Integrated Application Template (Optional)
Virtual Charter Schools

Willamette Connections Academy

Integrated Application Virtual Charter Questions

Needs Assessment Summary

Willamette Connections Academy engaged in a comprehensive needs assessment in order to determine how we could best utilize High School Success and Early Indicator and Intervention System funds.

We used the following strategies:·

- Surveys
- Email communications
- Webmail communications
- Website
- Social Media
- Listening Sessions
- Focal Group Sessions
- Board Meetings
- Staff, Student, and Family Planning Committee Meetings

We reviewed the following information
- Synchronous Contacts Data
- Attendance Data
- Synchronous LiveLesson Attendance
- Course Completion Rates
- Course Pass Rates
- FARM Data
- Gender Data
- Disability Data
- Geographic Student Location
- Present and Past Enrollment
- Grade Distribution
- Withdrawal Reasons
- Race & Ethnicity Data
- Language Data
- Prior Schooling Information
- Special Populations Data
- Previous HSS Plans & Budgets
- Survey Results
- Listening Session Comments & Questions
- Board Comments & Public Comments
- Committee Meeting Comments & Questions

We identified the following themes and areas to explore:
- Things School is Doing Well
  - Teacher Willingness to Engage
  - Teacher Experience & Knowledge
  - Variety of socialization options (clubs, field trips, service opportunities)
  - Communication efforts
  - Course customization
  - Flexibility - Program, Hours
- Things the School Could Do Better
  - More Teachers or Teacher Aides
  - More CTE Courses
  - More Electives
  - More SEL Supports
  - More soft skills training
  - Support for Struggling Students
  - More Course Variety
  - Attendance Tracking & Reporting Systems
  - Staff Professional Development
  - Clubs, Extracurriculars and Engagement Opportunities
- Ideas for School Improvement
  - Elective & CTE Courses
  - Hire Additional Staff
  - Software Funding
  - Mental Health Supports & Programming
  - College & Career Supports - Community Outreach, Mentorship, Dual Credit, In-House AP Course Offerings
  - Increased or more well defined transition services for Special Population Focal Group

Plan Summary

Willamette Connections Academy empowers students with the tools and experiences needed to create an individualized and equitable path to lifelong personal success through a culture that encourages growth, service, and exploration.

Our needs assessment and community engagement efforts over the last year have revealed a need to focus on a more diverse set of educational opportunities for our high school students in order to engage them early in their high school journey and set them up for success. We also discovered a disparity between the participation and success rates of our students with learning differences and our general education students. Thus the two outcomes we will focus on over the next biennium and ultimately over the next four years are 1. 90% of 9th grade students will be on track to graduate by the end of 9th grade and 2. School will achieve a graduation rate of 80% across all demographic groups.

We plan to achieve these outcomes through targeted strategies and activities aimed at increased engagement, support and accountability. Providing students with greater choice and voice will open up additional opportunities for students to individualize their learning experience through enhanced coursework, curricula and programs of study. Students will have a

- more robust set of electives and credit recovery option
- advanced coursework opportunities such as dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment, accelerated pathways program, advanced placement courses
- Career and Technical Education courses leading to certificates in designated programs of study in Arts, Information and Communication, Business Management and Health Sciences

In addition, we want to prepare students for and help them transition into the workforce, technical school, military or college through enhanced advisory and onboarding programs focused on building study skills, soft skills and social skills. In order to accomplish these goals we will also implement additional professional development and collaboration efforts with our educational staff to continue our equity work and trauma-informed, strengths-based approach to student learning and relationships.

Equity Advanced

- What strengths do you see in your district or school in terms of equity and access?

  - While there are always areas to improve upon, we have been diligent in our work to increase equity and decrease barriers to access. When families enroll with us, teachers reach out to each student to learn about who they are as learners, what interests them, and where they would like to grow. Knowing this information from the beginning, teachers have a clear through-line on what they need to provide each student, and how they need to provide it, in order to ensure equitable academic outcomes. This could mean differentiated instruction, small group or 1:1 learning opportunities, multiple pathways towards skill mastery, and often working with Special Populations teachers/case managers. Additionally, we create lessons and materials that are culturally competent, diverse, and inclusive. Relative to access, we are continuously looking for ways to increase access to not only programming, resources, and lessons, but also increase access to teachers, staff, and peers. We use multiple platforms and applications to engage learners (Gimkit, Nearpod, Pixton, etc.), we are developing a version of Outdoor School that not only fits the students that we serve, but accounts for transportation barriers as well, and this year we are taking learning to the streets - we have done numerous in-person study groups, grade-level meet-ups, field trips in order to increase teacher-peer and peer-peer connections.
- What needs were identified in your district or school in terms of equity and access?

