

ROCKETSHIP

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

YEAR IN
REVIEW 2017-18





Mural at Rocketship Fuerza Campus created by artist Carlos Rodriguez

Cesar Chavez once said, “We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community.”

I’ve thought a lot about the legacy of Cesar Chavez over the last year. Our schools in East San Jose rest on the sacred ground where Chavez first began organizing farmworkers. The area once known as Sal Si Puedes — “get out if you can” — became Sí Se Puede — “yes we can.” Cesar Chavez showed his community that they did not have to leave to rise up.

I’ve also thought a lot about the legacy of Frederick Douglass.

Frederick Douglass once wrote, “If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground...”

Our schools in southeast Washington DC are just down the road from the final home of the legendary abolitionist and social reformer. A gifted orator, Douglass promoted dialogue to bridge racial and ideological divides.

I am often reminded of the courage of those leaders and the power of their example. I see it in the families we serve. Families who are willing to take a chance on a new school with the hope of a brighter future for their child.

I see it in the teachers and leaders across our network. Educators who have dedicated their life’s work to solve the civil rights issue of our generation.

I see it in our students. Our Rocketeers. Kids who continue to overcome the low expectations our country places on students from disadvantaged communities.

Courage. It’s what has propelled our movement to transform the lives of over 18,000 kids and families in our first eleven years. And it’s what will steel our resolve to continue to fight for a more just and equitable society for kids across our country. Because when we do, our kids and families go on to lift up their communities and create a better world for us all.

Together, we are unleashing potential.

Preston Smith, Co-Founder & CEO

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SINCE LAUNCHING OUR FIRST SCHOOL IN 2007,
WE HAVE IMPACTED THE LIVES OF OVER
18,000 ROCKETEERS.

SERVING COMMUNITIES IN NEED

- 8,119 ROCKETEERS ENROLLED
- 82% SOCIOECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
- 48% ENGLISH LEARNERS
- 83% HISPANIC OR AFRICAN AMERICAN

UNLEASHING THE POWER OF TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOLS

Great schools level the playing field for students. They shine a light on the extraordinary potential inside every child — no matter where they were born, how much money their parents earn, or the color of their skin. But schools that truly transform communities extend their impact far beyond the confines of the classroom.

Transformational schools are beacons of hope. They restore pride in communities. They tap into the collective power, creativity, and passion of the parents they serve. They unleash the potential of communities that have endured decades of discrimination in everything from housing policies to public services.

We build transformational schools.

When Rocketship Rise Academy opened in Washington DC’s Woodland Terrace neighborhood, people said the community was too dangerous for an elementary school. But this long underserved neighborhood was already home to hundreds of kids, and hundreds more walked by Woodland Terrace on their way to school every day. Why should these kids have to leave their own neighborhood to go to school? Just two years after Rocketship Rise opened, the crime rate has fallen over 30% in the surrounding neighborhood. Today, families walk their kids to school, neighbors gather on the weekends, and art projects decorate local buildings. Woodland Terrace is proof that great public schools are powerful levers for social change far beyond the classroom.

In San Jose, our immigrant families are threatened by our nation’s radically changing immigration policies and practices. Yet instead of giving in to fear, they are using the leadership and advocacy skills they developed in their fight for education equity to stand up for their community. Our parents organized “Know Your Rights” information sessions in our schools with national immigrant rights experts and local elected officials. Taking what they learned in those sessions, our parents met with state elected officials to press for more immigrant protections. Exercising their collective power, Rocketship parents are on the frontlines of a movement to create a more just and equitable community.

Our collective of parents, teachers, leaders, supporters, and students are catalyzing a movement to transform the future for underserved communities across our country.

Together, we are unleashing potential.



STEPHANIE PEREZ FRIAS

Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary, 2007 – 2011
University of California – Riverside, Class of 2022



“I am persistent in attaining excellence.”

I didn't give a lot of thought to these words when I was seven years old, reciting them with my classmates during Launch every morning. I didn't really understand or appreciate their power. Years later, however, after many late nights studying for final exams, overwhelming college applications, and stressful decisions, I understand why I was taught about persistence at such a young age.

My path to college started one Sunday when my mom stepped into a crowded room after mass to hear Mr. Smith describe a new school that was opening in downtown San Jose. I was attending my local district school at the time. It was less than a block from my house, I had lots of friends, my teachers were old family friends, and I was getting good grades. But my mom was frustrated. There was no talk of college or expectation that kids in my community could compete with the wealthy kids across town. My mom wanted better for me and my little brother.

Two months later, I started second grade at a new school across town called “Rocketship One.” My mom had to change her work schedule to make sure we were there on time every single day. Why would she go to those lengths? Because Rocketship was different. My mom could see that I wouldn't just get passed from one grade to the next at Rocketship. I would be challenged and expected to succeed.

One of the biggest differences was the focus on college. The first time I ever stepped onto a college campus was as an elementary school student at Rocketship. I remember seeing the tall trees surrounding UC Santa Cruz and going to the top of the tower at Stanford. Every time we visited a college, I couldn't get over my excitement to someday be a student there. I never knew people like me could go to these beautiful, elite schools. I didn't realize it at the time, but this was how Rocketship helped me set a vision for my future.

Realizing that vision would take a lot of work. My mom used to show off my homework packets to my aunts and uncles whose kids had few homework requirements. At times, I wished that I could be playing instead of doing my homework. And during my senior year of high school, completing 13 different applications, making sense of financial aid forms, and writing different personal statements while staying on top of my AP courses and higher level science classes was overwhelming. But being persistent was a part of my character as a Rocketeer.

I am so proud to have been accepted to seven different, high-quality colleges, and to have the opportunity to achieve my dreams. At college and beyond, I will continue to be persistent in attaining excellence.

FIRST-YEAR ROCKETEERS ACHIEVE GAP-CLOSING GROWTH

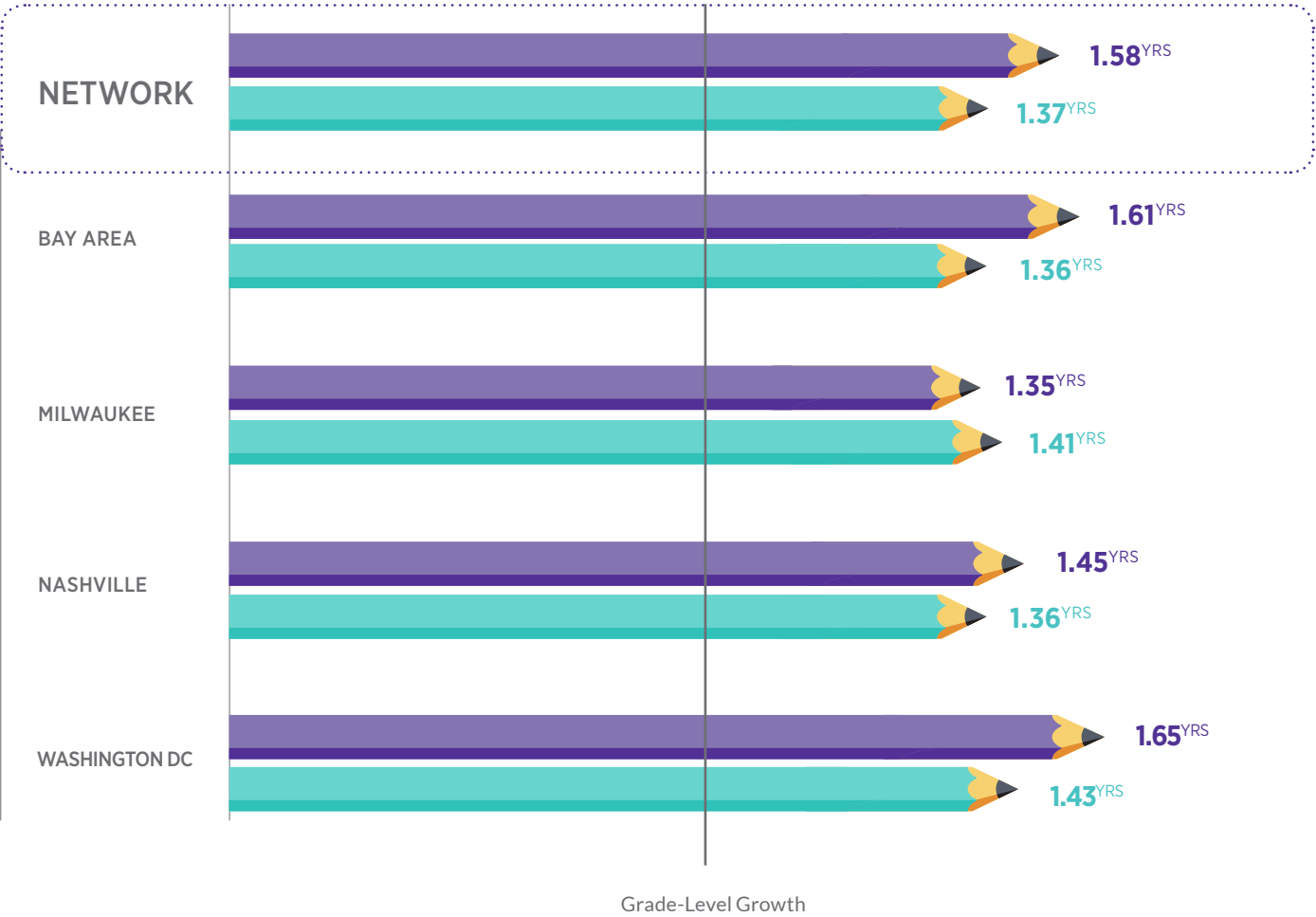
Every year a student spends in an underperforming school is another year they fall further behind their college-bound peers. Eventually those gaps become insurmountable. That is why Rocketship opens multiple grade levels in year one and continues to backfill students every school year. Of course, we do not expect to close academic gaps that accumulated over several years of prior schooling in a single school year at Rocketship. But we do expect major gains in academic growth that narrow the gap that separates them from their college-bound peers.

