships with students all over Missouri. Bethany will be Launch's full-time business teacher again during the 2019–2020 school year.—Editor

Happy Moms Across Missouri

"Just thought you would like to hear this—I had a mom who went on and on about how excited her family was to have this opportunity to take Launch courses this summer. This mom has three kids, and they can't wait to get started. They are from Waynesville. Your vision is really creating great things for kids!"

Cary Sikes

Launch Summer Academies Instructor
Springfield Public Schools

This letter was sent from one of Launch's summer academy instructors to Launch's Director of Digital Learning, Dr. Nichole Lemmon. The Launch instructor was working with Missouri students enrolled in Launch's summer academies—during our June and July sessions, we offer reading, math and coding academies for students in grades 1–12. These academies use adaptive software to keep students engaged and help prevent summer slide, and they are available to students in partner districts statewide.—Editor

Mr. McLain Speaks Out

"Working for Launch has given me the opportunity to become a better teacher because of the occasional miscommunication (since the conversations are not face-to-face). In a face-to-face conversation, I can check on body language and gestures, however, in the online world, those are not as readily available. I give great grace to parents and kids, because I need that grace and understanding in return. In a very complimentary communication I had with a parent on Friday, I explained that I treat my students like I want teachers to treat my own children."

Todd McLain

Launch Physical Fitness Instructor
Springfield Public Schools

Todd McLain, Launch's Physical Fitness Instructor, sent this note to Digital Learning Coordinator Janna Elfrink. All Launch teachers work to make sure students feel supported and equipped to complete their online course work.—Editor

Contact Us

Do you want to learn more about how Launch can help your district and students with course access issues? Are you already a Launch member, and you want to share your experience with our magazine readers? We would love to hear from you! Contact savannah@fueledbylaunch.com with all questions, comments or visit requests.

High School Catalog

Advanced Placement

- AP Calculus AB
- AP Calculus BC
- AP Computer Sci. Principles
- AP Computer Science A *
- AP English Lit. & Comp.
- AP European History
- AP Physics
- AP Psychology *
- AP Statistics
- AP US Gov. & Politics
- AP US History

Electives

- ACT Prep
- Driver Education
- Employment Internship
- FACS Internship
- HiSet Prep
- Volunteerism

English Language Arts

- Contemporary Lit
- Creative Writing I
- Creative Writing II
- English I
- English II
- English III
- English IV
- Film as Literature I
- Film as Literature II
- Grammar & Comp. I
- Grammar & Comp. II
- Introductory Speech
- Reading

Fine Arts

- Fine Arts Appreciation I: Music
- Fine Arts Appreciation II: Art
- Music Theory

Health

- Health
- Physical Education I
- Physical Fitness

Mathematics

- Algebra I
- Algebra II
- College Algebra *
- Foundations of Algebra
- Geometry
- Intro. to Computer Science
- Pre-Calculus
- Professional Math
- Statistics *
- Trigonometry

Practical Arts

- Computer Applications
- Digital Communications
- Early Childhood
- Financial Accounting
- Personal Finance
- Web Design

Science

- Astronomy
- Chemistry
- Earth Science
- General Biology
- Introductory Biology

- Introductory Chemistry
- Physical Science

Social Studies

- American Baseball History
- American Civil War
- Economics
- Liberty & Law (Gov.)
- Psych. of the Holocaust
- Psychology
- Sociology
- US History
- World Geography
- World History

World Language

- Chinese I *
- French I-IV
- German I-II
- Japanese I-II
- Spanish I-IV

Note: Spanish IV and French IV will be available Spring 2020

- Honors Available
- Credit Acquisition Available
- Credit Recovery Available
- Dual Credit Available
- NCAA Approved
- 0.5 Credit Course
- 1.0 Credit Course
- * Available January 2020

Middle School Catalog

English Language Arts

- ELA 6th Grade
- ELA 7th Grade
- ELA 8th Grade
- Reading Middle School

Exploratories

- Computer Coding I
- General Music I *
- Art I *

Health & Physical Education

- Health 6th Grade
- Health 7th Grade
- Health 8th Grade

- Physical Education 6th Grade
- Physical Education 7th Grade
- Physical Education 8th Grade

Mathematics

- Accelerated 7th Grade Math
- Algebra I
- Mathematics 6th Grade
- Mathematics 7th Grade
- Mathematics 8th Grade

Science

- Science 6th Grade
- Science 7th Grade
- Science 8th Grade

Social Studies

- Social Studies 6th Grade
- Social Studies 7th Grade
- Social Studies 8th Grade

World Language

- French I
- German I
- Japanese I
- Spanish I

Visit fueledbylaunch.com for full course details and to view sample assignments.

Dixon Learns With Launch

In addition to his seated schedule at Cassville Middle School, advanced eighth grader Dixon Reid took Geometry online with Launch.

Access Launch: How did you learn that you could take a Launch class online?

Dixon Reid: We were trying to find options for me to be able to take Geometry—either in the high school here or at the middle school here with videos and stuff—but I didn't really want to learn that way. Our high school principal knew about Launch. I was the first kid in Cassville to take a Launch class.

Access: Great—we were so pleased to have you! How would you compare your Launch experience with your experience in a seated class?

D.R.: I loved the online class. It gave me more freedom and worked well with my learning style. I felt less pressure and could work at my own pace.

Access: What was it like to work with your online Launch teacher?

D.R.: My first teacher, Sara Edwards, was really helpful. She had her own website with her own videos, and she had a Google Docs document with notes. I would ask my teacher in Cassville—who monitored me—to print out the notes, and then I would use those notes and watch the videos as I did my assignments.

Access: Did you communicate with your Launch teacher often?

D.R.: Yeah—communication with the teacher was really easy. There's a spot in Canvas for sending messages to your teacher, which was nice.

Access: How much time did you spend working on your Launch class?

D.R.: An hour and a half every day. I usually completed my work during this class time at school, but sometimes I would do stuff at home just to make sure I didn't get behind.

Access: How was your grade?

D.R.: Good. Really good, actually! I got an A.

Access: That's great! What about next year—what class are you most excited for as you enter high school?

D.R.: I am really excited to take my agriculture class next year. I know that my dad can help me with it a lot, because he was the superintendent of Roaring River State Park for eight years. He knows a lot about plants and stuff. Also, I know a lot of people in that class, so that will be fun!



Access: Great! Let's talk about extra-curriculars. Are you in any clubs at school?

D.R.: Yeah, well, I was last year—I did student council, knowledge bowl and TSA, which is the Technology Student Association. I think next year I may play soccer, and maybe FFA.

Access: Fun! Okay, now I want you to think big. Have you thought about where you want to go to college one day?

D.R.: Yes. A lot. I want to go to Purdue. I've wanted to go there for a long time—since fourth grade. We went to the campus when I was younger, and it was awesome!

Access: What is your dream job?

D.R.: Some sort of engineer. I'm not sure what kind yet.

Access: What about a dream city to live in—do you have any ideas for that?

D.R.: I don't really have one. I know I want to go to a big city, because in little cities there aren't as many jobs for engineers.

Access: Ah, that makes sense. Okay, now let's talk about your life outside of school. What are your hobbies?

D.R.: Soccer and video games.

Access: Where do you play soccer?