o Throughout the needs assessment process we discovered we can do a better job promoting access to advanced coursework for our students with IEPs, 504s, and English Language Learners. Everyone gets a course catalog, attends informational meetings regarding the course selection process, and meets with their homeroom teacher to review their course selections. However, we found participation was still low among our students in special populations and think we could expand the number of students opting for advanced coursework by instituting new strategies. We plan to implement targeted messaging to inform and support students and families as they explore their options. We plan to offer additional support through one-to-one meetings and drop-in Q & A sessions.

● Describe how you used your equity lens or tool in your planning.

o We used the Oregon Department of Education Equity Lens as a base model and added questions regarding the impact of our actions and decisions on students and families around the state. As we progressed through the needs assessment process and analyzed data, we made sure to start and end with reviewing our questions. This set up a firm foundation for the formation of our outcomes/goals, strategies and activities. The questions were reviewed during our committee meetings and listening sessions as well. The lens was then utilized to ensure equity was at the forefront of our budgeting decisions to ensure funds are being allocated appropriately and the impact of the investments are being considered on all populations with an emphasis on our focal groups.

● Describe the potential academic impact for all students AND focal student groups based on your use of funds in your plan.

o The focal group we believe needs the most immediate support and action steps is special populations. Historically graduation rates are lower for our students with disabilities and the High School Success committee and school participants have questioned what additional support we can put in place for this focal group. There are a variety of things that could be implemented which would have a positive academic impact for these students such as offering credits for some special education courses that meet the state standards. We find that students with IEPs often come to us with fewer credits than their peers. Once behind, it is extremely difficult to catch up. If students received appropriate credit for standards mastered through Specially Designed Instruction elective courses, this would produce a higher graduation rate for this group. We also plan to implement additional courses surrounding CTE and programs of study. All students will benefit greatly from the addition of the programs and courses but especially our non college-bound special populations focal group students. More career and technical courses would ensure classes are meaningful for our students who are moving into the trades post high school.

- What policies and procedures do you implement to ensure activities carried out by the district do not isolate or stigmatize children and youth navigating homelessness?

    o We discreetly identify these students initially through our comprehensive enrollment process. We provide support to them through our McKinney Vento Liaison. Our liaison contacts our students who are unhoused and their families on a regular basis to assess needs and provide necessary internal support. Students and families are also directed to appropriate external supports. Since we are an online environment, our liaison is able to do this without alerting other staff or students. The liaison can gather resources to meet academic, physical and emotional needs of the student and family with anonymity.

CTE Focus

- What strengths do you see in your CTE Programs of Study in terms of equity and access?
    o We offer a wide variety of CTE courses to all students in high school. We are working to establish our first CTE Programs of Study. We have built the foundation with quality curriculum options and staff dedicated to student growth and opportunities. We are working toward creating and selecting courses to support a program of study for Arts, Information and Communication and our long term goal is to also implement a program of study for Business Management and Health Sciences. This was definitely an area of growth highlighted by all stakeholders in our needs assessment process. Our four year plan includes the additional courses to support our designated programs of study and the staff needed to manage the application process and programs.

- What needs were identified in your CTE Programs of Study in terms of equity and access?

    o The desire for additional CTE coursework and programs was a consistent theme throughout all of our needs assessment process. Stakeholders are looking for increased coursework variety along with internships, hands-on experiences and opportunities for students that lead to additional post-high school options like technical schools, military or careers. Our goal as outlined above is to support a program of study for Arts, Information and Communication and also build the foundation for and implement a program of study for Business Management and Health Sciences. We also plan to continue to assess the impact of these courses and programs on our special populations focal group and pair these programs with a comprehensive transition plan to give special populations students the best path toward success.

- What is your recruitment strategy, and how does it ensure equitable access and participation in CTE Programs of Study?

    o During our spring course selection process we promote all courses and present information to students in grade bands and in small groups. Throughout the school year, counselors meet with students and families to guide them through the creation and maintenance of the Academic Completion Plan (ACP) which helps direct which courses a

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student will focus on each year of high school and in the preparatory 8th grade year. They also partner with homeroom teachers and advisory teachers to meet one-on-one with students to discuss their goals for high school and post high school plans. Since we are just beginning the CTE Program of Study application process, we plan to bolster communications and promotions of these options and provide additional support to our special populations focal group to ensure greater understanding of available options for success.

