



JUNE 2025

FutureReady@TCS

CAREER EDUCATION AT THE CITY SCHOOL

QUARTERLY TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE MAGAZINE NO. 0

FEATURING

City Lights Tech Academy

“Our focus is clear: retain the students we have, and attract new families who favor our value proposition.”

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1	"Strategically, the program is a recruitment and retention tool..."
WHY THIS MATTERS	2	"Career-aligned programming can increase retention by providing clear value and future planning."
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	3	"Delivery includes online modules, guided study, and test prep bootcamps."
CURRICULUM & CERT-READINESS	4	All certification courses are labeled as Prep courses.
REAL WORLD ENRICHMENT	6	"Learners gain valuable insights with nuts-and-bolts project learning."
A MODEL TO THE CITY	9	"We also recognize the importance of our learners developing strong networks..."
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	10	Get to know our 5 Smooth Stones.
MOVING FORWARD	11	"To strengthen and sustain the FutureReady@TCS initiative, we are actively seeking strategic partnerships with higher education institutions and enterprise partners."

Executive Summary

The **FutureReady@TCS** career pathway initiative is an innovation to prepare middle and high school students at The City School for successful careers in technology and beyond. Beginning as early as 6th grade, students are placed on a guided path toward earning industry-recognized certifications such as ITIL v4 Foundations, and CompTIA's A+, Network+, and Security+ certifications.

The **City Lights Tech Academy**, the first proposed FutureReady@TCS program, is facilitated by the IT Department and designed for flexibility and independence, and minimally dependent on teaching staff. Using a blend of online learning, elective substitutions, and self-paced modules, students can build a competitive skill set that will benefit them in their higher educational pursuits, in the workforce, and in life.



Strategically, the program is a **recruitment and retention tool**—offering a strong reason for families to enroll, and remain enrolled, through HS graduation by providing high-value career prep other schools may lack. We propose to introduce elementary families by way of innovative programming developed in partnership with the Dean's and Principal's Offices.

Why This Matters



Career and tech training boosts student outcomes.

- Students who earn **industry certifications in high school** are more likely to graduate, attend college, and find gainful employment (U.S. Department of Education).
- According to CompTIA, **93% of employers** believe certified employees provide added value.
- Students with certifications often earn **10-15% more** in entry-level roles than uncertified peers (CompTIA Workforce Study).

There's a growing IT talent gap.

- Over **377,000 unfilled tech jobs** in the U.S. as of 2024 (Cyberseek.org).
- PA's tech sector continues to expand—Philadelphia alone hosts major tech employers like Comcast, SAP, and multiple startups.
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a **13% growth in IT occupations** through 2030.

Early career exposure affects long-term outcomes.

- Students who explore careers early are more engaged, focused, and accountable.
- Career-aligned programming can **increase retention** by providing clear value and future planning (ACTE).

TCS Mission Alignment:

- This program locates the intersection of discipleship and vocation.
- Career education cultivates stewardship and leadership.
- Students are empowered to serve and lead with excellence in the marketplace.