In the 2017-18 school year, our first-year Rocketeers achieved remarkable gap-closing results in every region. By growing well over a grade level in a single school year, they are gaining solid ground on their college-bound peers and eliminating the achievement gap.

2017-2018

NWEA MAP Growth Years of New Rocketship Students

NWEA MAP is a nationally normed assessment used by more than 8,000 schools and districts throughout the world. Rocketship students take the MAP assessment in the fall, winter, and spring.



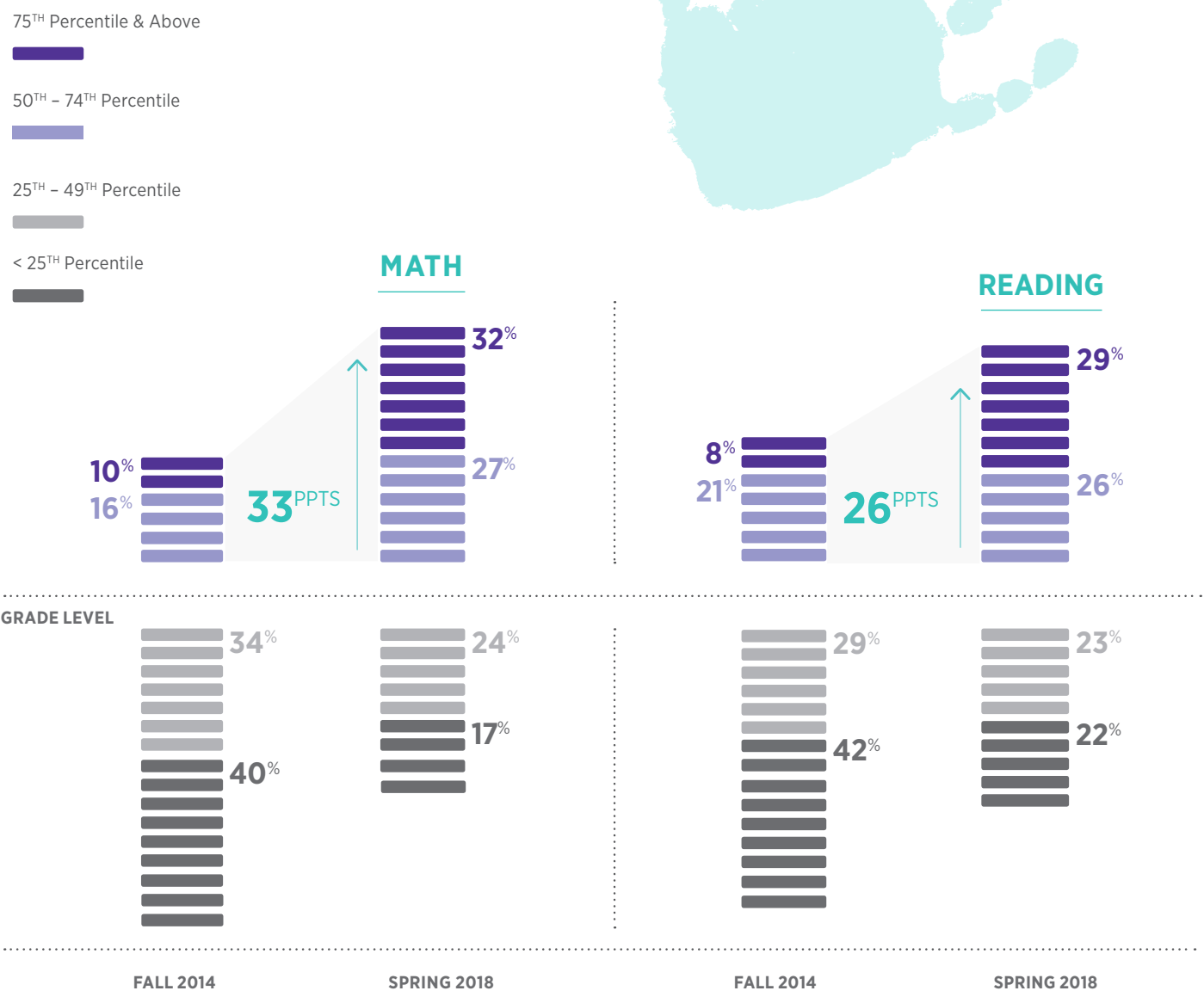
MOVING MAJORITY FROM BEHIND TO AHEAD

To get every Rocketeer on the college and career-ready path by the time they move on to middle school, our Rocketeers must grow more than a grade level every single year. One good year isn't good enough. If we hope to eliminate the achievement gap that separates our Rocketeers from their more affluent peers, we need to stack our success — year after year.

This cohort analysis shows the growth of over 700 Rocketeers who began with us in Fall 2014 and were still with us in Spring 2018. In Fall 2014, just 26% of Rocketeers were at or above grade level in math. By Spring 2018, 59% of that same cohort of Rocketeers were at or above grade level. In reading, only 29% of our students started 2014 on grade level. By Spring 2018, 55% were on the college-bound path. We still have to push harder, and we will. But like our Rocketeers, we are on the right path.

ROCKETEER ACHIEVEMENT FROM FALL '14 TO SPRING '18

Shows the growth of 722 new Rocketeers over four years at Rocketship



Rocketship Celebrates Its **TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY**



Rocketeers and supporters from across the country came together on April 5, 2018 to celebrate our ten year anniversary. San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo (p. 10, top left) praised the power of our parents who are leading a movement for education equity across the Bay Area. Katherine Bradley, founding chair of CityBridge Education (p. 11, bottom left), spoke about the importance of founding stories and how those stories bolster our stamina and inspire others. Founding Rocketeer and University of California - Berkeley freshman Maya Diaz (p. 10, bottom right) brought down the house when she spoke about her fight to “reset the expectations people have of students who look like me.” It was a magnificent celebration of our first decade hosted by Rocketship Board Chair Fred Ferrer (p. 10, bottom middle), Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep Principal Juan Mateos (p. 10, top right), and Rocketship Discovery Prep Principal Chaka Hajji (p. 11, bottom middle).