D.R.: Well, now at school. I'll be on the high school soccer team next year. But I've played for as long as I can remember, honestly. When I was younger, I played at the YMCA, then I did something called Seven Valleys Soccer here in Cassville. We played in Joplin every weekend.

Access: What video games do you play?

D.R.: I play a lot of Overwatch, and I've been starting to play Star Wars a little bit.

Access: What about TV—do you have a favorite television show?

D.R.: Yes. *The Office*.

Access: Nice—a lot of us on the Launch team like *The Office*, too! Do you have a favorite character?

D.R.: I'd have to say Jim, but Dwight really makes me laugh. So much.

Access: Do you use social media?

D.R.: Yeah. Mostly just Instagram. I have Snapchat, but I don't really like it.

Access: What is the most popular social media platform with kids in your school?

D.R.: Instagram.

Access: What's a fun fact about you, or maybe something interesting that people may not know about you?

D.R.: Well, I guess something kind of different is that and I only have blue shirts. I only wear blue shirts. I have actually been wearing only blue shirts for a long time—a few years, at least.

Access: That's so funny! Why?

D.R.: I don't really know. I like blue, I guess?

Access: You're a funny kid, Dixon! Thanks for learning with us. Do you anticipate taking more classes with Launch?

D.R.: Yes, I do! I am just not sure what those classes may be yet.

Access: Good—we're happy to know you'll be back! What about your classmates—do you think other middle school students would be successful learning online with Launch courses?

D.R.: I believe that Launch is a good fit for some students. You have to have the right mindset—you really have to be both self-motivated and self-driven. Since you have a bit more freedom with a Launch class, it could be easy to think 'I'll just get it done tomorrow.' But that type of thinking can get you behind very quickly. Then it may be hard to catch back up, unless you work on the weekends or work after school. And I know that some kids, or really most kids, definitely wouldn't want to do that. ■



An Alternate Route

Josh Douglas, Launch's full-time Social Studies teacher, shares how 18 years in alternative education prepared him to teach online.

I've been teaching for Springfield Public Schools for 18 years. I went to Missouri State University and majored in History, and I was between the ideas of teaching and going to law school. My senior year I decided I wanted to go to law school, and then I met a girl. She went to grad school, and I stayed in Springfield to be with her. I got a job, which became a teacher's aide job, and then I decided I liked teaching. That girl later became my wife.

My first teaching job was at Solutions, which is the long-term suspension program for the alternative world. I was there three years. Next I went to Greene County Juvenile Detention and was there for four years, then in 2008 I went to Study

"You find some really fun and funny ways to connect with kids that you may not be able to do seated, because it's a lot easier for kids to have a voice online."



Josh Douglas loves college basketball (particularly North Carolina), sneakers related to college basketball, his family and—last but certainly not least—teaching online!

Alternative Center and taught a variety of subjects. For the last four years I've done the Jobs for the American Graduate program at Study. Starting that program at Study required me to be very online literate, because it was pulling a lot of resources and designing things for kids.

I started teaching Psychology with Launch in Spring 2018. When the opportunity to teach full-time social studies came up, I knew it was something I wanted to do. I taught Psychology and Liberty and Law—the Government class—over the summer.

What I like about teaching for Launch is that you really get to focus in on the course material—you don't necessarily have to worry about some of the classroom distractions. Also, you find some really fun and funny ways to connect with kids that you may not be able to do seated, because it's a lot easier for kids to have a voice online.

They don't have to be the shrinking violet. Getting to learn their online personalities is very enjoyable.

One of the big things for me is finding ways to connect with students in my video announcements. This morning I started with "The Blues won the Stanley Cup!" I know I had some kids in St. Louis who are hockey fans, and they were really excited. An announcement last week was titled "I did not cop the Yeezys," because I spent four hours online in a waiting room try to get a pair of shoes. I knew that the sneakerheads in my classes would know what I meant. There are also ways to connect with students by reading their work and finding unique things they put in their assignments.

I'm excited about the additional opportunities I have to connect with students by teaching online. I think that my experience in the alternative world helped me prepare for this. I've learned how to build relationships anywhere. It's important that I have these relationships with students in schools all across the state, and of course online. Starting in the alternative world sharpened my relationship-building skills more than I would have ever anticipated. ■



Josh Douglas

Launch Social Studies Teacher

Home District: Springfield R-XII
Years as a Teacher: 18

Degree: Bachelor's degrees in History and Political Science, Missouri State University

Fun Fact: When Douglas taught seated classes, his students always enjoyed his sneakers. "I've always been really into basketball—college basketball especially," he says. "Since I was a kid, I have been into the shoes. Now that I'm an adult, I have money to buy them."



Behind the Scenes

What's it like to work for Launch? We joined Launch Digital Developer Nicki Dickson for a day of writing online courses.

7:20 a.m.: While the Launch office doesn't officially open until 7:30 a.m., Launch Digital Developer Nicki Dickson is already at her desk and working 10 minutes prior. "I had to drop my girls off early this morning," she says, referring to her three daughters. "I just came in right after to get started."

8:53 a.m.: "Yes, I'm finishing up Unit 2 right now," Nicki says to Dr. Nichole Lemmon, Launch's Director of Digital Learning. The two were discussing Launch's Spanish III course. "As a course developer, one of my main jobs is to work with teachers and the curriculum team and transform seated courses into an online format," Nicki says. Nicki has written dozens of virtual courses since she started working for Springfield Public Schools Online in September 2015, and she has been with Launch since it began.

10:38 a.m.: After Nicki hangs up the phone, she walks to the storage closet to grab a Garmin heart rate monitor. "I have to run this to a student up front," she says. Nicki wrote all of Launch's physical fitness and physical

education courses, and they all use Garmin monitors to track student heart rates as a part of the curriculum. Launch provides all physical education students a Garmin to use during their time in the course.

In summer 2019, more than 2,000 students earned physical education credits online with Launch.

12:42 p.m.: "Man, that was good," says Nicki, who just finished eating lunch with fellow Launch Quality Assurance Specialist Linda Ayres. They had nachos from Q'Doba—one of her favorite spots!

2:19 p.m.: "Traditional Virtual and Credit Recovery versions of Algebra I? I can do that," Nicki says. She is talking to Launch's Marketing & Engagement manager, Savannah Waszczuk, who asked her to set up a demo account for a potential Launch partner district. "I create demo accounts for school districts so they can see what our courses look like," Nicki says. "They get to work their way through the course as a student would."

2:26 p.m.: Nicki spends the next hour preparing for a webinar she has tomorrow. "Launch partner districts have the option to use our teacher or their own teacher for their credit recovery courses," Nicki says. "When they use their teachers, we have to train them. I'm in charge of that."

4:03 p.m.: Nicki grabs her backpack and heads out the door. She's off to spend time with husband, Donnie, and daughters, Kyonna, Da'Mya and Jayla. "It's another busy night," Nicki says. "We have gymnastics later, but now I have to get Kyonna to volleyball practice!" ■



Expanded **World Languages**

Launch recently added German I and II, advanced French and advanced Spanish courses to its online course catalog. All courses are taught by certified world language teachers.



German I & II

In German I, students will acquire an elementary ability to listen, speak, read, and write the German language. This course emphasizes the skills needed for useful daily communication, e.g. making friends, expressing one's needs and preferences, seeking and giving directions, etc. Along with learning the language, students will also be introduced to German culture. In German II, students continue to develop their skills tailored to speaking, listening and writing German. At this level there is an increased emphasis on vocabulary development, oral proficiency, expression in past and various other tenses. Students in this course also continue to expand their knowledge of the German culture.