Program Overview

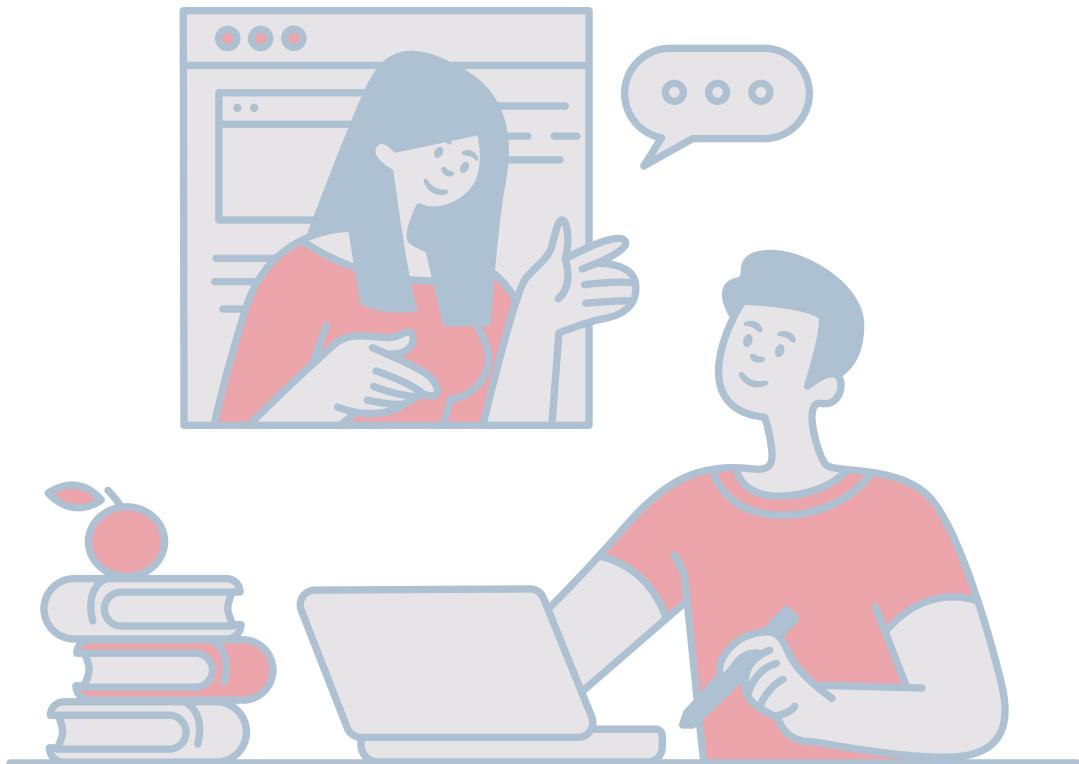
CERT-READINESS

Alongside normal coursework and by way of elective substitution, students become ready to sit for a variety of certification exams with modular, flexible, self-paced learning.

Electives may be satisfied by pathway content.

The program consists of 3 phases:

- 1. Introductory Exposure (Grades 6-8)**
- 2. Skill Development (Grades 9-10)**
- 3. Certification Mastery (Grades 11-12)**



Delivery includes online modules, guided study, and test prep bootcamps. Students that satisfactorily complete all modules will earn corresponding certificates and/or microcertifications.

Certifications are independently issued by the organization/governing body after successful completion of all related certification exams.

Curriculum & Cert-Readiness

GRADE 6

- **Google Docs / Sheets:**
Creation and Collaboration
- **Python 1: Intro**

GRADE 7

- **Personal Knowledge Management (PKM)**
- **Python 2: Jupyter Notebook and Data**

