

CATALYST ACADEMY CS

7061 Lemington Avenue

Schoolwide Title 1 Comprehensive Plan | 2021 - 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Catalyst Academy Charter School is to provide a world-class education where all of our scholars are prepared for college, career, and life, in an education setting aligned to our core values: Belong. Grow. Achieve.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of Catalyst Academy Charter School is to provide underserved areas of Pittsburgh with an excellent school where all students have the opportunity to define and achieve their dreams.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE STATEMENTS

STUDENTS

Belong It is the job of Catalyst scholars to support our shared core value, Belong, by learning, applying, and demonstrating the key takeaways of Social-Emotional Learning initiatives taught during Catalyst Community Time and Whole-School Community Time. Grow Scholars receive actionable feedback from teachers, peers, and school leaders daily. In order to grow as an organization, each and every unit of the organization must hold to the belief that they can reach levels of success with the right supports and access to feedback. Achieve Scholars will display mastery and show what they know when assessed on grade-level standards throughout the school year via local assessments and state assessments starting in grade 3. One of our primary objectives as a school is to ensure all scholars have what they need in order to achieve their dreams through college, career, and in life.

STAFF

Belong Staff members are entrusted with our communities most precious gift; their children. Faculty and staff must do the work to guarantee that scholars and families feel connected to their new school community. Building safe accountable, and fun learning environments where scholars know themselves and their peers deeply, aids in the creation of a classroom community that exemplifies our core value of belong. Additionally, making space for parents and families to play their necessary role in the education of their child is a non-negotiable. Grow Staff members will model what it means to have a growth mindset through the coaching and feedback they receive from Instructional Coaches and members of the School Leadership Team. It is the job of faculty and staff to push themselves and others within the organization to continually seek ways to improve in order to get the absolute best outcomes for scholars and families. Achieve Faculty and staff achievement is directly tied to their own growth and the growth and achievement of their scholars. Our primary focus is to guarantee that scholars have all of the skills and tools necessary to achieve their dreams; therefore, our achievement is inextricably linked to the growth and achievement of scholars. When scholars grow and achieve at grade-level, we are exemplifying our core value of achieve.

ADMINISTRATION

Belong The Catalyst Academy Charter School Administrative team (Leadership Team) works explicitly to create a culture in which all

stakeholders feel comfortable bringing their full self to our school community. We believe and act on the belief of meeting people where they are, but not leaving them there. It is critical that we create a culture where teammates and stakeholders care personally and challenge directly, exuding radical candor. Grow As stated above, we meet people where they are, but do not leave them there. This statement typifies growth and a growth mindset. The Leadership Team works to create systems of accountability and feedback for all stakeholder groups in order to support their overall growth and development. For scholars, this happens through the support and feedback given by teachers. For faculty and staff, accountability and feedback are built directly into our coaching and development model. Our Leadership Team receives additional coaching and development through outside partners and takes the feedback provided from stakeholders through surveys and formal two by two (2x2) conversations at the middle and prior to the end of the school year. For parents and families, we take their feedback through community surveys and take action based on the results while also building their capacity to act and advocate for their needs. Achieve The Leadership Team supports the achievement of our school community by upholding our other two core values: Belong. Achieve. while also: 1.) Remaining data-driven in our approach to teaching and learning 2.) Setting a clear vision for success 3.) Guaranteeing scholars access to rigorous, grade-level materials and curriculum 4.) Providing faculty and staff with the materials, resources, and outlets they need in order to be successful.

PARENTS

Belong Parents have done the work of entrusting the Catalyst team with who they cherish most, their child. Parents support the core value of Belong in service to our mission by engaging in monthly parent events, opening lines of communication with faculty and staff, and building relationships and connections with other scholars, parents, and families. Additionally, scholars cannot/will not feel a true sense of belonging if they are not here in school. Parent support with timely attendance each day directly supports Catalyst in making sure our core value of Belong is evident. Grow As stated previously, we all act as models for scholars in what it means to exhibit a growth mindset and what it means to seek to continually improve. Parents support our core value of Grow by seeking growth opportunities for themselves within the school community and by providing feedback directly to Catalyst via our Parent and Community Advisor or through parent surveys. Achieve Parents and families support the achievement of their scholar and Catalyst as a whole by demonstrating an understanding of the school expectations for scholar success and supporting our execution of providing scholars with grade-level curriculum and materials. At home, parents support scholars in the acquisition of early literacy skills by reviewing sight word lists, reading 20 minutes per night, and supporting with take-home work if necessary.