French III

In French III, students continue to develop their skills tailored to speaking, listening and writing French. At this level there is an increased emphasis on vocabulary development, oral proficiency, expression in past and various other tenses. Students in this course also continue to expand their knowledge of the French culture.



Spanish III

Students enrolled in Spanish III continue to develop their skills and ability to speak, listen and write the Spanish language. At this level there is an increased emphasis on vocabulary development, oral proficiency, expression in the past tenses and various other tenses. Students in Spanish III also continue to expand their knowledge of the culture of Spanish-speaking peoples.

Launch World Language Offerings:

Chinese I*	Spanish I
French I	Spanish II
French II	Spanish III
French III	Spanish IV*
French IV*	Japanese I
German I	Japanese II
German II	

*Coming Spring 2020

Find more courses online!

Check out our online catalog at fueledbylaunch.com/courses to find out more about each of Launch's 180 courses. You can view major topics and concepts and see sample assignments.



Anatomy of a Course:

ACT Prep

Launch's ACT Prep course utilizes a series of practice tests to help students prepare for the popular college entrance exam.

TEST FORM

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Course Facts:

Course Type: Elective

Credits: Half (0.5) credit course

Estimated Completion Time:
1 Semester/9-18 weeks

The Launch ACT Prep course features units on each of the exam's main subject areas: mathematics, science, English, reading and writing. It is taught by two teachers—one certified in math, and one certified in ELA, to offer the best support available. Every unit includes general test-taking strategies as well as a pre-test and a post-test from ACT Academy, the ACT's official prep resource. Students are able to review each missed question, and they are provided with additional resources that may help them master the particular concepts.

M A T H E M A T I C S

Provides mathematics instruction and practice of the following concepts: pre-algebra, elementary algebra, intermediate algebra, coordinate geometry, plane geometry and trigonometry.

S C I E N C E

Provides instruction and practice over data representation, research summary and conflicting viewpoints.

E N G L I S H

Provides instruction and practice over sentence structure, punctuation review, grammar review and correct word usage.

W R I T I N G

Covers general test taking strategies for writing portion of the ACT exam, which is optional.

R E A D I N G

Provides instruction and practice over identifying "false" answer choices, marking questions and text for emphasis, inferring and vocabulary in context.

IMPORTANT



- Use No. 2 pencil only
- Make no stray marks.
- Erase any changes cleanly.
- Example: Ⓐ  Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ

3 Facts on ACT Prep

1. **Soaring Scores.** Many students have reported score increases of 2 to 5 points after taking this class.
2. **Lay it Out.** Students don't only practice exam questions and learn strategies—they also become more familiar with the layout of the exam.
3. **Open to All.** While students often wait until their junior year to prepare for the ACT, this course can be taken earlier. Taking the course as a sophomore year helps familiarize students with the ACT exam and process.

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**DO NOT
WRITE
IN THIS
AREA**

The Wentzville Way

The Wentzville School District began offering Launch courses to students in summer 2019. Read on to hear how the program played out in one of the state's largest school districts.



Nora Pryor took her first-ever online class—Physical Fitness—with Launch this summer.

Summer school in the Wentzville School District looked a bit different this year. “Traditionally we’ve hosted a physical summer school and offered PE, Health and Personal Finance,” says Steven Pryor, who is the Assistant Principal at Wentzville’s Liberty High School and also leads summer school in his building. “Our goal is to offer more opportunities for our students to earn credit over the summer. Offering online courses helps our students who attend camps and don’t have transportation.”

For summer 2019, the district decided to offer some Launch courses in addition to offering them at the school. This online option was well received. “Launch provides students another opportunity,” Steven says. “Taking classes online with Launch fosters a little bit more

independence, and it allows students more flexibility to engage in other activities during their summer.”

Getting Started

The Wentzville School District first partnered with Launch in February 2019. “What was really impressive to us was that Launch is a not for profit that puts students first and aligned to Missouri Learning Standards,” says Dr. Karen Hill, the Wentzville School District’s Director of Professional Learning.

District administrators also liked that Launch is a part of Springfield Public Schools, as that comes with its own series of benefits. “We felt Springfield Public Schools was able to provide us with rigor that matches our expectations,” Karen says. “We also like the fact that—very

much like us in Wentzville—the Launch team wants to provide options for kids. They want to help kids. Philosophy wise, Wentzville is very much aligned with what Launch offers.”

Karen also mentioned Launch’s customer service in her list of program benefits. The district has used several virtual course providers to offer students credit recovery courses. “Working with individuals on the Launch team—as opposed to going through large systems—feels different,” Karen says. That’s definitely a benefit to us.”

The Student Experience

Rising sophomore Nora Pryor, who attends Wentzville’s Timberland High School, took Physical Fitness with Launch during the June 2019 session. “To be quite honest, I had absolutely no clue what it was going to be like,” says Nora, who is the daughter of Liberty High School Principal Steven Pryor. “It was my dad who initiated the idea. I did immediately think an online class sounded cool, because that way I didn’t have to rearrange all of my other summer plans.” One of the plans Nora is referring to is her annual week at youth camp. “For me personally, that’s a very important week during summer,” she says. “Since that camp is so important to me, I was happy to be given an opportunity to complete a course more on my own time. Without Launch, I would

“The Launch team wants to provide options for kids. They want to help kids. Philosophy wise, Wentzville is very much aligned with what Launch offers.”
—Dr. Karen Hill

not have been able to take the course this summer.”

After Nora first signed on to Canvas, Launch’s Learning Management System, she saw her course organized by units and noticed the assignments included due dates for the entirety of the class. “After I logged in to everything, it immediately just kind of all clicked,” Nora says. “Sure, it was a lot of content, because you’re fitting an entire semester’s class into a month. But you can work through all of the assignments at your own pace, and that was awesome. For this class we had written assignments that included essays, quizzes and tests, and we also had class discussions on a collaborative forum.”



In addition to the course’s written work and assignments, Nora also had to work-out for her online class—students in all of Launch’s physical fitness courses are given a Garmin heart rate monitor to track their exercise. “In the beginning, it took me a while to find ways to get in workouts,” Nora says. “But now it’s a routine part of my day. Once I wake up, I am already thinking of ways I can fit in an hour workout.” But this isn’t a complaint. In fact, Nora liked developing an exercise routine, and she wants to continue working out even after the course. “I think we’re going to end up buying Nora a Garmin after she turns hers back in,” Her father says. “I think she’s grown accustomed to it. I think she’d feel like she was missing out if she didn’t have it on.”

Looking Ahead

As students and administrators file back into Wentzville School District buildings this fall, Launch will be around as well. “We will be testing out different courses through Launch next year,” Karen says. And Nora hopes the district will offer courses again in summer 2020 as well—the next time around, she may take Personal Finance. “For me, taking a class like PE or Personal Finance outside of the traditional school year is great, because I can get those credits completed and not take up time in my schedule,” Nora says. “I’m in band, too, and that takes up an hour every day and limits the other classes I can take. Taking some classes online in the summer helps me have more time to take the classes I want to take to go to college.” ■

Steven Pryor, Assistant Principal at Wentzville’s Liberty High School, likes the flexibility Launch offers to all students.