Our work to eliminate the achievement gap would not be possible without the support of inspiring leaders in our movement like Reed Hastings (p. 11, bottom right), Bobby Turner and Andre Agassi (p. 10, bottom left), Joseph DiSalvo and John Danner (p. 10, middle), Maricela Guerrero (p. 10, middle left), and countless others who helped us reach this major milestone.

Rocketship Classrooms Serve All Students

8.5% Special Education Population

Last year, we served nearly 700 students with mild to severe learning needs across our network. But rather than isolate and further stigmatize these students, we operate a meaningful inclusion model that ensures all our students with disabilities have daily access to our general education environment. This means all students with disabilities spend at least half of their day in general education classrooms, with the vast majority spending over 80% of the day in the general education environment. With this inclusive approach, our students with disabilities are exposed to the same Common Core aligned instructional program as their typically developing peers. By coupling our meaningful inclusion model with individual supports including small group co-teaching and individual instruction, we help all Rocketeers achieve ambitious academic and social outcomes.

Our students with an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) achieved 1.37 years of growth in math and 1.27 years of growth in reading last year.

"When I first met Devin he could barely write his full name. In a room full of activity, he played with a pencil, uninterested in the world around him. A school evaluation confirmed that Devin is on the autism spectrum.

Upon his diagnosis, we created a plan to help Devin succeed. We knew that Devin needed access to grade-level content, he needed to learn alongside other students as much as possible, and he needed structure. Countless special and general education staff came together to put in the work needed to ensure that Devin was meaningfully included every minute possible. And Devin's mom worked at home to implement every strategy we recommended.

Before long, we saw that our work was paying off.

Today, Devin is a different person. He's happy, he's involved, and he's thriving. Devin can now identify feelings of others and even gives spontaneous compliments to peers and adults. He seeks out his classmates, he loves their jokes, and he makes faces to get them to laugh.

Devin is also succeeding academically. He's reading on grade level, and he's made three years of growth on STEP since he arrived less than two years ago.*

Devin and his family have shown me the power of meaningful inclusion. Our model strives to give students with disabilities maximum time in their general education classroom. We give them time and space to grow into their community, because they can't become part of the community if they are separated from it.

This isn't without challenges, but it's what our kids deserve. The bar is never lowered for any of our students with disabilities. Instead, we provide stepping stones to help them achieve excellence just like all our Rocketeers."

-Krystina Hermes, Education Specialist, Rocketship DC

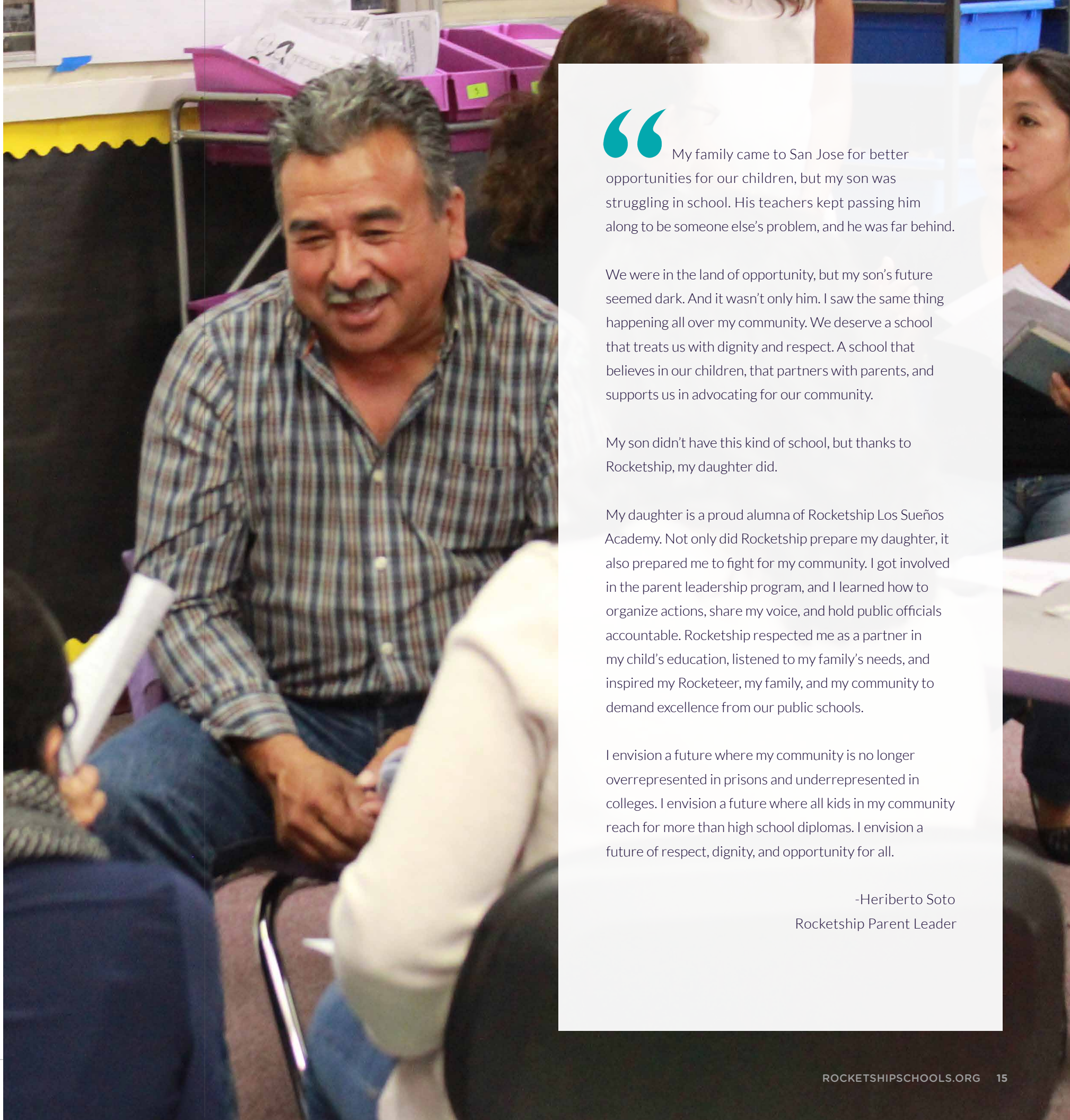
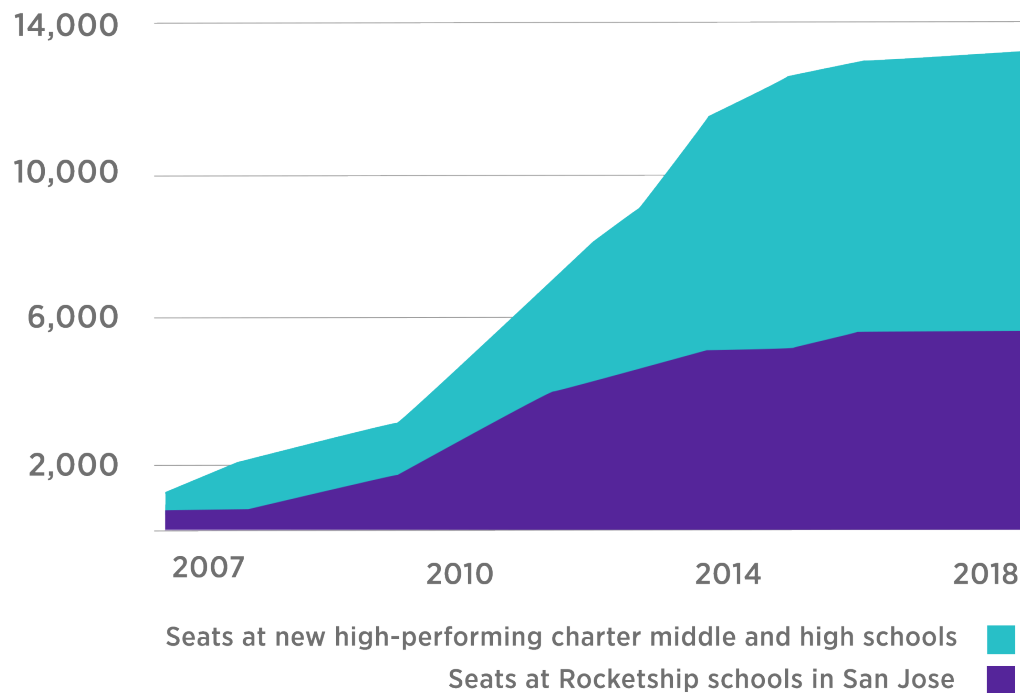


* STEP (Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress) is a research-based formative assessment system designed to improve student achievement in literacy across grades K-5.