GRADE 8

- **VirtualBox and Docker**
- **HTML / CSS / JavaScript**
- **AI and Ethics**

GRADE 9

- **AI for Beginners by Microsoft**
- **Intro to Linux**

GRADE 10

- **CompTIA A+ Prep**
- **Intro to AWS**

GRADE 11

- **Cisco Packet Tracer**
- **CompTIA Network+ Prep**

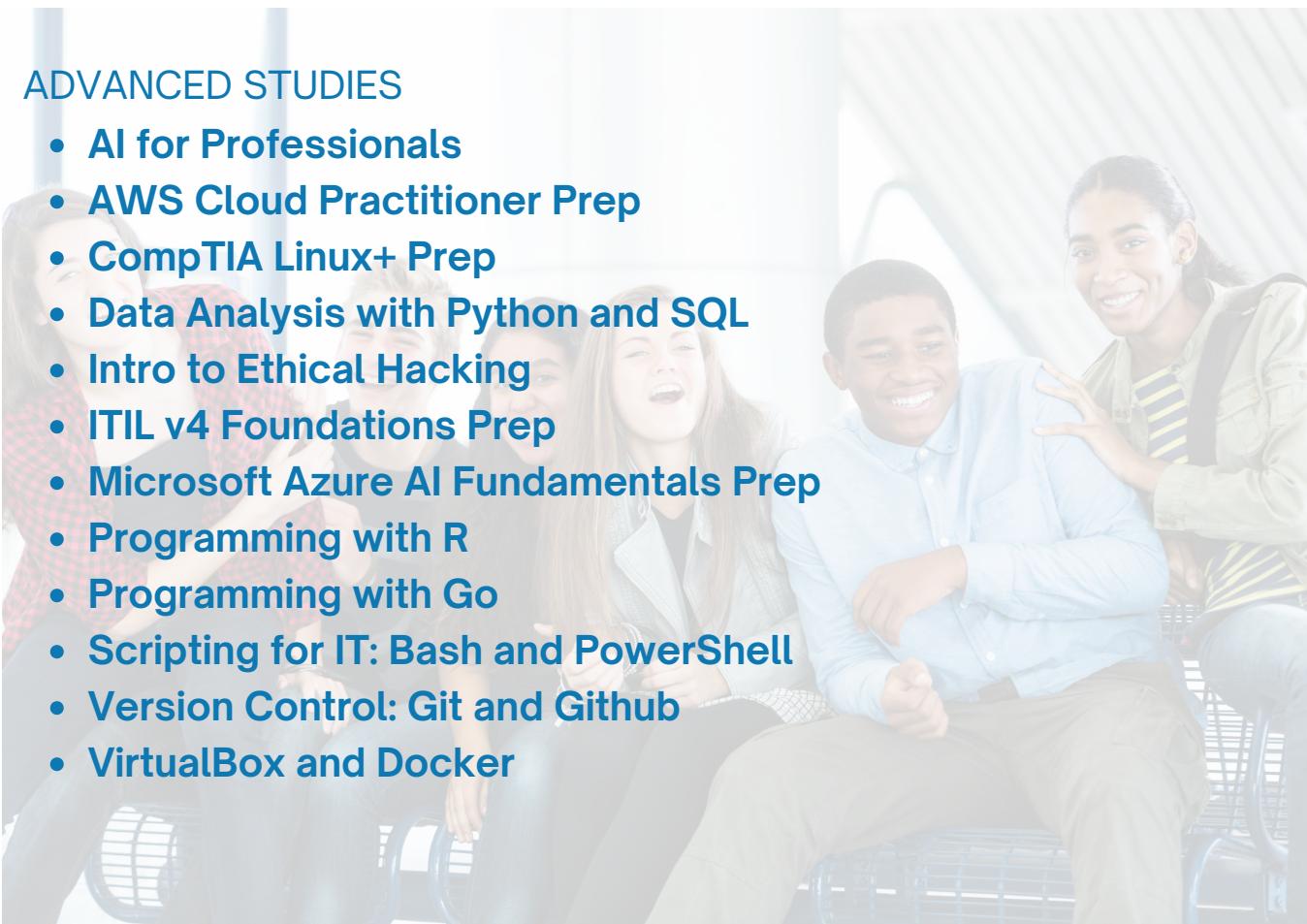
GRADE 12

- **CompTIA Security+ Prep**
- **Capstone**



ADVANCED STUDIES

- [AI for Professionals](#)
- [AWS Cloud Practitioner Prep](#)
- [CompTIA Linux+ Prep](#)
- [Data Analysis with Python and SQL](#)
- [Intro to Ethical Hacking](#)
- [ITIL v4 Foundations Prep](#)
- [Microsoft Azure AI Fundamentals Prep](#)
- [Programming with R](#)
- [Programming with Go](#)
- [Scripting for IT: Bash and PowerShell](#)
- [Version Control: Git and Github](#)
- [VirtualBox and Docker](#)





Learners gain valuable insights with nuts-and-bolts project learning. In addition to tech skills, we aim for students to develop businesses that include providing content for their own website or YouTube channel.

Real World Enrichment

AI EDUCATION & SPECIAL PROJECTS

AI can be a scary topic, but also one full of opportunity. The fact is, it is here and easily accessible to everyone with internet access. We propose to embrace it instead of eschewing it, rightly guiding students with a sense of professional, ethical, and civic responsibility.