Wentzville at a Glance

K-12 Enrollment: 17,215

High Schools: Holt High; Liberty High; Timberland High

MASA District: Greater St. Louis

Mission Statement: Learning today, leading tomorrow.

Vision: “Wentzville School District will be a model of excellence that sets the standard and maximizes the potential of every student. We will excel academically, be at the forefront of technology implementation, proactively plan for growth and be financially responsible.”



Planning for Success at **Chillicothe**

After utilizing Launch courses for one year, the administration team at Chillicothe R-II School District discusses their experience and shares tips for success.

Dr. Jill Watkins, Assistant Principal at Chillicothe High School, says the district partnered with Launch for its alignment to Missouri Learning Standards.



When it was time for the Chillicothe R-II School District to provide virtual course options to students, the administration team had a few must-have requirements for its chosen online course provider. “One thing that was important to us was finding a more rigorous credit recovery program for our students,” says Dr. Jill Watkins, Assistant Principal at Chillicothe High School. “We wanted something that was manageable for our students, yet a bit more rigorous.” Another must-have was alignment to Missouri Learning Standards, and last but certainly not least was a solution that utilized online teachers. “I wanted more instruction on the back end,” Jill says. “We didn’t want just a computer program.”

Getting Started

After discussing their must-have list with Launch, district administrators decided it would be the best fit for Chillicothe students. Launch’s credit recovery courses feature 60 percent of each traditional course’s content based on priority standards, and students must complete each credit recovery course at 80 percent mastery. All of Launch’s course content is built with the curriculum team at Springfield Public Schools and is aligned to Missouri Learning Standards, and all of Launch’s courses are taught by highly qualified Missouri teachers—in fact, these teachers actually live in and teach at Launch partner districts.

The Chillicothe School District officially partnered with Launch in May 2018.

Since that time, both Chillicothe High School and the Chillicothe Transition to Life Center have utilized Launch’s Traditional Virtual, Credit Recovery and Credit Acquisition courses.

A Year of Experience

District administrators learned a lot in their first year of partnering with Launch. “Our students had never really had any exposure to an online class before,” Jill says. “It took us some time to figure out what may work best for our students.”

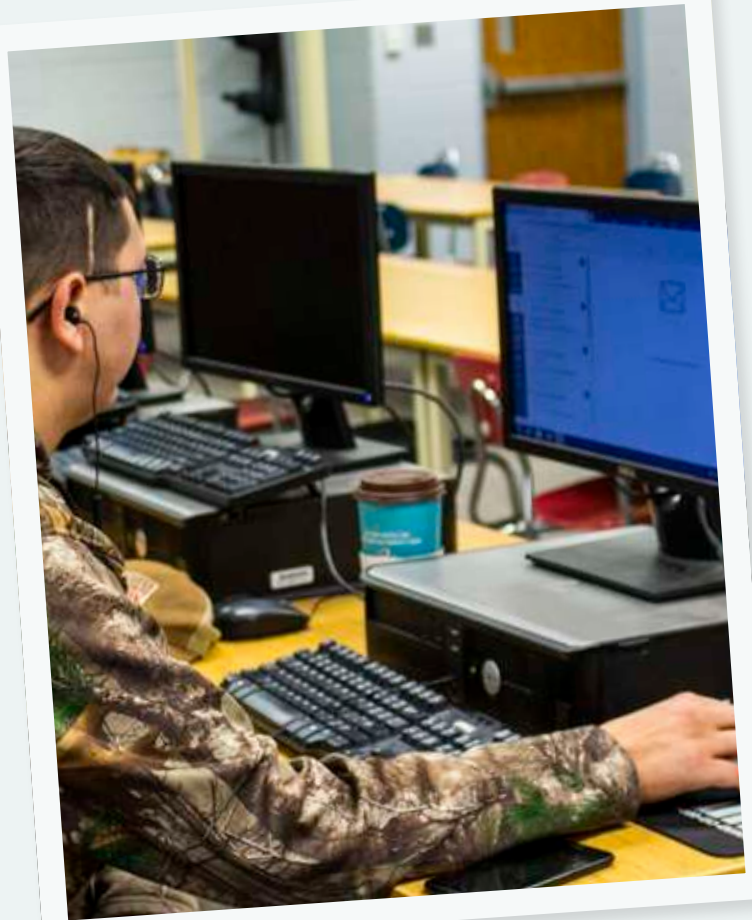
The district created a Launch Lab for students to sit and work on their online courses. “We also had facilitators that checked in on student grades,” Jill says. “I think next year, we will put more checks and balances in place. While our facilitator checked on grades and touched base with students each week, we feel the process needs to be more structured to ensure student success. Next year, we are going to add weekly student-facilitator conferencing with goal setting.”

Looking back, Jill says she learned a lot about how to best utilize Launch for students in Chillicothe. “This experience gave us perspective for protocols and procedures we can put in place for our students to be more successful,” Jill says. “I think figuring out what will work best for your district’s particular students—and having a plan for that from the very beginning—will help ensure student success.”

Staging for Success

How can you ensure a successful Launch experience for your students? Dr. Jill Watkins, Assistant Principal at Chillicothe High School, and Launch's Janna Elfrink share a few best practices for partner districts.

1. **Spread the word.** Develop and communicate a message that shares what Launch is and how it can be utilized by the students in your district, and share this information with all parents and students. Work with the Launch team to create free customized marketing, then distribute the materials to parents, students and community members.
2. **Provide a space.** Designate a work space in your building(s) so students taking Launch courses have a place to report to and work.
3. **Monitor and Mentor.** Establish an onsite mentor teacher to provide encouragement and support. While the Launch teacher is responsible for all instruction and grading, students are often most successful when a person at the district level checks in. This is especially important when districts are first starting with Launch, Jill says. Have your building-level mentor teacher(s) check in on student progress using Launch's Dropout Detective feature on a regular basis. ■



Chillicothe at a Glance

K-12 Enrollment: 1,877

High School Population: 543

MASA District: Northwest

School Colors: Red and Black

Mascot: Hornets

Vision: The town of Chillicothe, Missouri, is often referred to as "the home of sliced bread." It is said that sliced bread was first offered for sale in the central Missouri community from the Chillicothe Baking Company.



Launching Our **Quality**

With two official Quality Matters-certified reviewers on the team and two nationally recognized courses in our catalog, Launch is proud to build and offer courses that meet the design standards of Quality Matters.



At Launch, we never really say we are finished with a course,” says Coordinator of Course Development Dr. Meghan Roe. “We are always open to finding ways to make our courses even better. After they’re built, we revisit them and review them to see how they can be approved upon.”

Meghan works with Quality Assurance Specialist Linda Ayres and a team of digital developers to make sure the Launch team creates top-notch quality courses for all Missouri students, and as of early 2019, we have two official marks to prove it. Launch received its first nationally recognized Quality Matters Certification Mark for meeting course design standards in an Official Quality Matters (QM) peer review in February 2019, and a second mark was quick to follow.

Quality Matters, an internationally recognized, faculty-centered peer review process that certifies the quality of online

courses, has recognized Launch’s commitment to quality assurance for designing both Personal Finance and Health courses that meet Quality Matters standards. “We want to ensure that we are offering students high quality courses, and we believe in the mission of Quality Matters,” Linda says. “It only made sense that we partner with them to make our courses better.”