COMMUNITY

Belong The community exemplifies our core value of Belong in service to our mission by creating space for Catalyst to exist in a safe and nurturing environment. The community also creates space for parents, families, and scholars from across the Pittsburgh area to come together and form a shared community within their context. Additionally, the community pushes Catalyst to be a resource and support for the community as a whole. Grow The community allows for Catalyst to continue to support our mission and vision in the context of our given space and home while also supporting our overall growth by providing access to community resources or initiatives that will support the learning of scholars and families. Achieve When the Catalyst community wins, we all win. Collective success will only come from a shared sense of achievement for both the school and the community as a whole. With support in both the areas of Belong and Grow, the success shown through achievement is an inevitability.

OTHER (OPTIONAL)

STEERING COMMITTEE

Name	Position	Building/Group
Brian Smith	Administrator	Catalyst Academy Charter School
Darren Gray	Administrator	Catalyst Academy Charter School
Rachel Amankulor	Board Member	Catalyst Academy Charter School
Jennie Smith	Staff Member	Founding Second Grade Teacher
Hillary Wareham	Staff Member	Founding First Grade Teacher
Myra Powell	Staff Member	Founding Community Advisor
Terasha Craig	Parent	Parent of Kindergarten Scholar
Asia Nelson	Parent	Parent of a Kindergarten and Second Grade Scholar
Parrish Davenport	Community Member	Unity Collaborative and Family & Friends Initiative
Brittini Wright-Burley	Other	Wright Childcare Solutions

ESTABLISHED PRIORITIES

Priority Statement

Outcome Category

We will develop a more robust system for tracking and engaging students and parents in the work of improving attendance rates.

Regular Attendance

We will create more opportunities for parents to engage in their child's learning and school community.

Parent and family
engagement

ACTION PLAN AND STEPS

Evidence-based Strategy

Reduce Absenteeism

Measurable Goals

Goal Nickname

Measurable Goal Statement (Smart Goal)

Reduce chronic absenteeism rates by 20%

Reduce chronic absenteeism rates by 20% by 2023-2024.

Action Step

Anticipated Start/Completion

Lead Person/Position

Materials/Resources/Supports Needed

Daily contact with families of absent students

2021-10-26 - 2022-06-16

Myra Powell

Attendance data

Anticipated Outcome

documentation of calls

Monitoring/Evaluation

documentation of calls will be reviewed to develop strategies to encourage higher participation

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STEPS AND TIMELINES:

Measurable Goals	Action Plan Name	Professional Development Step	Anticipated Timeline
Reduce chronic absenteeism rates by 20% by 2023-2024. (Reduce chronic absenteeism rates by 20%)	Reduce Absenteeism	Daily contact with families of absent students	10/26/2021 - 06/16/2022

APPROVALS & SIGNATURES

Assurance of Quality and Accountability

Assurance of Quality and Accountability

The Building Administrator, Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer and President of the School Board will affirm the following statements.

We affirm that our school has developed a School Improvement Plan based upon a thorough review of the essential practices to advance educational programs and processes and improve student achievement.

We affirm that the action plans that we will be implementing address our specific school needs, include strategies that provide educational opportunities and instructional strategies for all students and each of the student groups, increases the amount and quality of learning time, and provides equity in the curriculum which may include programs, activities, and courses necessary to provide a well-rounded education. These plans address the needs of all children in the school, but particularly the needs of those at risk of not meeting the challenging State academic standards.

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that the school level plan has been duly reviewed by the Building Administrator, Superintendent of Schools and formally approved by the district's Board of Education, per guidelines required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

We hereby affirm and assure that this plan:

- Addresses all the **required components** prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Meets **ESSA requirements**
- Includes **at least one evidence-based strategy that meets one of the three highest levels of evidence outlined in ESSA**
- Has a **high probability of improving student outcomes**
- Has sufficient **LEA leadership and support to ensure successful implementation**

With this Assurance of Quality & Accountability, we request the Pennsylvania Department of Education grant formal approval to implement this plan.

School Board Minutes or Affirmation Statement

Signature (Entered Electronically and must have access to web application).

Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer

School Improvement Facilitator Signature

Building Principal Signature

ADDENDUM A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION TO INFORM PLAN

Strengths

Strong college aligned curriculum

Nationally normed assessment tools aligned with PA Future Ready Index and college readiness measures

Strong curricular tools such as Wit & Wisdom and our foundational skills program, Lifelong Readers that are aligned with research-based approaches to learning how to read and provide rich background knowledge development.