- How will you ensure equal access and participation in your CTE Programs of Study among focal student groups? How will you ensure there is no discrimination for focal student groups?

  o Our identified focal group, special populations students, needs additional support during the Academic Completion Plan process. Some of these supports include additional case manager involvement in the process, increased communications and reminders, even greater involvement of Learning Coaches. Other supports include small group and one-on-one meeting opportunities to ask and answer questions and supplemental digital and physical resources such as course catalogs and course selection forms. We will also ensure all academic accommodations and modifications are utilized during the course selection process. Further follow up with the family and students is needed to ensure understanding, answer additional questions and provide guidance. Finally, we will make sure our communications and promotions of CTE programs of study opportunities are consistent through all student populations. We will continue to use our equity lens to guide decisions and actions.

Well-Rounded Education

- Describe your approach to providing students a well-rounded education. What instructional practices, course topics, curriculum design, and student skills development are part of this approach? Describe the approaches by grade band (high school only).

  o We provide students with a well-rounded education using a variety of instructional practices. We use live online classes, self-paced coursework, one-on-one support from teachers, virtual and in-person field trips. Course topics include core subjects (math, science, english language arts, and social studies) as well as electives in world languages, fine arts, technology, and physical education. Our curriculum is designed to be engaging, challenging, and relevant. It is aligned with state standards and is developed by subject matter experts to ensure it is comprehensive and current. We are committed to helping students develop the skills they need to be successful in school and in life. These skills include critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, time management, and self-motivation. We also work to incorporate soft skills such as empathy, emotional control, communication, and self-awareness.

- Which disciplines (theater, visual arts, music, dance, media arts) of the arts are provided, either through an integration of content or as a separate class?

Oregon Department of Education

o   Our online school has a strong focus on visual and media arts. We offer Graphic Design, Introduction to Drawing, Art in World Cultures, Computer Design and Art History. We do not offer theater or dance courses and currently offer only one music class. We do offer arts related clubs and we encourage our students to participate in community arts related activities. We also fully support students who participate in these courses and activities with their local school district. We see the expansion of these courses as an opportunity for growth in our program.

● How do you ensure students have access to strong library programs?

o   As an online school we do not have a physical library for our students, but students do have access to our myOn books software that we weave into our curriculum as well. Students have access to EBSCO Explora, EBSCO Research Databases, and Grolier Online as well. We also share information with families on resources available throughout the state LIKE THIS. In order to promote reading and literature, we held our first book fair this year with opportunities for students at every grade band. We also had service opportunities for older students to share in reading experiences with students. Also, every year we participate in Read Across America where we promote reading, library patronage and community engagement. This is an area of growth for our school and we plan to partner with library science experts across the state to tap into additional digital resources available to all students.

● How do you ensure students have adequate time to eat, coupled with adequate time for movement and play?

o   At the beginning of the school year, each student and family have an orientation course to complete to get ready for the school year. The course is targeted to specific grade bands and audiences to ensure relevance. Those courses guide families through the process of creating a daily schedule for school including appropriate breaks for physical activity, mental stimulation, snacks and meals. Our LiveLessons with teachers are usually 30-45 minutes and teachers incorporate movement into the lessons on a regular basis. Our physical education and health courses provide learning content related to healthy movement and nutrition in addition to activity and movement logs. We encourage students and families to choose movement activities that best suit their lifestyle and geographic region of the state. Students are also allowed to log physical movement for their extra-curricular activities such as dance, sports, and martial arts. Finally, we offer clubs to extend the opportunities for students to eat and socialize during lunch bunches and snack chats. We also offer a yoga club for extended movement opportunities.

● Describe how you incorporate STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) instructional practices, including project-based learning, critical thinking, inquiry, and cross-disciplinary content.

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o   Students at all grade levels have access to high-quality science, technology, arts, and math courses. Each course contains opportunities for students to engage in hands-on and real-world learning activities to solidify their learning and make the content more meaningful. Project-based portfolios is one strong element of each course where students break the content down and apply it with an eye toward critical thinking. Each course is also full of activities to engage students in the inquiry and exploration process. Teachers bring the content to life during LiveLesson, small group, and one-on-one sessions to engage students in the content and extend learning beyond the curriculum. A focus for the next biennium is to increase cross curricular lessons, activities and portfolios in order to maximize student learning and expand the connections students make between content areas.