Quality Matters has developed a widely respected set of standards for the design of effective online courses and a rigorous faculty peer review process for applying these standards to existing courses. Through this process, reviewers provide instructors and instructional design teams with insight and recommendations that increase learner engagement, retention and satisfaction, and, ultimately, learner achievement. Both Meghan and Linda are official QM-certified reviewers, which also helps bring knowledge to the Launch development team and—in the long

run—makes Launch courses even better. In addition, all Launch development team members will be QM-certified reviewers by the end of quarter 1.

“We are proud of the quality of our courses, and we were happy for the review team from Quality Matters to agree with us,” says Meghan. “The process was both positive and collaborative, and we look forward to submitting more courses this year for review.” Up next for QM certification are Launch’s Film as Literature I and Astronomy courses. “Our partnership shows that we are serious about the quality of our courses,” Linda says. “We are always striving to make our courses better. We want them to be the best they can possibly be.” ■



QM Vision: Quality Matters is the global organization leading quality assurance in online and innovative digital teaching and learning environments.

QM Continued: Want to learn more about QM? Visit qualitymatters.org

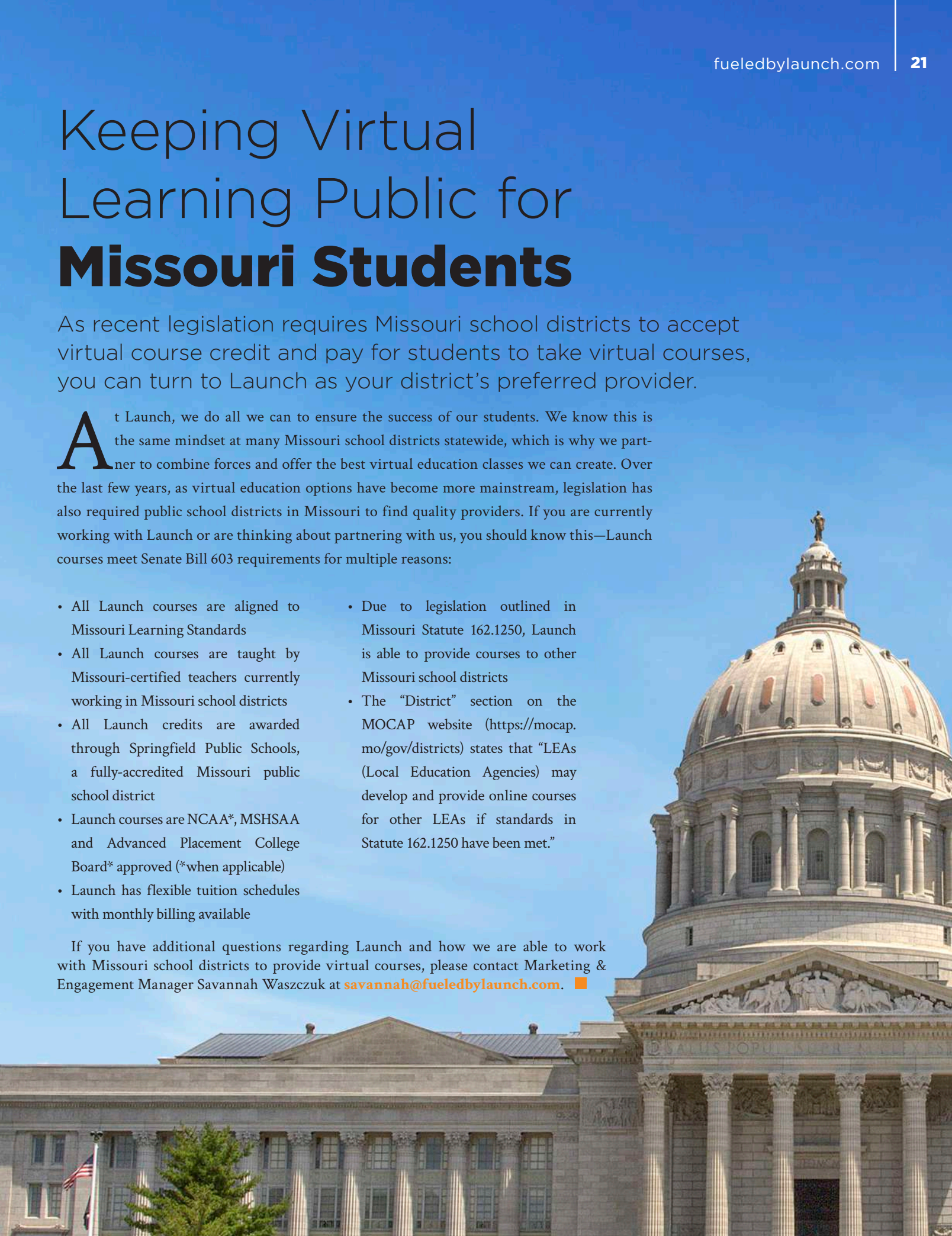
Keeping Virtual Learning Public for Missouri Students

As recent legislation requires Missouri school districts to accept virtual course credit and pay for students to take virtual courses, you can turn to Launch as your district's preferred provider.

At Launch, we do all we can to ensure the success of our students. We know this is the same mindset at many Missouri school districts statewide, which is why we partner to combine forces and offer the best virtual education classes we can create. Over the last few years, as virtual education options have become more mainstream, legislation has also required public school districts in Missouri to find quality providers. If you are currently working with Launch or are thinking about partnering with us, you should know this—Launch courses meet Senate Bill 603 requirements for multiple reasons:

- All Launch courses are aligned to Missouri Learning Standards
- All Launch courses are taught by Missouri-certified teachers currently working in Missouri school districts
- All Launch credits are awarded through Springfield Public Schools, a fully-accredited Missouri public school district
- Launch courses are NCAA*, MSHSAA and Advanced Placement College Board* approved (*when applicable)
- Launch has flexible tuition schedules with monthly billing available
- Due to legislation outlined in Missouri Statute 162.1250, Launch is able to provide courses to other Missouri school districts
- The "District" section on the MOCAP website (<https://mocap.mo/gov/districts>) states that "LEAs (Local Education Agencies) may develop and provide online courses for other LEAs if standards in Statute 162.1250 have been met."

If you have additional questions regarding Launch and how we are able to work with Missouri school districts to provide virtual courses, please contact Marketing & Engagement Manager Savannah Waszczuk at savannah@fueledbylaunch.com. ■







PARTNERING TO PROVIDE

As legislation requires public school districts in Missouri to find quality course providers, it is critical that we develop collaborative partnerships that are designed in the best interest of all Missouri students. Enter Launch. In summer 2017, Springfield Public Schools started the program with a few dozen courses and a handful of southwest Missouri school district partners. Today, Launch works with nearly 200 public Missouri school districts and offers a virtual course catalog of 180 high school and middle school courses. Read on to learn the inner workings of the purpose-driven program, which works to support school districts statewide and provides hundreds of thousands of Missouri students with quality course access.

INSIDE HQ

Each day, nearly two dozen employees report to the Launch headquarters to build and instruct virtual courses and provide support for partner district administrators, parents and students.