Scaling Through SYSTEM CHANGE

The achievement gap is massive. To scale to the size of the problem, we focus on catalyzing parent demand to change the ecosystem of public education in disadvantaged communities.

In San Jose, the parent-led movement we catalyzed in our first ten years helped open an additional 7,000 middle school and high school seats from high-performing networks like KIPP, Summit Public Schools, and Alpha Public Schools. Together, we've transformed San Jose into one of the nation's highest-performing urban charter sectors. A report by Stanford's Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) showed that, "Two urban charter sectors, New York City and South Bay, stand out for providing positive gains for their students in both math and reading...Continuous enrollment in these charter sectors can be expected to result in steady movement up the state's distribution of academic achievement."



“My family came to San Jose for better opportunities for our children, but my son was struggling in school. His teachers kept passing him along to be someone else’s problem, and he was far behind.

We were in the land of opportunity, but my son’s future seemed dark. And it wasn’t only him. I saw the same thing happening all over my community. We deserve a school that treats us with dignity and respect. A school that believes in our children, that partners with parents, and supports us in advocating for our community.

My son didn’t have this kind of school, but thanks to Rocketship, my daughter did.

My daughter is a proud alumna of Rocketship Los Sueños Academy. Not only did Rocketship prepare my daughter, it also prepared me to fight for my community. I got involved in the parent leadership program, and I learned how to organize actions, share my voice, and hold public officials accountable. Rocketship respected me as a partner in my child’s education, listened to my family’s needs, and inspired my Rocketeer, my family, and my community to demand excellence from our public schools.

I envision a future where my community is no longer overrepresented in prisons and underrepresented in colleges. I envision a future where all kids in my community reach for more than high school diplomas. I envision a future of respect, dignity, and opportunity for all.

-Heriberto Soto
Rocketship Parent Leader



COACHING IN THE CLASSROOM

Coaching is a collaboration at Rocketship. Our team of school leaders provides instructional frameworks, professional development, and real-time coaching for teachers every single week. Just as our teachers invest their time and energy in the growth of their students, we invest our time and energy in the growth of our teachers.

Every week, coaches observe and provide written reflections to their teachers, deliver in-the-moment feedback, model instruction, and engage in co-observations with each Rocketship teacher. This ranges from coaches speaking into an earpiece that the teacher wears during instruction, to analyzing video of the teacher, to observing another classroom and dissecting the practice of another teacher. Coaching allows for teachers to get immediate feedback and regular opportunities for practice in order to identify root problems and shape solutions.

Developing great teachers is at the heart of our students' academic achievement and our broader impact on the communities we serve. By coaching great teachers to lead in the classroom, Rocketship is developing skilled agents of change who are transforming their schools and communities.



On our annual parent satisfaction survey we asked, “Have you ever recommended Rocketship to another family?” An overwhelming 89% of parents responded “yes” - up two points from last year. They did not simply say they “would recommend” Rocketship, they actually did recommend Rocketship. Of course, not every parent raves about their school every single day. But on most days, the vast majority of parents love their school so much that they tell other families to enroll.

“

From the first time I walked through the doors at Rocketship Legacy Prep, I was welcomed with open arms by each and every team member. I even had Office Manager Andrea McLean visit my home to answer my questions about sending my daughter Laila to kindergarten at Rocketship. By the time school started, I knew every person who would be taking care of Laila each day, which put my mind at ease.

I’ve been to schools where the principals are like celebrities. You schedule a meeting and have to wait a week for them to get back to you. At Legacy Prep, their door is always open. The staff treats every child like their very own. At Rocketship, I have friends and family all in one place and I am confident that my daughter is loved and learning every day.

— Catherine Washington

Founding parent, Rocketship Legacy Prep



Rocketship Bay Area

The level of income inequality in the Bay Area is among the highest in the nation. In San Jose, families near the top of the income spectrum earn more than ten times families near the bottom. And it's only getting worse. This dramatic inequality underlies the countless challenges families face as they struggle to access affordable housing, good jobs, and great schools.

Rocketship is working to improve equity in communities across the Bay Area. While schools throughout the region struggle to realize meaningful progress, our network of twelve schools continues to make strong gains. Four years ago, California launched a new state assessment aligned to Common Core State Standards. And for the fourth year in a row, our Rocketeers' performance improved in both math and English Language Arts (ELA). Our Rocketeers continue to outperform similar students by large margins in every district where we operate. Once again, Rocketship ranks in the top 10% of all California elementary school districts and charter schools who serve a population of predominantly disadvantaged students.

5,972
STUDENTS

84%
SOCIOECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED

7.5%
SPECIAL EDUCATION

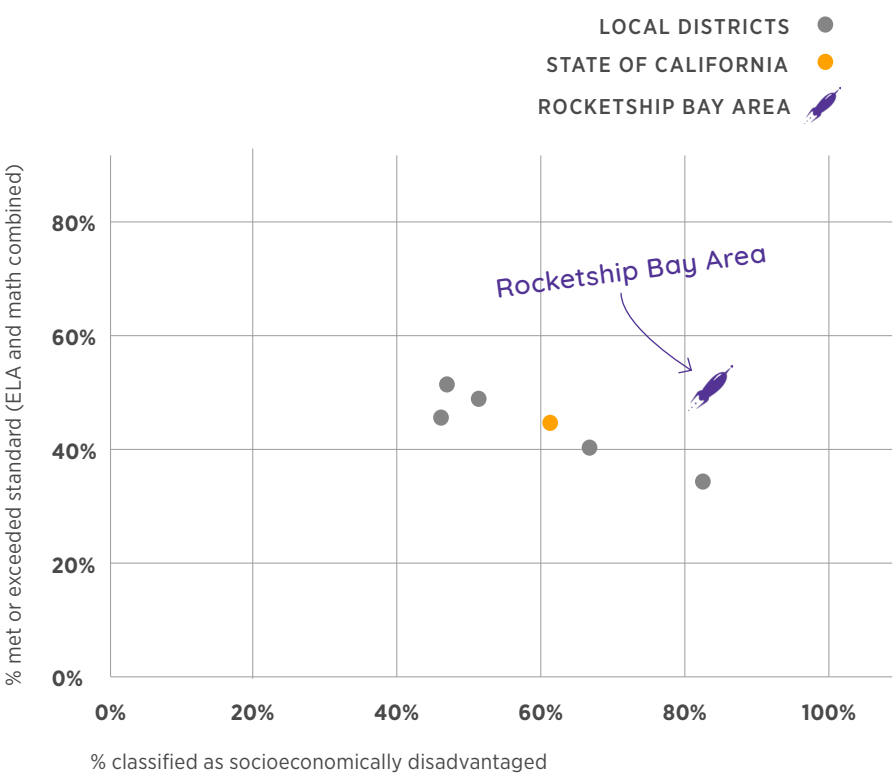
56%
ENGLISH LEARNERS

78%
HISPANIC OR LATINO



DISRUPTING THE STATUS QUO

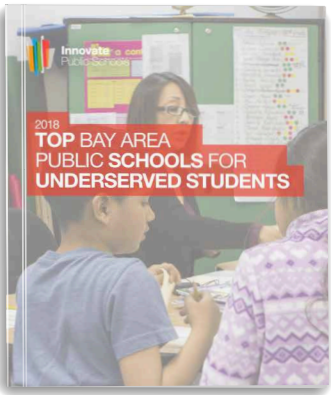
This chart shows the 2017-18 California state assessment results plotted against the percentage of students classified as socioeconomically disadvantaged for local districts, the state of California, and Rocketship Bay Area. This analysis underscores how student demographics correlate with academic achievement for the majority of schools in the state. But not at Rocketship. Our Rocketeers are proving that demographics do not define their potential.