- Learn AI basics, ethics, and hands-on experimentation
- Use tools like Google Colab and Teachable Machine
- Financial literacy projects like *Future Debt Reduction Plan* and *Race to 5K*



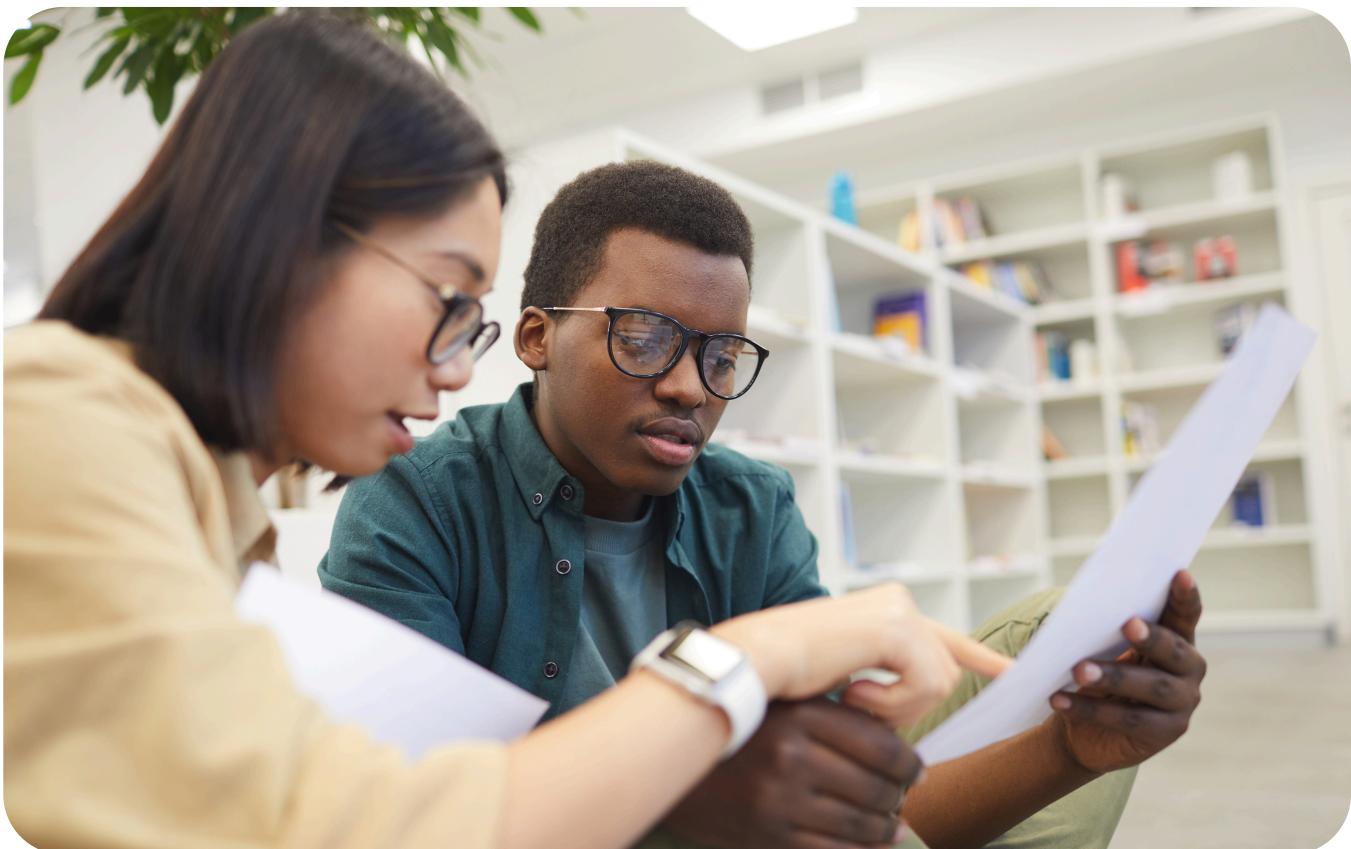
INTERNSHIPS & EMPLOYMENT

All learners are enrolled as Technologist Interns. After passing **CompTIA IT Fundamentals** and earning an internally granted certificate for Cert-Readiness, students become Tier-1 Classroom Techs, handling Tier-1 Chromebook issues as a student help desk.

- **Internally fulfilling menial and skilled support roles**
- **Externally fulfilling roles with community and industry partners**



"Students who explore careers early are more engaged, focused, and accountable."





“Students who earn industry certifications in high school are more likely to graduate, attend college, and find gainful employment.”

