



# **ROCKETSHIP INFINITY COMMUNITY PREP**

**Student/Parent Handbook**  
2020-2021 School Year  
Washington, D.C.

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*The policies provided in this handbook are subject to ongoing review and board approval. Rocketship will notify families if there are material changes to any of the policies contained here.*

*Please note that Rocketship may enact additional, supplemental, or alternative policies or procedures to accommodate developing circumstances related to COVID-19, to be separately distributed as needed. Families will be expected to comply with any such policies or procedures in the same manner as any policies and procedures contained in this handbook.*

*The policies provided in this handbook are subject to ongoing review and board approval. Rocketship will notify families if there are material changes to any of the policies contained here.*

## ABOUT ROCKETSHIP

Rocketship Infinity Community Prep is part of Rocketship Public Schools, a network of public elementary charter schools serving students in under-resourced neighborhoods where access to excellent schools is limited. We believe that truly transformative schools do more than educate students; they empower teachers, engage parents, and inspire communities. Rocketship strives to meet the unique needs of each and every student through a blend of traditional instruction, adaptive technology, targeted tutoring, and enrichment opportunities. Together, we can eliminate the achievement gap in our lifetime.

## OUR STORY

In 1999, Father Mateo Sheedy, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, created the Juan Diego Scholarship for Santa Clara University. He was surprised to discover that, of the hundreds of children in his parish, none of them met the basic academic requirements that would qualify them to attend their hometown college, or any other top-tier university.

Father Mateo Sheedy reached out to his community and started creating a plan to improve high-quality educational options in Washington Guadalupe, a neighborhood within greater San Jose.

Unfortunately, Father Mateo Sheedy passed away too soon, but his movement lived on. In 2006, his parishioners approached John Danner and Preston Smith—two educational entrepreneurs who were developing a new model for schools in under-resourced neighborhoods. John Danner, a former software engineer, was interested in the ways technology could help personalize education. Preston Smith was a young principal at a promising elementary school in San Jose who recognized the impact that empowered teachers and engaged parents can have on student success.

Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary opened soon after and our students quickly showed strong results in academic achievement. As more families joined the waiting list, we realized the need for even more high quality schools in the San Jose community, and beyond. Parent demand and parent organizing has played a strong role in opening new Rocketship schools all across the country.

Today, Rocketship Public Schools is a non-profit organization that operates all Rocketship schools and is governed by a Board of Directors. There are thirteen Rocketship schools in California, including San Jose, Redwood City, Antioch, and Concord; two in Nashville, TN; two in Milwaukee, WI; and two in Washington, DC.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission at Rocketship Public Schools is to eliminate the achievement gap by graduating all students at or above grade level in reading and math. All Rocketeers will learn to take initiative, be respectful, be responsible, show empathy, and be persistent in attaining excellence.

The purpose of schooling is for all students to learn to use their minds and hearts well. Students learn best in schools where they are known well, where expectations are high, support is strong, and where their voices and their parents' voices are valued. The mission of Rocketship Infinity Community Prep is to recognize all of these values and ensure that the students are empowered to learn, lead, and be positive and productive members of their community.

At Rocketship, our goals include the following:

- Students will develop a deep love of learning.
- Rocketship will provide parents with a path for their children to take in order to have the best chance to attend a four-year college.
- Rocketship will encourage our alumni to become leaders in their community.

## OUR MODEL

Our model is based on the following three core pillars:

1. **Excellent teachers and leaders create transformational schools.** Rocketship invests deeply in training and development to ensure teachers and leaders have a profound impact on students and communities.
2. **Every child has a unique set of needs.** Rocketship meets these needs by customizing each child's schedule with a combination of traditional instruction, technology and tutoring.
3. **Engaged parents are essential in eliminating the achievement gap.** Rocketship develops parent leaders in our schools and communities to become powerful advocates for their children.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### SCHOOL SITES

ROCKETSHIP INFINITY COMMUNITY PREP

Phone: 202-361-9924

Fax:

School Email: [dcinfo@rsed.org](mailto:dcinfo@rsed.org)

Angel McNeil, Founding Principal

[amcneil@rsed.org](mailto:amcneil@rsed.org)

*If your call is sent to voicemail, please leave a message and we will return your call within 24 hours.*

### WEBSITES

Rocketship Public Schools' website is [rsed.org](http://rsed.org). Here, you can find general information about Rocketship, including our educational model, our management team, and other schools in our network.