● Describe your process for ensuring the adopted curriculum (basal and supplemental) consists of a clearly stated scope and sequence of K-12 learning objectives and is aligned to all state and national standards.

o   Our course curriculum is created by a team of curriculum authors and experts at our content provider Pearson Virtual Schools. We also utilize high quality third party content creators to provide some of our CTE and electives courses. All of our curriculum is aligned to state standards and our teachers provide clarity, direction and supplemental content as needed to enhance or remediate students. Each course has a course outline so all stakeholders can see the overall units and lessons from the beginning to the end of the course and refer back to the material any time. We have a course map that includes all of the basic information about each course. Teachers create a scope and sequence based on state standards. Here is an example of some of our Science Curriculum Alignment. .

● Describe your process for ensuring classroom instruction is intentional, engaging, and challenging for all students.

o   To ensure classroom instruction is intentional and engaging by employing LiveLesson strategies to meet a variety of learning styles and then supplement live learning during classes with a variety of teaching methods through the online curriculum. We ensure instruction is differentiated for various learning levels and provide follow up small group and individual LiveLesson opportunities for students who need remediation or extension. Individualized Learning Plans for each student are employed to outline their academic strengths and weaknesses, learning styles, and goals, which also drives differentiated instruction. Students can work through the online content at their own pace which allows for additional questioning and support from teachers and learning coaches. Effective feedback on daily lesson completion and completed assessments is key to our model and provides specific support to individual student growth and goals.

- What strategies do you employ to help facilitate effective transitions from middle grades to high school and from high school to postsecondary education?

  - o We employ numerous strategies to help our students transition from middle school to high school and then from high school to post-secondary education. We have a Senior Success course which focuses on college preparation, a career interest inventory and career-ready senior résumé building. Some other activities that we employ for our seniors are Future Story Essay (Meets Oregon State Dept of Ed PLRs), Mock Job Interview, Path to the Future Action Plan (assignment focused on students' post-high school plan to achieve their career goals), Financial Literacy skill building, Life Skill Readiness with a focus on building resources such as relationships, understanding the hidden rules of society, language registers, stress management, etc. For our middle school students we have "meet the teachers" meetings, transition presentations and in-depth high school course selection meetings to review resources and supports and walk families and students through the 4 year college planning process.

  - o Additional active strategies employed include a Fall counseling LiveLesson that takes place during homeroom to introduce all high school students to the counseling team and let them know what kind of things the counselor can support them with as well as how to contact the counselor. On an individual level, counseling and advisory staff meet with students to support academics, mental health, and career and college planning. We provide students and their caretakers with Academic Completion Plans that show progression towards graduation by credit category once a year to all students, and as needed to individual students and caretakers.

- How do you identify and support the academic and technical needs of students who are not meeting or exceeding state and national standards, and Perkins Performance targets, particularly for focal student groups?

  - o Teachers and case managers review data constantly to better understand and serve our students. Administration holds staff accountable for tracking attendance, participation, grades and contacts. If we notice a student is underperforming, we have several systems in place to support students who are not meeting targets. The most important one is the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process that we are continuing to develop. The MTSS group is composed of general education, special education and school counselors and looks at students who are not performing as expected and determines what is hindering their progress then provides guidance to steer them in the right direction. Some of the students need basic interventions, some need counseling support, some need support in how to use their technology, and some are eventually guided through the formal child find process.

- What systems are in place for supporting the academic needs of students, including for focal student groups, who have exceeded state and national standards?

- We provide options for all students including our special populations focal group to participate in our [Accelerated Pathways](#) program. This program allows students to take college courses from a number of universities across the United States to earn Dual Enrollment credit. We hold informational meetings for families to explain the program logistics and its benefits. We also include this information during the conversations homeroom teachers have with students during course selection. We plan to increase our partnerships with local community colleges to increase the number of dual enrollment and concurrent credit opportunities for all students. We also have plans to improve our communications directed at our special populations focal group with the goal of increasing participation in these opportunities. Finally we have a chapter of National Honor Society which encourages and honors academic excellence of all students and provides guidance and service oriented opportunities for students who are college, trade school, military, or career bound post high school.

- How do you provide career exploration opportunities, including career information and employment opportunities, and career guidance and academic counseling before and during CTE Program of Study enrollment?