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Every student will receive business training, but is not required to start a legal business. However, each student is required to create a portfolio and take all necessary *preparatory* steps to start a successful business, and is strongly encouraged to enter the professional world with entrepreneurship as a viable option.

- **Business planning, branding, and licensing**
- **Aim for students to launch businesses at any time before graduation**





A Model to the City

The City School already has a reputation of developing students of high character. By leaning into existing partnerships with Delaware County Christian School and others, as well as cultivating new ones, we endeavor to refine our distinction as an innovative academic center.

In the same way we seek to connect students to mentors, we desire to make mentors of our learners, beginning with the Fairmount campus, establishing a bridge that can act the foundation of a pipeline that guides students from the beginning to the end of their primary educational journey.

We also recognize the importance of our learners developing strong **networks**, integrating internal and external peer-to-peer engagement throughout their journey.

Guiding Principles

Then David took his shepherd's staff, selected five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the pocket of his shepherd's pack, and with his sling in his hand approached Goliath. *1 Samuel 17:40*

5 SMOOTH STONES

CONSISTENCY: What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 1:9

ORDER: Let all things be done decently and in order.

1 Corinthians 14:40

VISION: For we walk by faith, not by sight.

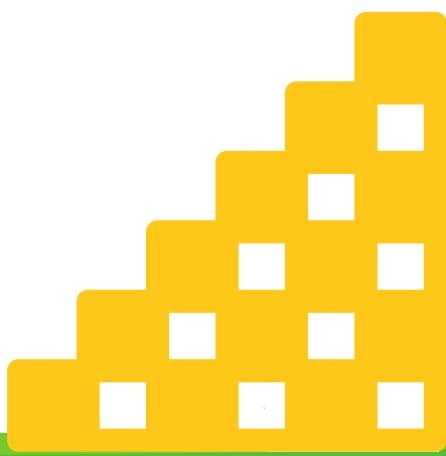
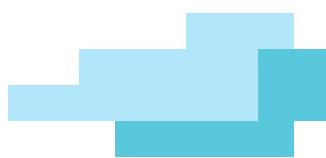
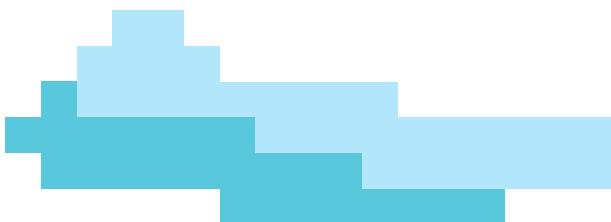
2 Corinthians 5:7

WORK: Likewise, faith without works is dead.

James 2:17

EXCELLENCE: Whatever you do work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.

Colossians 3:23



Moving Forward

START



We endeavor to grow beyond tech education. There are many fields where young people can find excellent opportunities in Philadelphia and surrounding cities.

Top 5 Employment Fields in the Philly Metro Region

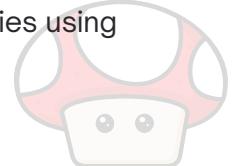
Based on recent employment data and industry analysis, these 5 fields offer the most employment opportunities in the Philadelphia metropolitan area:

- 1. Healthcare**
- 2. Retail & Hospitality**
- 3. Business & Financial Services**
- 4. Tech & IT**
- 5. Education**

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Economy League of Greater Philadelphia, and Randstad



With the resources we already have like our kitchen and hydroponics lab, we can begin to explore new offerings like **Culinary Arts**, as well as training for entry-level positions in other industries using strategic partnerships.



Seeking Strategic Partnerships

To strengthen and sustain the FutureReady@TCS initiative, we are actively seeking strategic partnerships with higher education institutions and enterprise partners.

Specifically, we aim to establish and maintain relationships with:

- At least 3 institutions of higher learning to support dual enrollment, scholarship/grant offerings, and mentorship opportunities for our students.
- At least 3 companies to provide internships, employment pathways, scholarship/grant opportunities, and real-world learning experiences.

These partnerships are essential to securing access to many of the opportunities, experiences, and networks our students seek for success in college, careers, and beyond.