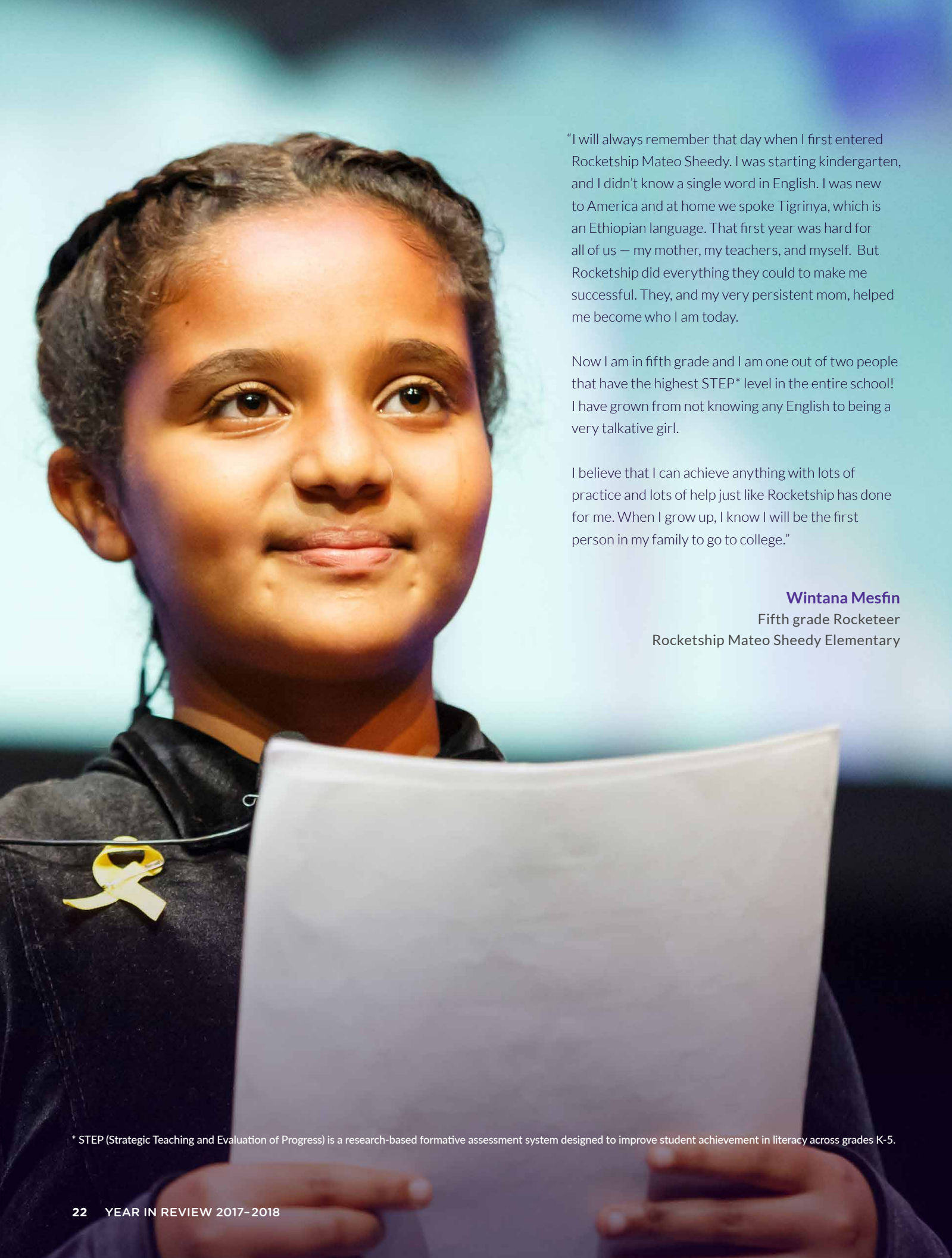


Source: California Department of Education. Percentages calculated by Rocketship Public Schools from grade-level data research files downloaded from the CAASPP website.

RECOGNIZED AS TOP BAY AREA SCHOOLS FOR UNDERSERVED STUDENTS

Out of 1,275 schools in the Bay Area, only 52 were recognized as top performers for underserved students on [Innovate Public Schools' annual report](#). Eight of those schools were Rocketship schools. Once again, Rocketship had the most schools of any charter network or school district recognized for effectively closing the achievement gap.





“I will always remember that day when I first entered Rocketship Mateo Sheedy. I was starting kindergarten, and I didn’t know a single word in English. I was new to America and at home we spoke Tigrinya, which is an Ethiopian language. That first year was hard for all of us — my mother, my teachers, and myself. But Rocketship did everything they could to make me successful. They, and my very persistent mom, helped me become who I am today.

Now I am in fifth grade and I am one out of two people that have the highest STEP* level in the entire school! I have grown from not knowing any English to being a very talkative girl.

I believe that I can achieve anything with lots of practice and lots of help just like Rocketship has done for me. When I grow up, I know I will be the first person in my family to go to college.”

Wintana Mesfin
Fifth grade Rocketeer
Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary

* STEP (Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress) is a research-based formative assessment system designed to improve student achievement in literacy across grades K-5.

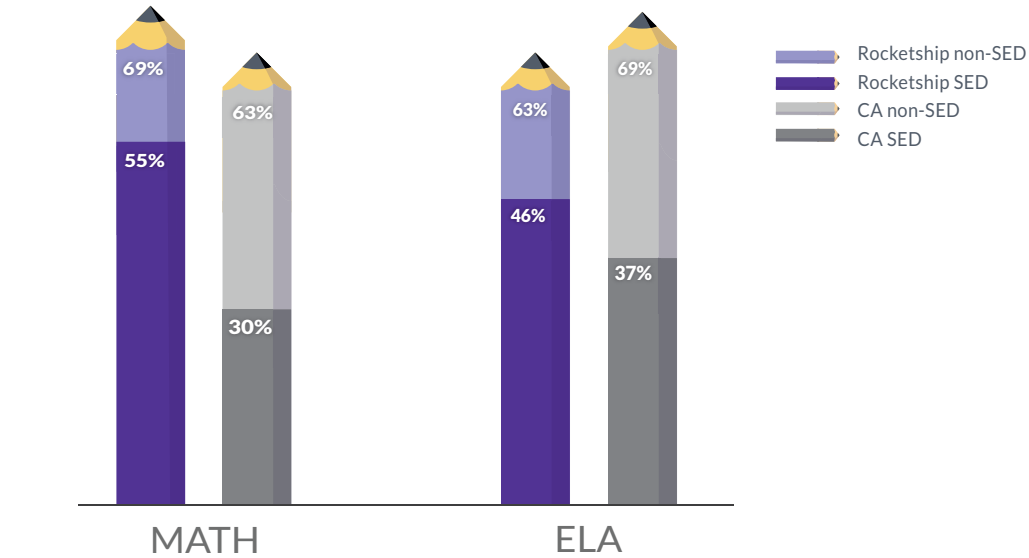
NARROWING GAPS IN THE GOLDEN STATE

Since opening our first school, we have relentlessly focused on eliminating the gap that separates disadvantaged students from their more privileged peers. 84% of Rocketship Bay Area students are classified as disadvantaged. We pay close attention to how our disadvantaged students perform against both similar students and non-disadvantaged students across the state, in the districts we serve, and within our own schools.

In California, there is a 33 point gap in math performance separating disadvantaged students from their non-disadvantaged peers. The gap between disadvantaged students at Rocketship and their more privileged peers across the state shrinks to just eight points. In ELA, the statewide gap is 32 points. The gap narrows to 23 points when comparing disadvantaged students at Rocketship to non-disadvantaged students across California.

Our internal achievement gaps in both math and ELA (14 points and 17 points, respectively) are half of the size of the state’s gaps. We also have the smallest achievement gaps in both subjects in every district where we operate in every year since California launched its Common Core aligned assessment. The progress we are making year after year gives us great confidence that we will continue to reach higher and ultimately realize our vision to eliminate the achievement gap.