Based in the administration building at Springfield Public Schools, the Launch headquarters is a happening place. While a support team works to answer a steady stream of phone calls, the development team transforms seated course content into an online format. Meanwhile, the student services crew

schedules another online-only student for the last course they need to earn their diploma, and the marketing and engagement crew welcomes a new Missouri school district to Launch's world of online learning. Get a glimpse of each of our teams below.

STUDENT SERVICES

What's the best way to describe the five individuals on the Launch Student Services team? Hearts of gold. While every one of us on the Launch team is passionate about helping kids, these five are the ones responsible for processing all of Launch's enrollments—a number that reached nearly 23,000 in summer 2019—and scheduling all students in Launch courses. This team also manages attendance and supports and coaches all Launch teachers. They work to support thousands of students in both Springfield Public schools and at all partner districts. Oh, and did we mention the extra one-on-one support they provide to online-only students to help get them to graduation?

DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT

Good, better, best—never let it rest. The Development team members at Launch don't only work with curriculum specialists and teachers to transform seated courses into an online format—they also regularly review all Launch courses to ensure quality. In fact, by October 2019, all of the dev team's 9 members will be Quality Matters certified! The team also includes a custom programmer who helps make sure our classes run smoothly and also ensures partner districts can easily enroll students, and there are two support team specialists who provide Launch tech support seven days a week.

MARKETING & ENGAGEMENT

When it comes to providing students statewide with quality course access, we have to spread the word—no one can enroll in our classes if they don't know they are offered in their school district! Launch's marketing and engagement team works with partner districts to customize marketing materials so that each district can share information on Launch courses with parents, students and community members. The team is also in charge of helping make the Launch brand known and—in return—getting additional school districts and organizations to work with Launch. If you're looking to partner, give our M&E team a call!

Inside Launch headquarters in Springfield, MO



NEW, FOR YOU

As Launch continues to create new partnerships with school districts statewide, we also add to our team and update roles and responsibilities to best support staff and students.

STUDENT SERVICES

COORDINATOR, DIGITAL LEARNING

Janna Elfrink

Joined the team:

May 2019

Roles and

Responsibilities: “I

lead teams responsible for partner district support and student services support, and I am also responsible for starting Launch’s new liaison network.”

Fun Fact: Janna spent 25 years in education before joining the Launch team. “Through a class project, my former students from 2006 are responsible for crayfish getting their proper recognition as Missouri’s State Invertebrate!,” she says.



SPECIALIST OF STUDENT SERVICES

Christopher

Kensinger, Ed.S

Joined the team:

August 2018

(as an online teacher); promoted to new role May 2019

Roles and Responsibilities: “I work to support SPS students taking Launch courses. I also help mentor and coach Launch teachers, handle parent concerns and am in charge of managing Launch’s dual credit and AP courses.”

Fun Fact: Christopher grew up on a dairy farm in rural Missouri.



SCHOOL COUNSELOR

David Schuman

Joined the team:

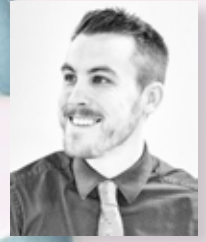
May 2019

Roles and

Responsibilities: “I’m

the school counselor for students in the Springfield school district who complete all of their work through Launch’s online courses. I support students not only in the area of academics, but also in their social and emotional development.”

Fun Fact: David has visited five countries in the last two years—most recently, he and his wife ziplined through canyons and repelled down waterfalls in New Zealand.



DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT

COORDINATOR, COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Meghan Roe

Joined the team:

July 2017 (as Quality Assurance Specialist); promoted to new role June 2019

Roles and Responsibilities: “I’m responsible for Launch’s course development process. I ensure that new courses go out on time and that they are as good as they can possibly be.”

Fun Fact: Meghan has lived in six different states, but lived in Missouri the longest—from 1994 to 2007, and then again starting in 2017!



QUALITY ASSURANCE SPECIALIST

Linda Ayres

Joined the team:

November 2015 (as a digital developer); promoted to new role June 2019

Roles and Responsibilities: “I make sure our course content is understandable and our courses flow naturally. I also ensure that all of the Quality Matters standards are met.”

Fun Fact: “I actually love playing video games,” Linda says. “I don’t play them often, though, because that would take up all of my spare time!”



LAUNCH SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Adam Shawley

Joined the team:

May 2019

Roles and

Responsibilities:

“As a tech support specialist, I receive all inbound communication for Launch.”

Fun Fact: Not too long before joining the Launch team, Adam biked 30 miles a day, four days a week. “For now, I’m taking a break to take some phone calls,” he says.



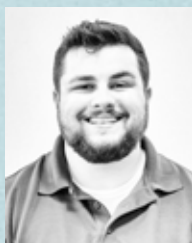
LAUNCH SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Tyler Gray

Joined the team: June 2019

Roles and Responsibilities: “As a Support Specialist, I receive phone calls from students, parents and teachers that need help with Launch-related situations. I also respond to our support email.”

Fun Fact: Tyler is heading back to school to get a second degree in Computer Information Science.



STATEWIDE EXPANSION

In summer 2019, Launch opened offices in St. Louis and Kansas City to better support area partner districts and students.

While many for-profit companies aim to provide school districts with online courses, Launch strives for more. We don't simply want to be an online provider—we want to work together as partners. And what is the difference between a provider and a partner? To us, it includes much more than simply providing quality online courses. It's about meeting administrators and students in their own buildings. It's about working with other school districts to build courses that can be offered to all Missouri school district partners. It's about providing boots-on-the-ground service that results in the absolute best customer support, face-to-face meetings and regular building visits.

As we've grown over the past two years, we have worked to continue providing these things statewide, and we're not stopping any time soon. That's why we've expanded and opened offices in both St. Louis and Kansas City.



LAUNCH ST. LOUIS

Launch Support Specialist Missy Sandbothe is a familiar face at the Launch St. Louis office. "I am recently retired from the Kirkwood School District, where I spent 15 years as a building level administrator and 2 years as the Executive Director of Special Programs," Missy says. "I had the good fortune of being introduced to Launch a couple years ago, and I quickly became a huge fan of the quality of course content, the rigor expected of our students and the ability to customize implementation." Missy works with school districts in St. Louis and the surrounding areas to provide an array of Launch services and support.

Launch St. Louis
1460 Craig Road
St. Louis, MO 63146



LAUNCH KANSAS CITY

Shannon Gilliland, the Launch Support Specialist in the Kansas City region, has been a full-time online teacher and mentor with the North Kansas City School district for 12 years. During this time, she not only instructed her online courses—she also worked with seniors to explore what they may want to do after school through individualized internships and work experiences. Shannon believes in the power of online learning as a way for students to have opportunities they may not be able to access through traditional means. She works with schools in Kansas City and the surrounding areas to provide services and support.

Launch Kansas City
6889 North Oak Trafficway
Gladstone, Missouri 64118



LEADING THE ONLINE CLASSROOM

Launch works with more than 100 highly qualified teachers statewide to provide our online students with the very best instruction and support.

How do we teach thousands of virtual learners all over Missouri? By hiring hundreds of highly qualified teachers all over Missouri. After a school district partners with Launch, their teachers are then eligible to teach for us. Most teachers are hired for an adjunct position—for example, a seated Science teacher at Parkview High School in Springfield may also teach a Launch AP Physics course online. Class sizes are limited to a maximum of 33 students per teacher—just as seated classes—so a teacher will never have more than that number of students in a section.