RICs website is [dcinfo@rsed.org](mailto:dcinfo@rsed.org). Here you can find school staff contact information; parent resources, including an electronic version of this Handbook; school calendars; and other informational materials about the school.

## ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

Rocketship Infinity Community Prep is a charter school. Charter schools run independently of local school districts, but they must be approved by a local school board to open.

Charter schools are public schools that are tuition-free and open to any student who wishes to attend. They allow parents, organizations, and communities to restore, reinvent, and re-energize our public school system.

Rocketship will not administer any test or assessment to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into Rocketship. Rocketship will not limit enrollment on the basis of a student's race, color, religion, national origin, language spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a student with special needs.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Admissions and Enrollment Policy.

## CALENDAR AND ATTENDANCE

### SCHOOL SCHEDULE

#### Kindergarten Schedule

Regular Day Schedule: 7:55 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

All Thursdays are on minimum day schedule with dismissal at 1:50 p.m.

#### Grades 1-2 Schedule

Regular Day Schedule: 7:55 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

All Thursdays are on minimum day schedule with dismissal at 1:50pm

After-school programming may be available for some students. Information on afterschool opportunities will be shared with families over the summer and at the beginning of the school year.

### LAUNCH

Each Rocketship campus begins the school day with Launch, which is a period of time for the whole school to come together and talk about a school-wide focus. During Launch, the school may also promote a particular successful student habit, teach a new school management system, discuss progress toward achievement goals, and foster school culture and pride. The whole school, including the staff, may also learn a song or a dance together or celebrate a particular student or classroom's recent accomplishment.

### OFFICE HOURS

Our front office opens 30 minutes after the start of school and closes 30 minutes after the end of school.

**Regular Day:** 7:30 am – 4:30 pm

**Minimum Day:** 7:30 am – 2:30 pm

The front office is closed on the days when students do not have school. These include holidays, staff professional development days, parent conference days, winter vacation, and spring break.

## ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

Tardiness and absences can be detrimental to a student's academic and social progress. Rocketship makes every effort to ensure that students are on time and present every school day. Students will be marked late if they arrive within the first 30 minutes of the school day. Students will be marked tardy if they arrive more than 30 minutes late.

Rocketship must receive proper documentation within three days of the student's return or the absence/tardy will be considered unexcused. **Students who are chronically absent or truant may become subject to consequences, including (but not limited to) interventions, retention, and loss of field trip or other privileges.**

**Please note that any student who participates in a Rocketship distance learning program, as arranged by the school, will be required to attend all components of that program in the manner designated by the school and will incur unexcused absences if they do not adhere to the distance learning attendance requirements.**

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Attendance and Truancy Policy.

## COMMUNICATION

This year, all Rocketship schools will be using a system called Alert Solutions to send messages to families. These messages may include information about upcoming school events, emergency notifications, attendance issues, or other things that the school feels are important for families to be aware of. The messages will be sent via text message, email, or phone calls using the contact information that you provide upon registration. Please contact your child's school if you wish to opt out of receiving such communications.

## SCHOOL CANCELLATION, LATE START, AND EARLY DISMISSAL

On rare occasions, Rocketship may decide to alter the regular schedule of the school day by closing school for a day, starting the school day late, or releasing students early at one or several campuses due to snow, rain, severe weather, natural disasters, or other emergency conditions. Rocketship recognizes that closing school or shortening the instructional day is disruptive for students, staff, and families and will only make this decision when it is necessary for the safety of our school community. Whenever possible, Rocketship will provide families and staff with advance notice of the decision or possible decision to shorten the instructional day or close school.