  - We are working to build our first program of study for our school. We are establishing the initial courses for year one and working on the execution plan for communication roll-out. We will connect students to career pathways and resources and host sessions for all students with a virtual walk-through of the student hub DataView/Resources, WillCA Counseling website, Individual Graduation Plan DataView/Plan and Pearson Future Focus resource. Counseling sends out a fall welcome letter to all seniors and their Learning Coaches to outline FAFSA, OSAC, college admissions and links resources to those items as well as other resources for non-college bound students. We will also utilize webmail and newsletters to remind them about due dates, announce college/career based field trips- (campus visits, career fairs, college fairs), and give information regarding graduation activities. We also have a 12th grade advisory teacher supporting our seniors through the college and career readiness process.

- How are you providing equitable work-based learning experiences for students?

  - We currently allow students to participate in independent learning opportunities related to the jobs they have. We design curriculum to encourage reflection on goals, skills acquisition, job performance, career growth and improved communication with employers and fellow employees. In the future, as we grow and fully form our programs of study, we plan to partner with businesses across the state that can assist students in acquiring the necessary experience and skills. This will help students complete a certification which would either allow them to gain meaningful employment after high school, enter a trade school program to further their education, enter the military with a usable skill, or continue their education at a college or university with a strong base of knowledge to build upon.

- Describe how students' academic and technical skills will be improved through integrated, coherent, rigorous, challenging and relevant learning in subjects that constitute a well-rounded education, including opportunities to earn postsecondary credit while in high school.

  o   Within the course content, students are encouraged to practice knowledge using practical tools to help enhance the learning from the curriculum. Students have options to improve academic and technical skills by engaging in alternative assessments promoting student voice and choice. Teachers often use LiveLesson time to explore tools and resources to help students expand on their knowledge of the specific content area. We currently encourage students in the workforce to utilize their work experience for independent study opportunities. We plan to partner with businesses and workforce education partners to allow our students to gain the needed skills and experience to secure certificates of completion in programs of study.

- What activities will you offer to students that will lead to self-sufficiency in identified careers?
  o   Transition planning involving the student will occur on an individual basis. Students will be able to determine career or educational goals and steps to achieve those goals. A curriculum to help students plan out organization skills will also be developed and utilized. We also allow students to participate in independent study courses that provide flexibility to the student to further explore hands-on experience in careers of interest. These courses provide students with a structured way to analyze the pros and cons of a field and weigh the investment of further time and effort in that career. These courses also allow teachers, counselors, and advisors to guide students toward certificate programs to further equip students for success in the workforce or in technical school opportunities post-high school.

CTE Focus
- How will students from focal groups and their families learn about CTE course offerings and Programs of Study that are available?

  o   Students and families learn about our course offerings and Programs of Study available through counseling/advisory sessions and our course catalog which is sent to families in the spring before course selection and is housed on our school website. Students and families create Academic Completion Plans in partnership with school stakeholders. These plans are updated annually when course offerings are reviewed. CTE courses are highlighted and we plan to highlight upcoming programs of study opportunities as well. We also will send targeted communications and provide additional opportunities for our Special Populations focal group to ask questions and provide feedback on course selection and future planning.

- How will you prepare CTE participants for non-traditional fields?

- o We will conduct in-depth discussions and Academic Completion Planning to ensure proper course placement and alignment for each student. These efforts will help focus students and lead them to establish post high school goals. School counselors will lead these efforts. Entrepreneurship and Internship courses will also allow for students pursuing non-traditional fields an opportunity to explore those fields while also earning credit for it. Programs of study will be explained and tracked for participating students.

- Describe any new CTE Programs of Study to be developed.

  - o We are working toward creating and selecting courses to support a program of study for Arts, Information and Communication, Business Management and Health Sciences. We will be piloting the foundational Business Management and Health Sciences courses next school year. Those courses include the following: Business Information Management: Introduction, Business Information Management: Data Essentials, Health Science Foundations: Introduction, HSF: Professional Responsibilities, Principles of Business, Marketing and Finance: Introduction, PBMF: Targeting Your Business Insight, Principles of Information Technology: Introduction, PIT: Working with Computers. We also plan to support these efforts with a firm foundation of Middle School Career Exploration 1 and 2.

Engaged Community

- If the goal is meaningful, authentic, and ongoing community engagement, where are you in that process? What barriers, if any, were experienced and how might you anticipate and resolve those issues in future engagement efforts?