LAUNCH TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

Launch teachers communicate with their students regularly. In addition to hosting three virtual office hours per week, Launch teachers also post weekly video announcements and respond to student inquiries within 30 minutes during office hours and as soon as possible outside of office hours (always within one business day). All assignments are graded within 48 hours of submission, and teachers call home if students are failing or inactive. Teachers also collaborate monthly with virtual staff meetings.

LAUNCH TEACHER TRAININGS

All of Launch's online teachers are required to attend an in-person teacher training before they begin teaching a course in the fall, spring or summer semester. These day-long trainings prepare teachers to build culture in their online classrooms and provide the online instructors with a wealth of professional development. The teachers also take time to work with the Launch development team and set due dates for their entire semester's course work.

Launch teacher trainings occur before every semester.



MEET THE TEACHERS

Launch worked with nearly 200 highly qualified Missouri teachers last summer, and we will continue to hire hundreds of teachers each semester. Meet a few of the instructors who make our virtual world go round.

WILLIAM THOMAS

Teaches: Astronomy

Home School: Glendale High School, Springfield, Missouri

In his own words: “I have been involved in Launch from the beginning, designing and revising the Astronomy curriculum to meet the needs of students. Teaching students statewide is impactful—being able to provide meaningful and timely feedback to coursework that involves so many different technology tools is a rewarding experience as a teacher. Launch teachers are not just focusing on their content, but also incorporating digital tools and proper communication skills that young adults will be able to use in their future endeavors.”



ALICIA MAGGERT

Teaches: English III and English III Honors

Home School: Smith-Cotton High School, Sedalia, Missouri

In her own words: “I came to education in a weird way. I was an average student who did not score well on the ACT test, and I got Bs and Cs in school. Teachers did not always get me or understand how I learned. I believe that is the reason I love teaching today. I know that all students can be successful—some may look different than others—but all students can be successful. Coming from this background, I can relate to students who are not as motivated or who don’t know what the next step is. Education in 2019 can look very different than it has in the past 100 years, and I am very honored to be a part of virtual learning.”



TIMOTHY SCEGO

Teaches: Liberty and Law; World History; US History

Home School: Reeds Spring High School

In his own words: “My favorite thing about teaching for Launch is the interaction I have with students. I’ve met students from a variety of backgrounds. Some just needed the course I taught to graduate. Launch provides those opportunities to students and also allows students to access classes their school cannot offer. I have had several students from small schools throughout the state take honors courses that are not offered at their school.”



BETHANY KELLY

Teaches: Fine Arts Appreciation: Visual Art

Home School: Central High School, Springfield, Missouri

In her own words: “Launch provides the ability for online teachers and students to build relationships. The teachers and people working behind the scenes are all committed to creating a sense of belonging for students, even if they are hundreds of miles away. I love this about Launch, as well as the flexibility Launch gives to students and teachers. It makes learning more accessible and helps level the playing field across the state by allowing students access to classes that may not be offered in their home school.”



HOW TO TEACH FOR LAUNCH

Want to teach for Launch? We post positions three times per year for our fall, spring and summer sessions. If your school district partners with Launch, you are eligible to apply for an online educator position.

1
Visit fueledbylaunch.com and click the "Work for Launch" button to see current openings.

2
Find the "Online Launch Educator" position, and read the description. If you feel you are qualified for the role, click "Apply Now."

3
Create a new applicant account with Springfield Public Schools, then follow the on-screen directions for submitting your application.

Once you submit, you may also consider asking your superintendent or school administrator to send a recommendation email to Launch's Director of Digital Learning, Dr. Nichole Lemmon (nichole@fueledbylaunch.com).

**Mc
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Hill**

LEARNING IS A BLAST

STUDYSYNC® PRESENTS

SYNC BLASTS™

SyncBlasts offers a growing library of engaging reading and writing assignments that present cross curricular current event topics relevant to students' lives and their world. *SyncBlasts* provides a variety of rich multimedia including topical preview videos, interactive QuikPoll, a news show, and more.

SyncBlasts challenge students to:

- ★ Build vital research, writing, vocabulary, and critical-thinking skills while providing an easy entry point for peer review.
- ★ Develop informed opinions on high-interest topics of cultural significance.
- ★ Express their opinions succinctly, in a familiar, social media-like format.
- ★ Participate in thoughtful discussions with an authentic audience of peers.

MAKING SENSE OF STRUGGLE

After living in foster care and later being moved to a group home, Felicity Winfield lacked the determination she needed to finish high school. Thanks to positive encouragement and a few Launch courses, she got on the right track and graduated in July 2019, and she plans to begin cosmetology school in the spring.

When she was a child, Felicity Winfield would sit on her bedroom floor and braid her Barbie doll's hair. "I taught myself how to do all that when I was really little," Felicity says. "It was just something that I really liked to do. I'd also braid my sister's hair sometimes. But I taught myself how to braid by practicing on my Barbie dolls."

As Felicity grew, so did her interest in cosmetology. Simple braids evolved to more elaborate updos. Her clientele transformed from her Barbies to her best friends, and they began asking her to style their hair for special occasions. She learned about applying makeup and researched proper skin care. She started painting and shaping nails—both her own and others. And she was so happy. When anyone asked her what she wanted to be when she grew up, she answered confidently—a cosmetologist.

Springfield Public Schools student Felicity Winfield (above) worked with Launch Graduation Advisor Katie Kensinger (opposite) to complete her online classes.

A ROCKY FOUNDATION

Felicity began attending Springfield Public Schools in fourth grade, and she didn't have any real issues to speak of throughout elementary school or middle school. But then when it was time for high school, she began to struggle. "Things at home were iffy, and I was mean to my mom," Felicity says. "I didn't want to go to school." So she didn't.

Next Felicity ran away from home, and she was gone for three months. "When they found me, my mom was upset," Felicity says. "She sent me back to Sikeston, Missouri, to be with my biological family on my dad's side." She struggled there, too, and eventually ended up in foster care. Next she moved to an all-girls group home. "When I was at the girl's home, my transcripts got messed up, and I got so frustrated," Felicity says. "I was done. I didn't want to do school anymore."

As Felicity neared what would be her sophomore year of high school, she learned that if she didn't start going to school regularly she would never graduate. "I had nothing at all," she says. "I didn't have any credits from my freshman year, because I didn't finish the school year."

REDIRECTING THE PATH

It was around this time that Felicity had a conversation that changed her life. "I knew this man in the group home—the principal there—and he told me his story," Felicity says. "He was in foster care and everything, too. I cried a little bit, but then I realized that I had hope for my future. I realized that even though everything didn't start out the way I wanted it to, I knew I could still do what I needed to and be successful for myself."

Felicity changed the way she looked at life at this point. "When I got there at first, I was really hard headed," she says. "I didn't talk to anyone for about four months. But

as more time went by, I realized—'What am I doing? I'm wasting my time being here if I'm not trying. There are people here who love me and are trying to help me.'" Talking to other girls in the group home helped, too. "A lot of them struggled more than I did, and I realized how ungrateful I was being for the things I did have," Felicity says.