Please see the Appendix for Rocketship's full School Closure Policy.

## CAMPUS OPERATIONS AND SECURITY

### ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

#### Transportation

All parents/guardians are responsible for securing the transportation for of their child to and from school. In addition, parents must provide contact information for any person authorized to pick up their student. Parents/guardians must inform the front office if a child has permission to walk home.

#### Drop-Off

Students may be dropped off as early as **7:15 AM**.

If your child is dropped off late (after **7:45 AM**) they they **MUST** go to the front office first and get a pass from the Office Manager before heading to Launch or class. If you arrive after 8am with your child, you **MUST** accompany your child to the front office to get a pass from the Office Manager before your child can head to class.

If your child is marked tardy, you may be subject to disciplinary procedures for tardy students. Please see the Attendance and Truancy Policy in the Appendix for more details.

#### Pick-Up

If you need to pick up your child before **3:30 PM** for an appointment or any other reason, you will need to park in the parking lot if there is open space available. There is also street parking available. Please adhere to the signs for parking if you are parking on the street.

Parents are to show their ID to be inserted in our system ScholarChip. Once families are cleared to enter the building they will go to their Rocketeers classroom, show their pick up pass, collect their Rocketeer, and leave out of the exterior exit door. Families are not to exit through the front door as that is an entry only point.

Parents who are using our carline wil remain in their vehicles. Parents are to show their ID to be inserted in our system ScholarChip. Once families are cleared their Rocketeer will be brought to their car by a member of a team.

#### Walker/Rider Cards

At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians are given a Walker/Rider Card with the student's name, grade, and homeroom. During dismissal, the child's parent/guardian (or other authorized individual) must present this card to school staff to pick up the child. If you lose your Walker/Rider Card, authorized individuals will be required to show ID in the front office to obtain a temporary pick pass.

### **Reminders to Parents/Guardians for Arrival and Dismissal**

- Treat all other Rocketship families, students, and staff members with courtesy and respect at all times. Do not take any actions that may endanger the health or safety of anyone on campus. Disruptive, disrespectful and/or unsafe behavior during arrival and dismissal may result in parents/guardians losing privileges to be on the school campus.
- Do not conference with teachers or school leaders during arrival and dismissal time; make an appointment instead.
- Do not let your child out on the sidewalk outside or near our campus. YOU MUST enter our campus and let your child out in the designated drop-off zone.
- With very limited exceptions, animals are not allowed on campus during drop-off or pick-up. If you have an animal in your car, it must remain completely inside the vehicle at all times while on campus.
- Students may only exit cars on the passengers' side.
- Display your Walker/Rider card when picking up your child.
- Please remember to leave adequate space between cars to avoid collision
- Please DO NOT talk or text on your phone during this time. We need to be able to communicate with you for the safety of the children.

## **STUDENT RELEASE**

Rocketship will make every effort to ensure that all students get home safely when they leave school each day.

At the beginning of the year, parents/guardians must complete a Walker/Rider Card that they must display when picking up their child (described above). Parents/guardians must also complete an Emergency Contact Card that includes the names of individuals to be contacted in case of an emergency if attempts to contact the parent/guardian fail.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Student Release Policy .

## **LATE PICK-UP**

Rocketship's goal is to dismiss our students safely, efficiently, and responsibly. We understand that occasional family emergencies may cause a child to be picked up late from school, but

consistently failing to pick up students on time is costly to the school, burdensome to the school staff, and disruptive to students' daily routines.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Late Pickup Policy.

## **CAMPUS ACCESS AND VISITORS**

At Rocketship, we strive to create campuses that are welcoming to families, volunteers, and community members while maintaining a safe and secure environment for students and staff.