Strong curricular tools (e.g. Eureka Math) that are aligned with college-readiness standards, and the PA Future Ready Index.

STEMScopes is a nationally recognized elementary program that aligns with both PA standards and Next Generation Science Standards.

Catalyst provides STEM programming five days/week

We have chosen to use the SMARTFutures platform to help align our career readiness efforts to PA standards and the PA Future Ready Index.

Catalyst students have opportunity in their schedules, either in

Challenges

Attendance rate improvements, especially reduction in chronic absenteeism

Increasing the level of parent engagement despite ongoing COVID related challenges

The MAP ELA data revealed greater deficits in the "writing and language" subskill areas of ELA.

The MAP Math data revealed greater deficits in the "numbers and operations" subskill areas of ELA.

Staffing elementary STEM teachers has been a challenge. Many STEM teaching professionals want to focus on middle and high school grades.

Implementation of career readiness modules ideally would involve working with a lot of outside partners in professional contexts. This is challenging to execute especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There aren't a lot of elementary school counselors with deep experience in targeting career readiness efforts for elementary school students.

Strengths

the enrichment block or during their community time block, to explore career readiness topics.

Our staff recruiting efforts have focused on building a team of professionals that are equity-driven.

Our leadership team has significant prior experience with serving the student groups identified in this plan.

Title 1 plan aligned with strong professional development of teachers.

Special Education plan is driven by an inclusive learning model to serve all students at high levels with rigorous use of data.

Provide frequent, timely, and systematic feedback and support on instructional practices

Foster a culture of high expectations for success for all students, educators, families, and community members

Challenges

Improving teacher instructional delivery skills would improve the classroom outcomes of the student groups identified in this plan.

Improving attendance rates would improve performance on key measures for the student groups identified.

Identification of students with early intervention plans and services has sometimes been more difficult due to gaps in service delivery as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are limited Title 1 resources. With additional resources, there would be greater impact on teacher development and classroom supports.

Implement an evidence-based system of schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports

Partner with local businesses, community organizations, and other agencies to meet the needs of the school



Most Notable Observations/Patterns

Attendance is critical to all of our collective goals.

Challenges	Discussion Point	Priority for Planning
Attendance rate improvements, especially reduction in chronic absenteeism	COVID-19 materially impacted student attendance rates.	
Increasing the level of parent engagement despite ongoing COVID related challenges	COVID-19 materially impacted parent engagement.	

ADDENDUM B: ACTION PLAN

Action Plan: Reduce Absenteeism

Action Steps	Anticipated Start/Completion Date
Daily contact with families of absent students	10/26/2021 - 06/16/2022

Monitoring/Evaluation	Anticipated Output
documentation of calls will be reviewed to develop strategies to encourage higher participation	documentation of calls

Material/Resources/Supports Needed	PD Step	Comm Step
Attendance data	yes	yes



ADDENDUM C: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Measurable Goals	Action Plan Name	Professional Development Step	Anticipated Timeline
Reduce chronic absenteeism rates by 20% by 2023-2024. (Reduce chronic absenteeism rates by 20%)	Reduce Absenteeism	Daily contact with families of absent students	10/26/2021 - 06/16/2022

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Professional Development Step	Audience	Topics of Prof. Dev
Parent communication PD	Parent Community Advisor	parent communication, attendance data

Evidence of Learning	Anticipated Timeframe	Lead Person/Position
Understanding of attendance data, parent communication techniques	11/01/2021 - 12/13/2021	Myra Powell, Parent Community Advisor

Danielson Framework Component Met in this Plan:	This Step meets the Requirements of State Required Trainings:

ADDENDUM D: ACTION PLAN COMMUNICATION

Measurable Goals	Action Plan Name	Communication Step	Anticipated Timeline
Reduce chronic absenteeism rates by 20% by 2023-2024. (Reduce chronic absenteeism rates by 20%)	Reduce Absenteeism	Daily contact with families of absent students	2021-10-26 - 2022-06-16

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Communication Step	Audience	Topics/Message of Communication
Absenteeism activity	parents of absent students	Absenteeism

Anticipated Timeframe	Frequency	Delivery Method
11/01/2021 - 06/17/2022	monthly	Email

Lead Person/Position
Myra Powell

ADDENDUM E: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNICATIONS

Communication Step	Topics of Message	Mode	Audience	Anticipated Timeline
Publish the plan on our website. Make parents aware of the plan.	Solicit feedback and engagement on the comprehensive plan.	email, website	Parents, board members, community members	October - November 2021