Next Felicity began to pay attention to her school work, and she also began building relationships with the other girls in the home. "I started braiding their hair," Felicity says. "That made me realize even more how much I loved doing hair, and the girls loved getting their hair done, because they don't get to go off campus and do things like that." This also gave Felicity even more motivation to finish high school. "When I saw that a lot of those kids were looking up to me, I knew I needed to do this," she says. "They started doing their work and focusing and paying attention, too. And that made me happy."

THE FINAL STRETCH

After a few more bumps in the road, Felicity found herself back in Springfield and three credits shy of graduation. "I didn't

have a way to get to school," says Felicity. "That's when my counselor at Kickapoo helped get me started with Launch."

Felicity enrolled in English III, World History and American History courses, which were the three classes she needed to graduate. Over the summer, she began meeting Launch Graduation Advisor Katie Kensinger at an area coffee shop. Katie mentored Felicity and helped keep her motivated. "She had a lot of challenges over the last few years, but she is taking all the right steps to overcome them," Katie says.

Felicity earned her final three credits with Launch, and she officially graduated in July 2019. "Without Launch, I wouldn't have graduated, and I know that," Felicity says. "But I did it. Launch helped me get through, and now I have even more hope for my future." Felicity applied for cosmetology school, and she plans to start in winter 2019. "The things that have happened these past years aren't even going to matter to me," Felicity says. "Now I'll be able to go on to cosmetology school, and then for the rest of my life, I'm going to be able to do something I love. All because I finally graduated high school." ■



Ticket to Ride

Thanks to Launch's online course offerings, Grain Valley High School junior Tyler Hagan is able to keep up on his school work as he competes in BMX races nationwide.

Tyler Hagan discovered his passion for BMX riding at age 7. "One of my friends asked me if I wanted to go with him and watch the races," says Tyler, who is now 16 years old and entering his junior year at Grain Valley High School. "I found out they had loaner bikes and helmets and wanted to try it out," he says. "I fell in love with it."

The following Christmas, Tyler's parents bought him a BMX bike, and he soon found himself pedaling around racetracks in Kansas City. "I started in the local scene, then the state scene," Tyler says. Next were regional competitions, and in 2011—only a year after he began riding—Tyler found himself at the first of several national competitions.

When he isn't traveling from state to state and race to race, Tyler spends much of his time training, which also takes him around the country. "Every year from February to April, I train in Phoenix, Arizona," Tyler says. And whether he's preparing to fight for first or simply staying in shape in the off-season, he uses Launch to complete his classes online. "My favorite thing about Launch is the flexibility it gives me," Tyler says. "I'm going to continue to ride my bike as long as I can, and it'll take me wherever it takes me. It's a relief for me to be able to keep up with my school work online when I'm doing all of this." ■



Photos courtesy Brian Ostensha © B&C BMX Photography 2019/6/9

Grain Valley student Tyler Hagan took Launch courses online so he could compete in BMX races nationwide.

Member District **Directory**

Without district partnerships, Launch wouldn't be possible. Below are the Missouri school districts who are partnered with Launch to help give all Missouri students equal course access.

Advance R-IV
Affton 101
Albany R-III
Alton R-IV
Archie R-V
Ash Grove R-IV
Aurora R-VIII
Ava R-I
Bakersfield R-IV
Belton 124
Bloomfield R-XIV
Blue Eye R-V
Bolivar R-I
Branson R-IV
Brentwood
Bronaugh R-VII
Butler R-V
Cabool R-IV
Camdenton R-III
Cape Girardeau 63
Carl Junction R-I
Carrollton R-VII
Cassville R-IV
Center 58
Chillicothe R-II
Clarkton C-4
Clayton
Clever R-V
Clinton School District
Cole Co. R-I
Cole Co. R-V
Crane R-III
Crocker R-II
Dadeville R-II
Delta R-V
Doniphan R-I
Drexel R-IV
Dunklin R-V
East Newton Co. R-VI
El Dorado Springs R-II
Elsberry R-II
Everton R-III
Excelsior Springs 40
EYC Academy
Fair Grove R-X
Fairview R-XI
Fayette 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
Gideon 37
Glenwood R-VIII
Grain Valley R-V
Grandview C-4
Green City R-I
Greenfield R-IV
Halfway R-III
Hardin-Central C-2
Hartsville R-II
Hazelwood
Hickory Co. R-I
Higbee R-VIII
High Point R-III
Hollister R-V
Houston R-I
Howell Valley R-I
Iberia R-V
Iron County C4
Jackson R-II
Johnson Co. R-VII
Junction Hill C-12
Kansas City 33
Kearney R-I
Kingsville R-I
Kirbyville R-VI
Kirkwood R-VII
La Monte R-IV
Laclede County R-1
Ladue
Lamar R-I
Laquey R-V
Lawson R-XIV
Lebanon R-III
Lexington R-V
Liberty 53
Licking R-VIII
Lincoln R-II
Lindbergh Schools
Logan-Rogersville R-VIII
Lone Jack C-6
Lonedell R-XIV
Louisiana R-II
Macon Co. R-I

Madison C-3
Mansfield R-IV
Maries Co. R-I
Marion C. Early R-V
Marion Co. R-II
Marshfield R-I
Maryville R-II
Meadow Heights R-II
Meramec Valley R-III
Miami R-I
Milan C-2
Miller R-II
Monett R-I
Montgomery Co. R-II
Montrose R-XIV
Morgan Co. R-I
Mountain Grove R-III
Neosho School District
New Haven School District
Niangua R-V
Nixa
Nodaway-Holt R-VII
Norborne R-VIII
North Andrew Co. R-VI
North Kansas City 74
North Nodaway Co. R-VI
North Shelby
Northeast Nodaway Co. R-V
Northwest R-I
Oak Grove R-VI
Oak Hill R-I
Orchard Farm R-V
Osage Co. R-II
Ozark R-VI
Parkway C-2
Pattonville R-III
Plato R-V
Pleasant Hill R-III
Poplar Bluff R-I
Raymore-Peculiar
Raytown C-2
Reeds Spring R-IV
Republic R-III
Rich Hill R-IV
Richards R-V
Richland R-IV
Ridgeway R-V
Rock Port R-II
Rockwood R-VI

Rolla 31
Savannah R-III
School of the Osage
Sedalia 200
Seneca R-VII
Seymour R-II
Shell Knob 78
Sherwood Cass R-VIII
Silex R-I
Smithville R-II
South Callaway Co. R-II
South Nodaway Co. R-IV
Southland C-9
Sparta R-III
Springfield Catholic Schools
Springfield R-XII
St. Charles R-VI
St. James R-I
St. Joseph
Stanberry R-II
Steelville R-III
Stewartsville C-2
Stockton R-I
Strafford R-VI
Success R-VI
Tarkio R-I
Thayer R-II
The Goodwill Excel Centers
Tipton R-VI
Troy R-III
Union R-XI
University City
Verona R-VII
Warrensburg R-VI
Warsaw R-IX
Waynesville R-VI
Webb City R-VII
Webster Groves School District
Wellington-Napoleon R-IX
Wentzville R-IV
West Nodaway Co. R-I
West Plains R-VII
Wheaton R-III
Willard R-II
Willow Springs R-IV
Windsor C-1
Woodland R-IV
Worth Co. R-III
Wright City R-II Of Warren Co.

Disclaimer: Listed member districts are accurate as of press time (August 1, 2019).