At all times during the school day, the front office to each Rocketship campus will be manned by a Rocketship staff member. All visitors must sign in at the front office immediately upon arriving on campus and sign out before leaving. The Principal or designee may withdraw consent for an individual to be on campus whenever there is reasonable basis for concluding that the visitor presence on school grounds would interfere or is interfering with the peaceful conduct of the activities of the school, or would disrupt or is disrupting the school, its students, its teachers, or its other employees.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Campus Access and Visitor Policy.

## **ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE**

Electronic surveillance may be used at Rocketship campuses where deemed necessary. The use of electronic surveillance at our schools is solely for the purposes of controlling theft, ensuring the safety of Rocketship students and staff, and facilitating the identification of individuals who behave in a disruptive manner or commit a crime. Rocketship will abide by all state laws regarding electronic recording.

Rocketship requests that other than during designated school events (such as school plays, graduation, and other events open to the Rocketship community) parents and other visitors to campus refrain from taking photographs and or making audio/video recording of students and staff without first obtaining written consent from the parent of the student. In the event that a parent or campus visitor does capture an image of a student, Rocketship requests that the individual refrain from posting any such image to a personal social media account. Such photography and audio recording is intrusive and may be in violation of state privacy laws.

## **FAMILY CUSTODY**

Rocketship will make every effort to ensure compliance, on the part of school staff as well as parents/guardians, with legal custody arrangements. Updated Court Orders should be provided to

the Office Manager as soon as possible. All documentation provided to the school will be kept confidential and will only be accessed by members of the staff when necessary. **Rocketship does not have the right to limit the rights of a parent of a Rocketship student without a Court Order.** If one parent does not wish to allow the other parent/guardian the right to remove the child from school or visit the child in school, Rocketship must be provided with a Court Order limiting the other parent's rights.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Family Custody Policy.

## **VOLUNTEER CLEARANCE**

Because Rocketship is deeply committed to ensuring the safety of all students, any parent, guardian, or family member who chooses to volunteer on- or off-campus at Rocketship-sponsored events must apply to become a volunteer and undergo any necessary background check procedures required for the volunteer position. Volunteers must also sign the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Volunteer Clearance Policy.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are off-campus excursions designed by Rocketship staff to supplement the curriculum and to provide enrichment experiences for students. We value these enrichment opportunities and strive to ensure that these experiences are safe, organized, and efficient from beginning to end. When applicable, parents who wish to chaperone a field trip must comply with all of Rocketship's volunteer clearance and transportation requirements.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Field Trip Policy.

## SCHOOL MEALS

### **Free and Reduced Lunch Forms**

Rocketship participates in the National School Lunch Program. All families must either fill out and submit a federal free/reduced lunch (FRL) application or indicate that they do not wish to submit an FRL application during Orientation, the summer before school starts. Families that qualify will get free/reduced pricing for lunch provided by the school after their application has been processed. All families are encouraged to complete the application form in order to include as many eligible students as possible.

If a family submits an FRL form late (after Orientation, benefits will take place once the application is processed. Forms are typically processed within 5-10 days after they are submitted. Families will have to pay full price for any meals eaten before the reduced price or free meal benefit takes effect.

### **Paying for School Lunch**

Our school lunch program is supported by Rocketship funds, government reimbursement, and payment from parents. We need parents to pay what they owe for student meals in advance in order to keep this program running.

If a student is going to eat a lunch provided by the school, parents will need to pre-order and pre-pay for these meals. Parents will receive information on how to pre-pay and pre-order over the summer. Credit/debit card is our preferred form of payment.

Families will be charged according to their FRL status. ("Paid" families will pay full price for their lunches; "reduced" families will pay a reduced rate for lunches; "free" families will not need to pay for lunch).

Even if you think your child will not eat school lunch, please pre-pay some amount to cover the cost of incidental meals. At the end of the year, you can be refunded whatever is left in your child's account.