Rocketship and State of California Achievement Gaps
socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED) students vs non-socioeconomically disadvantaged (non-SED) students who met or exceeded state standards



Source: California Department of Education. Grades 3-5 percentages calculated by Rocketship Public Schools from grade-level data in research files downloaded from the CAASPP website.

On December 3, 2017, Rocketship lost a dear friend and fearless leader in our movement when Jason Fromoltz, Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Principal, suddenly passed away. Jason was a builder — so deeply dedicated to our mission, communities, and kids — and so selflessly willing to give whatever it took to realize our collective vision. His legacy lives on through the thousands of Rocketeers he served over his nine years at Rocketship, and the lineage of teachers he helped develop and grow to become leaders in our movement.



Rocketship Milwaukee

Despite decades of effort, the racial achievement gap in Milwaukee is still among the worst in the nation. The causes of this chronic gap are many — unemployment, unstable housing, racial bias, and low academic expectations are frequently cited factors. Another generation of students in Milwaukee is at risk of being denied the opportunity to break free from this vicious cycle and realize their full potential.

Standing apart from this seemingly intractable problem is Rocketship Southside Community Prep. Outperforming Milwaukee Public Schools year after year and, once again, earning the state’s “Beating the Odds Award,” Rocketship is proving that demographics do not define student potential. On the 2017-2018 Wisconsin Forward Exam, Rocketship Southside Community Prep ranked in the top ten of all district and charter elementary schools serving similar students across the entire state of Wisconsin.



531
STUDENTS

86%
SOCIOECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED

16%
SPECIAL EDUCATION

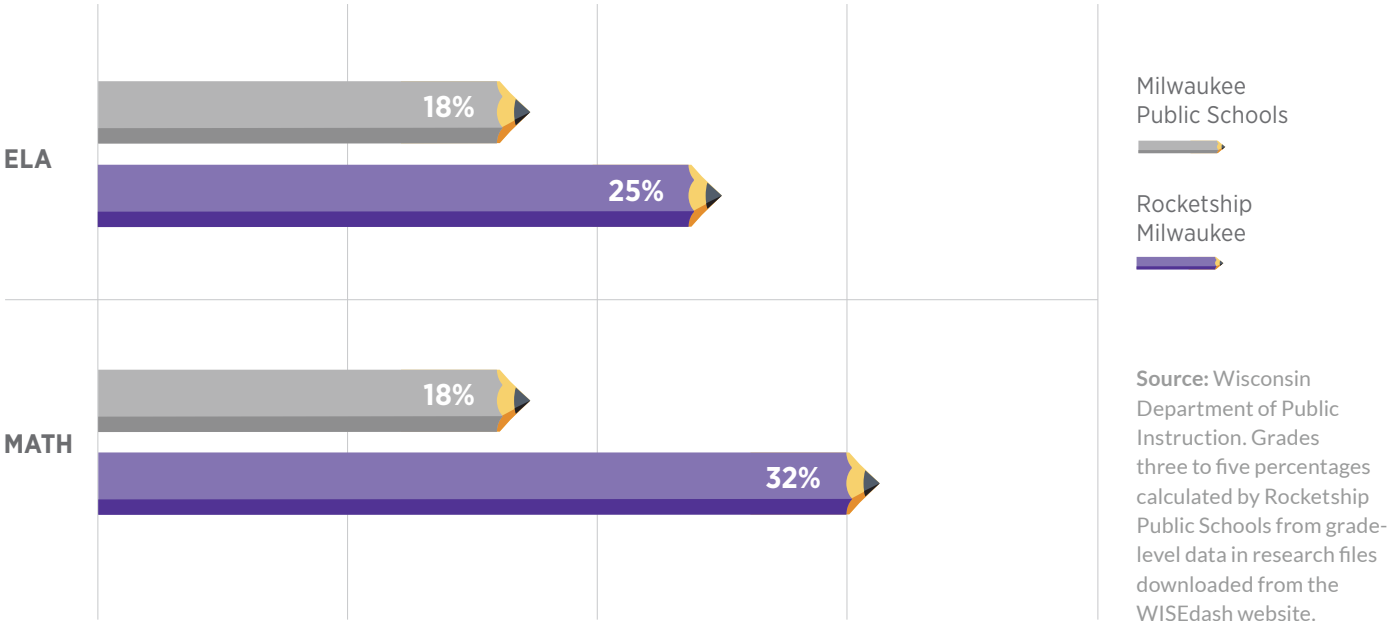
44%
ENGLISH LEARNERS

94%
HISPANIC OR LATINO



2017-18 Wisconsin State Assessment Results

Percent of students in grades three to five who scored proficient or advanced



PARTNERING TO TRANSFORM MILWAUKEE'S NORTH SIDE

With proficiency in the single digits and decades of stalled progress, Milwaukee's north side is home to a glaring achievement gap for the largely low-income students who live there. For years, the vast majority of north side families have sent their students to schools in other parts of the city. North side families deserve a high-performing public school in their own neighborhood. That is why Rocketship is partnering with the Silver Spring Neighborhood Center, Carmen Schools of Science and Technology, and other local groups to bring a high-quality elementary school to this historically underserved community. Opening in August 2018, Rocketship Transformation Prep, our second campus in Milwaukee, will grow to serve over 400 students and families at full enrollment. Our north side Rocketeers will benefit from additional services provided by the Silver Spring Neighborhood Center including mental health counseling, after school care, extracurricular activities, and food pantry access. Carmen Northwest, a high-performing middle and high school, is just a few blocks away — ensuring our Rocketeers will have the choice to attend an excellent school in their own community from pre-K all the way to graduation day.

"I just believe our community deserves a positive change and a new approach to educating our children. The values, culture, and achievements of Rocketship will lead to that transformation."

LaDonna Richards
Founding parent
Rocketship Transformation Prep



“

I was born and raised on the north side of Milwaukee. A lot of people here don't believe in themselves or have the resources or help that they deserve. Rocketship is a beacon of hope for young kids and families. Our teachers are passionate about learning and connecting with the families we serve to create a true sense of community at our school.

Mariah Galarza
Founding Teacher, Rocketship Transformation Prep
Former Teacher, Rocketship Southside Community Prep



Rocketship Nashville

Nashville lost its claim as the nation's leader in job growth this year. The reason? Employers can't find enough qualified workers. The workforce shortage seems to be the only thing capable of slowing Nashville's booming economy. New residents are flocking to Music City while local schools struggle to prepare students with the 21st century skills they need to succeed.

Our Nashville Rocketeers are achieving academic growth that ranks among the highest in the entire region. Both Rocketship United Academy and Rocketship Nashville Northeast Elementary scored the highest possible growth score — Level 5 — on the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). Scoring at Level 5 means our students gained more than one year of academic knowledge during the last school year. TVAAS is particularly significant since this is the first time the state has been able to establish a growth measure for elementary schools under its new, higher academic standards.

Our Rocketeers' remarkable progress is a testament to the strength of our school communities. Since opening in Nashville in 2014, Rocketship continues to demonstrate that all students have the potential to achieve excellence, no matter where they were born or how much money their parents earn.