  - o We have a robust school website with extensive resources for families to engage in our school community. We send weekly, all-school newsletters to families along with all-school webmail messages and targeted webmail messages to focal groups. We offer opportunities for engagement during the day and in the evenings including Lunch with Leaders and Coffee Talks. We send post meeting communications to families to keep them updated on discussion points and next steps. We use social media to advertise and solicit feedback. We send out surveys to students, learning coaches, staff, district partners, school board members, program and platform providers and community members. The process for community engagement was very challenging with our best feedback gained through surveys which were a low level time commitment for our stakeholders. Some ideas for additional engagement are to create video summaries with exit tickets attached to gain quick non-threatening feedback, to promote social gatherings, field trips, and service projects where brief engagement meetings can be woven into the agenda, and to add engagement questions and points of interest into required tasks like upcoming course selection and our intent to enroll process.

- What relationships and/or partnerships will you cultivate to improve future engagement?

o   We need to focus on building relationships and partnerships with community colleges and universities to increase dual and concurrent enrollment options and post secondary exploration. As we build out our programs of study we will need to partner with businesses around the state to facilitate internships and career path learning opportunities for students. We also need to promote a parent teacher organization. We can encourage this group to form and provide them with the virtual space and structure to grow and thrive would be a great addition to our school.

● What resources would enhance your engagement efforts? How can ODE support your continuous improvement process?

o   Our school could benefit from a regular schedule of engagement activities along with discussion topics that span the school year and are published ahead of the beginning of the school year and promoted on our website and social media. Having something like a regularly scheduled Lunch with Leaders or Coffee Chat opportunity that stakeholders can depend on would promote consistency and hopefully increase engagement. We already have regular award assemblies, but families would benefit from this being on a calendar of activities so they can plan their academic schedule around these opportunities. We could also send a short survey with each newsletter and post them on social media more regularly and then follow up with action taken as a result of the survey results. We can also capitalize on some student led organizations to gather valuable information and form deeper connections with some possible focal groups.

● How do you ensure community members and partners experience a safe and welcoming educational environment?

o   Within the first few days of enrollment students are personally introduced to their homeroom teacher. All teachers work to stay in communication to build meaningful relationships with the students. With frequent check in calls, and personalized curriculum based assessments, students are able to have their voice heard and feel like valued members of our school community. We offer clubs for students with similar interests so they can meet more students with common interests. Inside the live lesson times, teachers communicate the best ways to interact with each other in class so each student feels safe to speak their mind without fear of embarrassment. Our teachers work hard to keep the connections open and inviting so every student feels acknowledged in our school.

● Who was engaged in any aspect of your planning processes under this guidance?
(Check all that apply)

✔ Students of color
✔ Students with disabilities - Designated Focal Group
✔ Students who are emerging bilinguals

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✔ Students who identify as LGBTQ2SIA+
✔ Students navigating poverty, homelessness, and foster care
✔ Families of students of color
✔ Families of students with disabilities - Designated Focal Group
✔ Families of students who are emerging bilinguals
✔ Families of students who identify as LGBTQ2SIA+
✔ Families of students navigating poverty, homelessness, and foster care
✔ Licensed staff (administrators, teachers, counselors, etc.)
✔ Classified staff (paraprofessionals, bus drivers, office support, etc.)
Community Based Organizations (non-profit organizations, civil rights organizations, community Service groups, culturally specific organizations, etc.)
Tribal members (adults and youth)
✔ School volunteers (school board members, budget committee members, PTA/PTO members, booster club members, parent advisory group members, classroom volunteers, etc.)
✔ Business community
Regional Educator Networks (RENs)
Local Community College Deans and Instructors; Local university deans and instructors
✔ Migrant Education and McKinney-Vento Coordinators
Local Workforce Development and / or Chambers of Commerce
CTE Regional Coordinators
Regional STEM / Early learning Hubs
Vocational Rehabilitation and pre-Employment Service Staff
Justice Involved Youth
Community leaders
Other _____

● How were they engaged?
  (Check all that apply)

  ✔ Survey(s) or other engagement applications (i.e., Thought Exchange)
  ✔ In-person forum(s)
  ✔ Focus group(s)
  ✔ Roundtable discussion
  Community group meeting
  Collaborative design or strategy session(s)
  Community-driven planning or initiative(s)
  ✔ Website
  CTE Consortia meeting
  ✔ Email messages
  ✔ Newsletters
  ✔ Social media
  ✔ School board meeting
  Partnering with unions

Partnering with community-based partners
Partnering with faith-based organizations
Partnering with business
Other _____

- How will you intentionally develop partnerships with employers to expand work-based learning opportunities for students?

  o We currently offer an internship course and a variety of independent study courses. Our new programs of study will incorporate facilitated internship opportunities for our students which will expand career exploration and connection opportunities for our students. Our goal is to create extensive resources to offer to our students as well as field trip and service project opportunities in the coming biennium to share with our families.