*Please see the Appendix for a full copy of Rocketship's Meal Charge policy. If you have further questions or concerns about lunch billing at your child's school, reach out to your Business Operations Manager Jasmine Tindley [jtindley@rsed.org](mailto:jtindley@rsed.org)*

### **Breakfast**

Our school participates in universal breakfast, meaning that every student present at school will receive a meal. Studies have shown that students who eat breakfast have more energy, do better

in school, and eat healthier throughout the day. Students are *not* required to eat the breakfast provided by the school.

### **Food Allergies**

If your child has a known food allergy or dietary restriction, parents/guardians should let school staff know. In some cases, it may be possible to accommodate a child's dietary needs in Rocketship lunch orders, but a doctor's note will be required. Parents/guardians should work with the school's Business Operations Manager to make arrangements.

### **Food Brought From Home**

Rocketship partners with our local food vendor to provide our Rocketeers a healthy lunch every day. Students are allowed to bring their own food from home for lunch or snack, but junk food is not allowed on campus.

Foods that are NOT ALLOWED (and may be confiscated):

- Chips (unless included in a complete lunch, i.e. along with a sandwich, fruits, vegetables, etc.)
- Cookies
- Gum
- Candy
- Fast Food
- Soda

Foods that are encouraged:

- Salads
- Carrots and celery sticks
- Apple slices and peanut butter
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Whole Grains
- Healthy snack packs

### **Birthday Parties/Celebrations**

Birthday celebrations can be held during the lunch block or after 3:30. Please coordinate with classroom teachers at least 48 hours in advance if you wish to host a birthday celebration with your students class. Only store bought items can be served due to possible allergies. If and when possible, please include a list of ingredients for all food items.

If you would not like your child to participate in birthday parties or be included when food items are brought into the classroom, please contact the student's teacher or school leader as soon as possible.

## ACADEMICS

### CURRICULUM

Students will be exposed to a well-rounded curriculum that includes reading, writing, English language development, mathematics, science and technology, and social studies. Students will also take Physical Education and enrichment courses in areas such as art, music, theater, or gardening.

The Rocketship curriculum follows all required state performance standards for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. This includes the Common Core State Standards for English/Language Arts, English Language Development, and Mathematics. Teachers will use regular assessments to measure how well students are progressing toward mastery. Rocketship shall annually administer required state testing to the applicable grades.

We use knowledge about student skills to shape whole class instruction, small group work, and small group tutoring. Using individual student data, instruction can be targeted to better meet individual student needs.

Teachers will give students and parents ongoing feedback about student performance. Teachers will often send work home for parents/guardians to sign, and teachers will contact parents/guardians if they see a significant slip in academic performance or a special skill that needs extra practice at school and home. Parents/guardians will also regularly receive progress reports and report cards. You should feel free to contact any of your child's teachers regarding his/her progress at any time.

### HOMEWORK

Parents and students should expect homework each weekday evening. Homework will be

Families who do not complete their homework will receive a call from teachers to support in homework being completed. IF families do not continue to their homework a meeting will be set up with their Grade Level School Leader.

### RETENTION AND PROMOTION

Rocketship's instructional model is organized so that each student's learning plan is individualized in order to account for individual differences and promote academic and social growth. Upon a student's enrollment at Rocketship, schools will typically not make decisions to allow a new

Rocketship student to repeat or skip a grade. Schools are expected to enroll all students in the next consecutive grade level and then assess students objectively as needed. Furthermore, believe that retention should only be used in rare and exceptional circumstances, when the student's family is given notice well in advance and is fully in support of the retention decision.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Retention and Promotion Policy.

## **CHILD FIND ACTIVITIES**

Rocketship Public Schools is required to locate, identify, and evaluate all children, with disabilities, including children with disabilities attending private schools in the school district, and homeless children. The process of locating, identifying, and evaluating children with disabilities is known as child find. Rocketship has systems in place that assist the school in determining whether a student may have a disability. These include a specific "Child Find" form that is completed by parents upon enrollment in a Rocketship school.

Please see the Appendix for a full copy of the Child Find Policy.

## BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND DISCIPLINE

### ROCKETEER CODE OF CONDUCT

Safety, order, and student discipline are fundamental to learning at Rocketship. Rocketship expects all students to behave in a way that fosters a safe and welcoming environment for other students, Rocketship staff, and community members.

The Rocketship Code of Conduct includes the following non-negotiable expectations for our Rocketeers:

- Adherence to the Rocketship Commitment to Excellence
- Adherence to the Rocketship Five **Core Values**: Respect, Responsibility, Persistence, Empathy, and Integrity.
- Adherence to the **Rocketship Creed**:

*I am a Rocketship Rocketeer, proud at home, at school, and in my community*

*I am respectful of myself, others, and the environment*

*I am responsible for my learning, actions, and achievement*

*With pride and power I strive for excellence every minute of my day*

*I am empathetic to my world.*

*I am persistent in attaining success*

*Together we're all Rocketship Rocketeers!*

### STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Rocketship promotes positive behavior at school and aims to create learning environments that are more consistent, predictable, positive and safe. We clearly define behavioral expectations and consequences, create systems for recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors, and provide our students with social-emotional learning.

Students will be subject to disciplinary action if they engage in prohibited conduct while on school property, when attending any school-sponsored activity or while in transit going to or coming from a Rocketship campus. Students may also be subject to disciplinary action for off-campus behavior if it creates a substantial disruption to the school environment or interferes with another student's ability to participate in the school program.

Rocketship classrooms also use a variety of management systems to address behavioral issues. These may include color-coded card chart systems and other tiered consequences.

If students do not respond to our positive behavior supports or classroom management systems, Rocketship may take alternative in-school disciplinary action. Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Student Discipline Policy.

## **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

We believe that our students are best served when they are present at school every day. However, we recognize that situations may occur when a student commits a behavioral offense that is so severe that the student may become subject to suspension or expulsion.

A student may be disciplined, suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at a Rocketship school or at any other school or a school-sponsored event at any time including but not limited to: while on school grounds; while going to or coming from school; during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; and during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity. Students may also be subject to disciplinary action for off-campus behavior if it creates a substantial disruption to the school environment or interferes with another student's ability to participate in the school program.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION**

Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological and academic impact on bullies, victims and bystanders. Bullying at Rocketship is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. "Bullying" includes discrimination; harassment; intimidation; and bullying based on disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, or perceived characteristics. All alleged incidents of bullying will be promptly investigated by designated Rocketship staff members. In addition, Rocketship prohibits retaliation against people who report incidents of bullying.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Bullying Prevention Policy.

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

Student uniforms help minimize disruption during the school day, promote respect for oneself and others, and foster school/community spirit. Students are expected to wear the Rocketship uniform to school every day.

The Rocketship uniform consists of a khaki bottom (pants, shorts, dress, skirt, or skorts) and a dark purple collared shirt. Students may also wear a Rocketship polo shirt or t-shirt, which can be purchased from the school Office Manager. Shirts must be tucked in at all times, which Rocketship considers being “dressed for success.”

Students should also wear closed toe shoes. Sandals are not considered to be safe or appropriate for school.

The following are considered to be dress code violations and are NOT permitted on any Rocketship campus:

- Dresses and shorts which are shorter than mid-thigh
- Spaghetti straps (smaller than two inches, or the width of a credit card)
- Tank tops (including white, ribbed undershirts)
- Clothing or accessories that are sexually provocative
- Clothing or accessories that identify a student with non-school clubs, profanity, obscenity, references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gangs (red or blue color) or prison culture name insignia
- Attire with writing that degrades individuals or groups
- Body piercings that create a safety hazard are not acceptable; moderate sized earrings are acceptable
- Platform shoes or high heels over 2.5 inches high
- Underwear or undergarments that are visible
- Tops that show the midriff area
- Pants that sag around the waist
- Intentionally torn pants or jeans
- Untied shoelaces
- Bandanas, hairnets, headbands, doo rags, and non-Marshall hats (also includes beanies, baseball caps, etc.)
- Sunglasses or Marshall hats may not be worn in the building, but may be worn outside to protect from the sun