983
STUDENTS

72%
SOCIOECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED

9%
SPECIAL EDUCATION

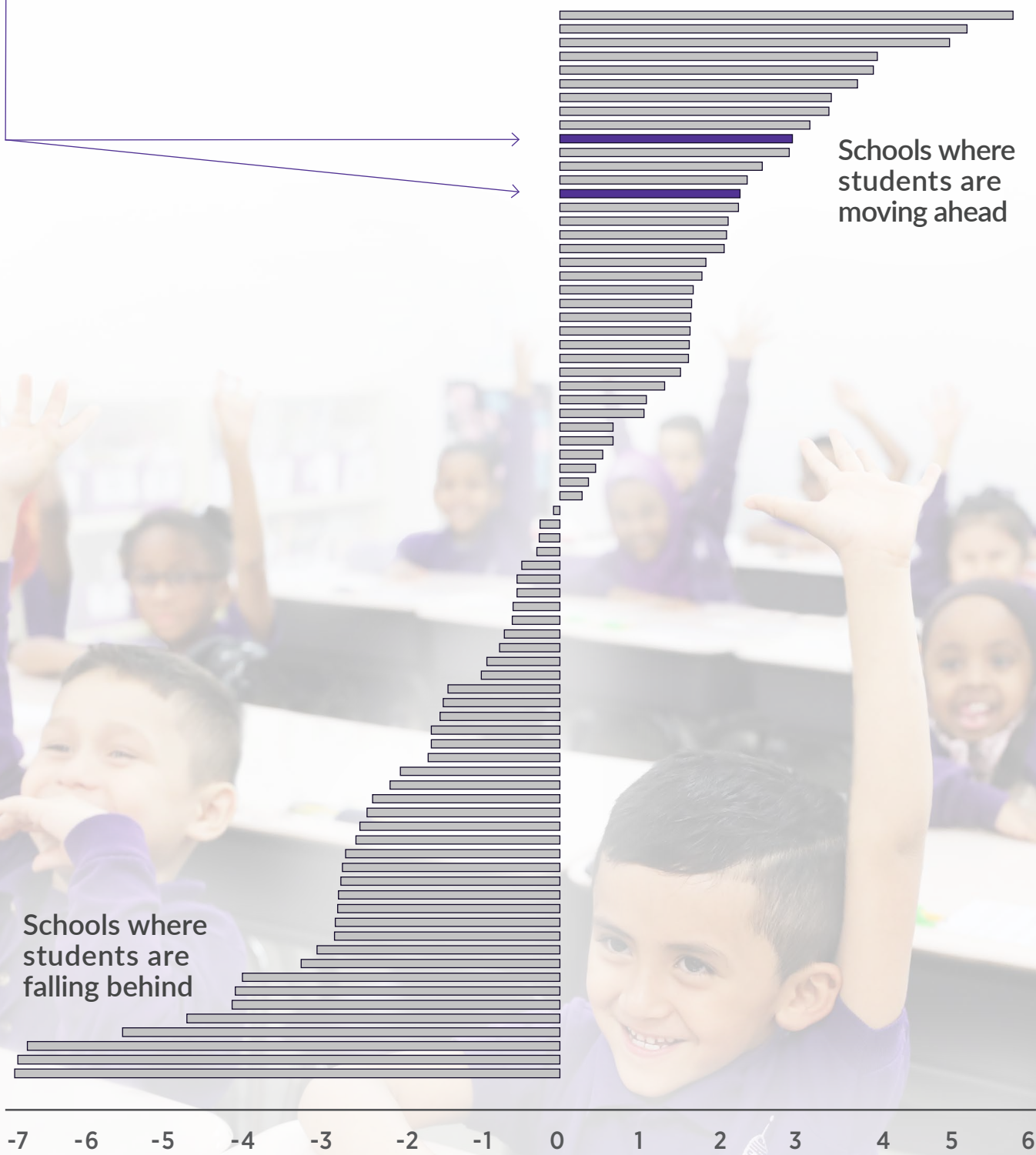
28%
ENGLISH LEARNERS

56%
AFRICAN AMERICAN



2018 Nashville Schools TVAAS Growth Scores

Rocketship demonstrates substantially more progress than the state standard for academic growth



The Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) measures the impact schools and teachers have on their students' academic progress.



ROCKETSHIP UNITED EARNS TOP HONOR IN TENNESSEE

Rocketship United Academy was named a “Reward School” by the Tennessee Department of Education for the 2017-18 school year. This is the state’s highest recognition for student performance and progress. Only 11 of Nashville’s 139 Title 1 schools earned this honor.

To be eligible for “Reward” status, a school in Tennessee must demonstrate overall student academic achievement and student growth for all students and for subgroups of students. On the 2018 state assessment, Rocketship United Academy students had the best year-over-year improvement in reading of any elementary school in Nashville by more than doubling the percentage of students on-track or mastered. United Academy also serves one of the largest populations of English Learners in Nashville. English Learners at United Academy are three times more likely to be proficient in reading than their peers throughout Nashville and the state. This is a major milestone for our Nashville Rocketeers as we continue to strive toward our ultimate goal of eliminating the achievement gap in Music City.



The sad fact is that many children in our education system have fallen through the cracks and become victims of the school-to-prison pipeline. Many children that act out are desperately longing for care, guidance, and support from an authoritative figure they can relate to. Someone who believes in them. This is why love is so important on our campus. It not only builds trust, confidence, and a sense of community, but it translates into learning. And when a child learns to love learning, they take that with them into middle school, high school, college, and beyond.

Jermaine Gassaway
Principal
Rocketship Nashville Northeast Elementary

Rocketship Washington DC

The District of Columbia has seen a public education renaissance in the last decade. After years of declining enrollment, students are coming back to the public school system — attracted by improving district schools and high-quality, public charter schools. But in the shadow of our nation’s capital, there are still massive achievement gaps in historically underserved communities.

With two schools now serving students in southeast DC, Rocketship is starting to make a meaningful dent in the District’s achievement gap. In our second year serving DC, we launched our second campus — Rocketship Legacy Prep at the Norman Rales Campus. And our first school, Rocketship Rise Academy at the Ruth Rales Campus, has quickly established a reputation for serving all students with excellence. Rise Academy serves the highest percentage of students classified as “at-risk” of all public charter schools in DC. On the first year of DC’s new rating system (STAR) for all district and charter schools, Rocketship Rise ranked second among all schools who serve predominantly “at-risk” students. And while we still have much more work ahead to ensure all our DC Rocketeers are on the path to a better future, we are inspired by the progress our teachers, families, and students are making.