INITIAL TARGETS

ACADEMIC

1. Community College of Philadelphia
2. Delaware County Community College
3. Eastern University
4. Western Governors University

ENTERPRISE

1. Amazon
2. Comcast
3. Google
4. Microsoft



With our recent campus consolidation and enrollment reduction, we find ourselves at a natural point of reflection and strategy. Our focus is clear: retain the students we have, and attract new families who favor our value proposition. Offering early career and technology training by developing FutureReady@TCS will help do both.

The opportunity is here—to build on what we've started, strengthen our student pipeline from elementary to high school, and provide real pathways to professional certification and career readiness.

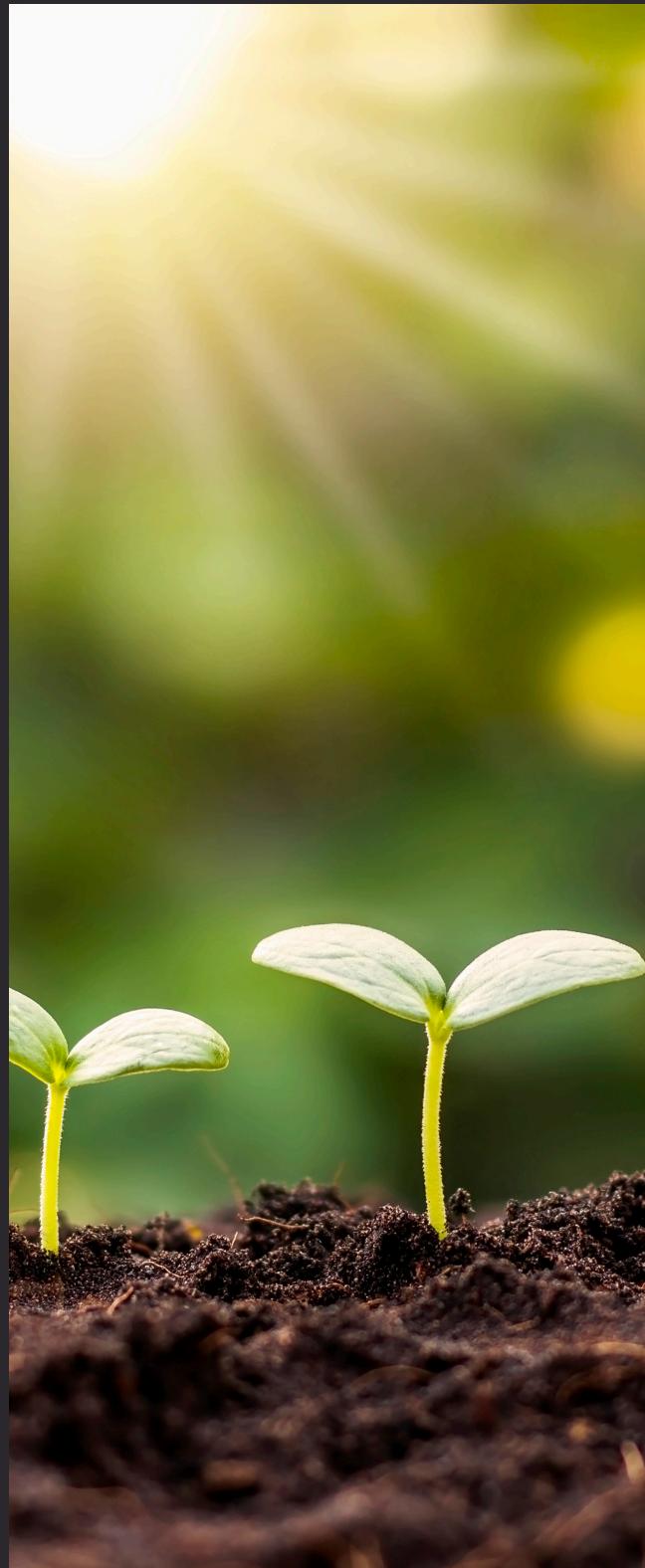
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To move forward, we propose a formal commitment to integrating FutureReady@TCS into the fabric of The City School's academic offerings. This includes dedicated resources, administrative support, and a clear plan to scale the program to reach more students at every grade level. Together, we can ensure this program not only begins and continues—but thrives.

At the Intersection of Growth and Opportunity



**Thank you for
your time and
attention.**



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