Strengthened Systems and Capacity

- How do you recruit, onboard, and develop quality educators and leaders? How are you recruiting and retaining educators and leaders representative of student focal groups?

  o Our first priority is to build a culture at WillCA that promotes high staff retention. We offer teachers opportunities for autonomy and growth as educators in an environment that allows for flexibility and innovation. We focus on staff collaboration through PLC work and have strong grade band networks. We set up and encourage daily teacher communication and interaction through grade band chats, an all school chat, a get help chat and subject area chats. We also have staff get togethers, activities and newsletters to promote connectedness. We have a comprehensive onboarding plan with a schedule of tasks/activities and courses designed to train teachers how to be effective online educators. We provide buddy teachers for new staff members and follow up with teachers during bi-weekly touch base meetings with managers to follow up on progress and provide additional support. We have career ladder position opportunities for teachers to stretch their leadership skills and participate in specific areas of need for the school such as Communications, DEI, McKinney Vento Liaison, Dyslexia, Department Leaders, Teacher Managers, Professional Development Coordinator among others. Finally we offer a wide range of professional development courses throughout the school year to encourage educator and staff growth and progress toward set goals.

- What processes are in place to identify and address any disparities that result in students of color, students experiencing poverty, students learning English and students with disabilities being taught more often than other students by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers?

  o We pride ourselves on the quality of our professional teaching staff and the development plan we have in place to support their professional growth. Each staff member is highly qualified in his/her content area and grade band. Because we are a smaller school, we only have one teacher per content area/grade band and therefore all students are

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assigned equally to grade/content specific teachers. Teachers are supported through professional development and DEI training to recognize the needs of focal student groups. We also review data quarterly with staff to highlight any areas of disparity for these groups that need to be addressed.

- How do you support efforts to reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom, particularly for focal student groups?

  o Since we are an online school, we rarely remove a student from class. The only time something like this occurs is if a student has repeatedly violated the online classroom environment and needs to be removed for a period of time for the teacher to converse with the students and learning coach about online classroom expectations. In these situations the student still has access to the lesson recordings so content is not missed. Also, student assignments for grading and master of content are completed in the Pearson Online Classroom which is not housed in the LiveLesson environment. Students are encouraged to attend small group LiveLessons or set up one-on-one teacher meetings to go over content requiring clarification/assistance or additional practice.

- How do you align professional growth and development to the strengths and needs of the school, the teachers, and district leaders?

  o There are several ways in which we align professional growth and development. We conduct surveys to identify areas where staff need additional support or training. We use data from student assessments, teacher evaluations, and other sources to identify areas where professional development is needed. We provide ongoing support that includes coaching, mentoring, and collaborative learning among ourselves and with other CA schools across the country. We partner with Pearson experts who provide specifically requested training to our staff.

- How do you provide feedback and coaching to guide instructional staff in research-based improvement to teaching and learning?

  o Teachers and managers meet every other week. The meetings are collaborative where strategies, data, professional goals, student growth goals, students of concern and school year cycle timeline activities/events are discussed. Techniques and strategies are discussed for teachers to use during their LiveLesson and student support meetings. Ongoing professional development is offered for specific areas that teachers may be referred to to improve their teaching and learning. A calendar of professional development is offered for teachers to choose personal areas of growth.

- What systems are in place to monitor student outcomes and identify students who may be at risk of academic failure? How do you respond and support the student(s) when those identifications and observations are made?

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- o Student data is monitored closely by all staff members weekly and sometimes daily depending on the data. Staff monitor course completion, pass rates, attendance, contacts and more. Students who are at risk of academic failure are reviewed weekly and individual contact is made with the student and caretaker to determine an appropriate support plan to get the student back on track. This can involve individual academic support meetings, reviewing of content through a phone call, alternate ways to show knowledge on an academic standard, and/or creating an academic plan to support grade improvement and student engagement. Families are informed daily of absences and learning coaches and students have access to course completion data and grades in real time as students complete work. Every two weeks teachers enter temporary zeroes when appropriate so students and families can better assess their grades in each course and take appropriate corrective action when warranted.

- How do you facilitate effective transitions from middle grades to high school; and from high school to postsecondary education?