633
STUDENTS

77%
SOCIOECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED

11%
SPECIAL EDUCATION

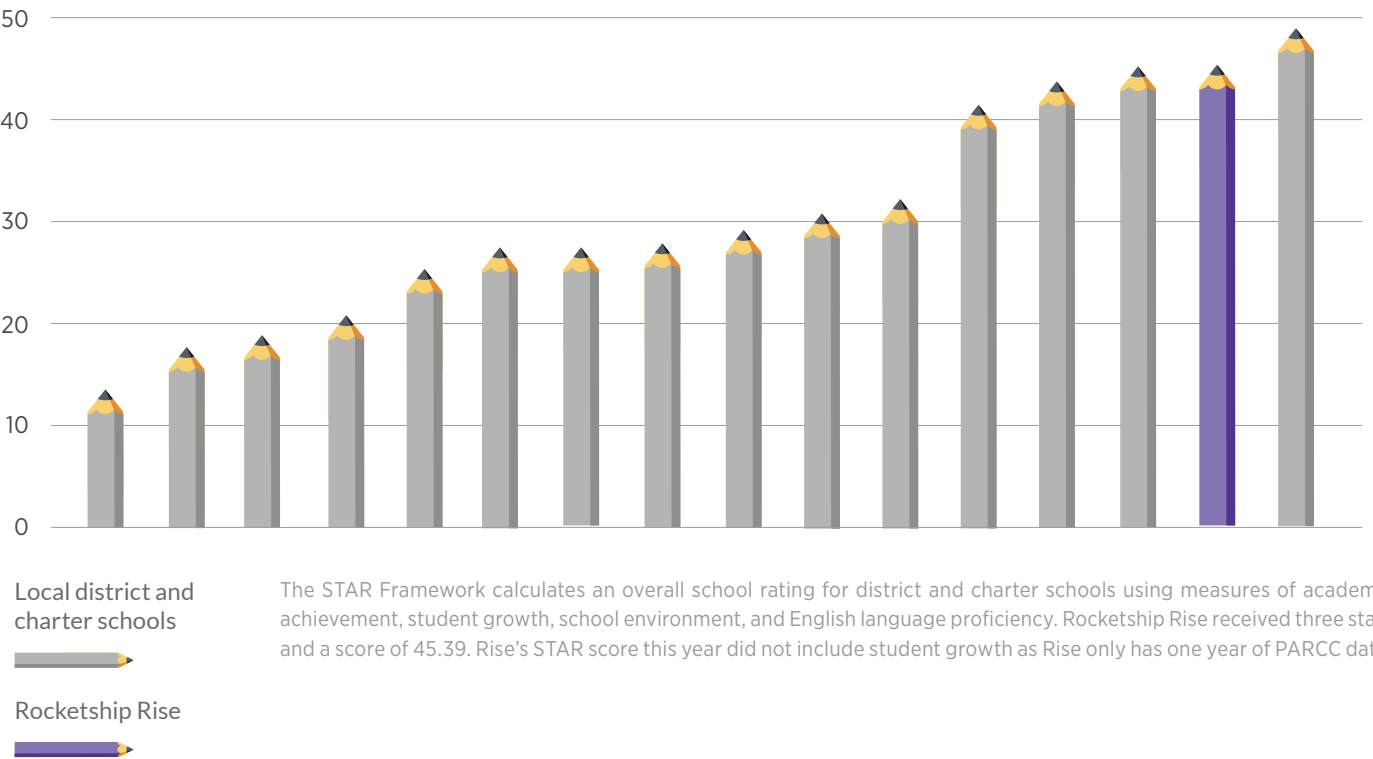
35%
HOMELESS

98%
AFRICAN AMERICAN



2018 School Transparency and Reporting (STAR) Framework

Ranking of STAR scores for DC district and charter schools serving a population of predominantly (80% or more) “at-risk” students





Rocketship Legacy Prep Earns Record High Score

Rocketship Legacy Prep earned the highest score ever for an elementary school on the DC Public Charter School Board’s 2018 School Quality Report. Also known as the Performance Management Framework (PMF), the rating system was first introduced to DC public charter schools eight years ago. Rocketship Legacy Prep, our second school in southeast DC, scored 94.6% — the highest score on record for any school serving pre-K through eighth grade. This places Legacy Prep at the top end of the Tier 1 category. Rocketship Legacy Prep is off to a great start. Achieving this record-setting score in its very first year is an important first step and a strong proof point that Rocketship serves all students with excellence. But one good year isn’t good enough for our Rocketeers. If we hope to eliminate the achievement gap that separates our students from their more affluent peers, we need to stack our success year after year.



The DC Public Charter School Board uses the Performance Management Framework (PMF) to assess school-wide academic performance. Schools are rated by tiers:

Tier 1 = High-Performing (65.0% - 100.0%)

Tier 2 = Mid-Performing (35.0% - 64.9%)

Tier 3 = Low-Performing (0.0% - 34.9%)

“

The work we do is hard. Every day brings a new challenge but each day we see something that tells us that we’re doing a good job, and we’re making a difference. We’re thinking about how we can change this Rocketeer’s life and how that Rocketeer will go on to help change the lives of their parents, their peers, and their entire community. This is hard work, but it is worth it.

Jennifer Lewis
 Founding Teacher, Rocketship Rise Academy
 Founding Teacher, Rocketship Legacy Prep

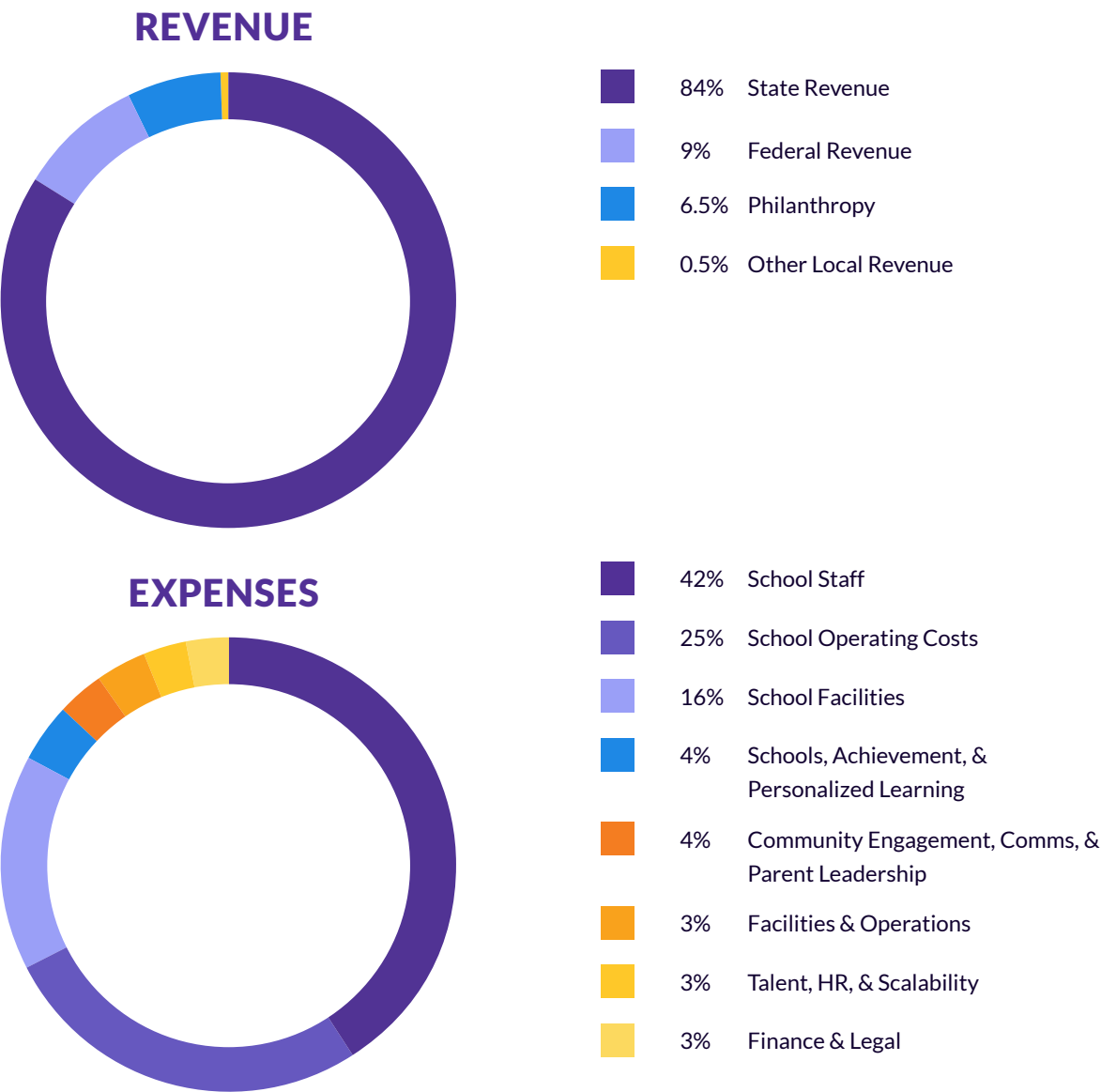


FINANCIALS

Rocketship is building a scalable and financially sustainable non-profit school model that propels student achievement in underserved communities across the country. In 2017–18, 93% of our funding came from public sources. School-based expenses accounted for 83% of our spending.

Financial Sustainability

Fully enrolled schools reach financial sustainability within three to five years of launching. Each region is financially sustainable at five to eight schools. Our Bay Area region is our first fully sustainable region, meaning that our 12 schools and the regional team supporting them operate solely on public funds.



SUPPORTERS

Authorizers

Rocketship couldn't do this work without the partnership, support, and expertise of our authorizers.

- Antioch Unified School District
- California State Board of Education
- City of Milwaukee
- District of Columbia Public Charter School Board
- Franklin-McKinley School District
- Metro Nashville Public Schools
- Redwood City School District
- Santa Clara County Office of Education
- Tennessee Achievement School District
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

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Thank you to our board for their expertise and dedication. We are proud that all board members support our schools both strategically and financially.

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2017–18 Major Donors

Thank you to our donors for their generous support, which allows us to continue innovating across our network and growing to provide high-quality schools for more Rocketeers across the country.

\$1,000,000+

- Arthur and Toni Rembe Rock
- Charter School Growth Fund
- Michael & Susan Dell Foundation

\$500,000+

- Education Forward DC
- NewSchools Venture Fund
- Silicon Schools Fund
- Tipping Point Community

\$100,000+

- Lauren and Bobby Turner
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