  - o Willamette Connections Academy's counseling and advisory team offer several active transition strategies that are built into our school cycle calendar to assist students in the transition from high school to postsecondary planning. One of our most important supports comes from the Senior Success class. This class is designed to guide students in creating a plan and being prepared upon graduation to carry out that plan for their life after high school. (see Victoria's response for details)
  - o Additional active strategies employed include a Fall counseling LiveLesson that takes place during homeroom to introduce all high school students to the counseling team and let them know what kind of things the counselor can support them with as well as how to contact the counselor. There is also a Spring counseling LiveLesson that takes place during homeroom in which career pathways and resources are presented to all students with a virtual walk-through of the student hub DV, Willca Counseling website, Individual Graduation Plan DV and Pearson Future Focus. Counseling sends out a fall welcome letter to all seniors and their CTs to outline FAFSA, OSAC, college admissions and links resources to those items as well as other resources for non-college bound students. We also utilize webmail and newsletters to remind about due dates, announce college/career based field trips- (campus visits, career fairs, college fairs), and give information regarding graduation activities. On an individual level, counseling and advisory staff meet with students to support academics, mental health, and career and college planning. We provide students and their caretakers with Academic Completion Plans that show progression towards graduation by credit category once a year to all students, and as needed to individual students and caretakers.

Attachments Completing Your Submission

- Integrated Planning & Budget - Included in Board Packet
  - o The plan must cover four years, with a two-year budget, and include outcomes, strategies, and activities you believe will cause changes to occur and meet the primary

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purposes of the programs included in this integrated plan: HSS, SIA, EDM, CIP, EIIS, CTE / Perkins. It should also reflect the choices you made after pulling all the input and planning pieces together for consideration. This plan serves as an essential snapshot of your expected use of grant funds associated with the aforementioned programs.

- **WillCA Equity Statement & Equity Lens**
  o As a school, we must ensure that all students are guaranteed a comprehensive, rigorous, and inclusive education that empowers them to thrive after they exit high school. This not only benefits students individually, but also strengthens our communities and builds a stronger democracy and society. Despite this commitment, the school's persistent opportunity gaps remain, producing outcomes that are not representative of the strengths and abilities of students. These outcomes are not acceptable. Efforts have been made to address the inequities, and much work remains to ensure all students have the opportunity to succeed. This work is the responsibility of the school, its leaders, and all of its employees. Additionally, by committing to inclusive teaching practices, equitable learning opportunities, and a focus on relationship-building, WillCA will further explore the correlation between student engagement and positive learning outcomes.
  o 1. Who are the racial/ethnic and underserved groups affected? What is the potential impact of the resource allocation and strategic investment to these groups?
  o 2. Does the decision being made ignore or worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences? What is the impact on eliminating the opportunity gap?
  o 3. How does the investment or resource allocation advance student mental or behavioral health and well-being and/or increase academic achievement and address gaps in opportunity?
  o 4. What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)
  o 5. How have you intentionally involved partners who are also members of the communities affected by the strategic investment or resource allocation? How do you validate your assessment in (1), (2) and (3)?
  o 6. How will you modify or enhance your strategies to ensure each learner and communities' individual and cultural needs are met?
  o 7. How are you collecting data on race, ethnicity and native language?
  o 8. What is your commitment to professional learning for equity? What resources are you allocating for training in culturally responsive and sustaining instruction?

- o 9. How does this decision impact the various populations you serve around the state of Oregon? Are considerations needed for differentiated needs and experiences based on demographic and location factors?
  - o Additional Equity Resource - [Equity & Inclusion Lens Guide](#)
- ● URL where grant application is publicly posted - To Be Posted after Board Approval

Assurances

Complete - The applicant provides assurance that they will comply with all applicable state and federal civil rights laws, to the effect that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination under any program or activity on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity, religion, age, or disability.

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✔ By checking this box, you provide assurance that you have taken into consideration the Quality Education Model (QEM)

✔ By checking this box, you provide assurance that your proposed expenditures comply with supplement (not supplant) guidance outlined in statute for CSI/TSI, CTE, and HSS district/school activities (if applicable)

✔ Disaggregated data by focal group was examined during the planning process: By checking this box, you provide assurance that disaggregated data by focal student group was examined during the integrated planning process

✔ HSS Funded Dropout Prevention/Pushout Prevention: By checking this box, you provide assurance that dropout/pushout prevention strategies are applied at every high school within the district, including alternative schools.

After Application Submission

Applicants will receive a notification from ODE to acknowledge receipt of the application. The notification will include contact information for an ODE Application Manager, a single point of contact as you move from submission to review, and into co-development of Longitudinal Performance Growth Targets and finally, to executing a Grant Agreement.