Students who repeatedly do not come to school in uniform may lose privileges. In addition, Rocketship may contact the student’s parent/guardian to discuss the dress code violation.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Students are not allowed to have the following items at school:

- Gum
- Soda
- Cell Phones
- Weapons and toy weapons
- Gameboys or any other electronic toys
- Matches or any flammable item
- Chips, candy, or other junk food
- Hats
- Any illegal substance
- Toys, stuffed animals, dolls, fidget spinners
- Personal electronic devices (i.e. iPad, iPod, mp3 player)

## TELEPHONE USE

Students may not use cell phones or other personal electronic devices during school. Students may not use any school phone without permission from a teacher. Students will only be allowed to use the school phone in case of emergency or to inform a parent/ guardian regarding a specific need. A teacher must dial the number for students. Students who use a phone without permission from a teacher will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Rocketship is committed to supporting the health of its students and meeting the needs of students with medical conditions, in compliance with state laws and regulations.

Before medication can be kept or administered at Rocketship, a student's parent/guardian must complete and submit a medication authorization form. Parents/guardians should contact the Office Manager for a copy of this form. Rocketship staff will administer all medication in accordance with state law.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Medication Administration Policy.

### IMMUNIZATIONS

To ensure a safe learning environment for all students, Rocketship follows and abides by the health standards set forth by the District of Columbia. Students will not attend school until all required records have been received. The immunization status of all students will be reviewed periodically. Those students who do not meet DC's guidelines may be excluded from school until the requirements are met. Students who have been exposed to a communicable disease for which they have not been immunized may be excluded from school at the discretion of the School.

Students must receive the immunizations required by the DC Department of Health, in the specified dosages and schedules, including the following:

- Diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis;
- Polio;
- Varicella (chickenpox, if no history of disease);
- Measles, mumps, and rubella;
- Hepatitis B;
- Hepatitis A;
- Hib (Haemophilus Influenza Type B);
- PVC (pneumococcal)

Students may be exempted from the immunization requirements if the student's parent/guardian objects in good faith and in writing, to the Principal, that immunization would violate his or her religious beliefs; or the student's parent/guardian provides written certification by a private

physician, physician's representative, or the public health authorities that immunization is medically inadvisable for the student.

## HEALTH EXAMINATIONS AND SCREENINGS

All students must provide documentation of the following health assessments as part of the enrollment package:

- A health history and physical examination to be provided by a physician or certified nurse practitioner as per the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Guidelines.
- A tuberculosis assessment
- A lead exposure assessment. (All children in DC must be screened twice prior to age 6.)
- Required immunizations, as required by DC law and described in Rocketship's DC Immunization Policy.

This documentation should be provided through the completion of the District of Columbia Universal Health Certificate, which Rocketship will make available to families prior to the start of the school year. All documentation must include a certification and signature from the physician or nurse practitioner. All documentation must also include a parent/guardian signature.

All student health records will remain confidential under DC's pupil records laws. Under DC law, a health screening will not be required if a parent/guardian submits in good faith a written notarized statement to Rocketship affirming that the screening in question would violate the established tenets of the parent/guardian's religious denomination.

## HEAD LICE

If student is suspected of having head lice (i.e. constant itching or tickling feeling in the hair), the school nurse or other trained school employee may examine the hair of the suspected student for lice or nits (lice eggs). In certain circumstances, the employee may also examine other members of that student's household. If a student is positive for live head lice, the student is to be promptly sent home with information to the parents regarding treatment and control measures.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Head Lice Policy.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT CARDS

Over the summer, parent/guardians complete and submit an Emergency Contact/Authorization to Pick-Up Card. This card is kept on file at the school in the Front Office. This card contains the names and phone numbers of individuals who can be contacted if a child has an emergency and the child's parent/guardian cannot be reached.

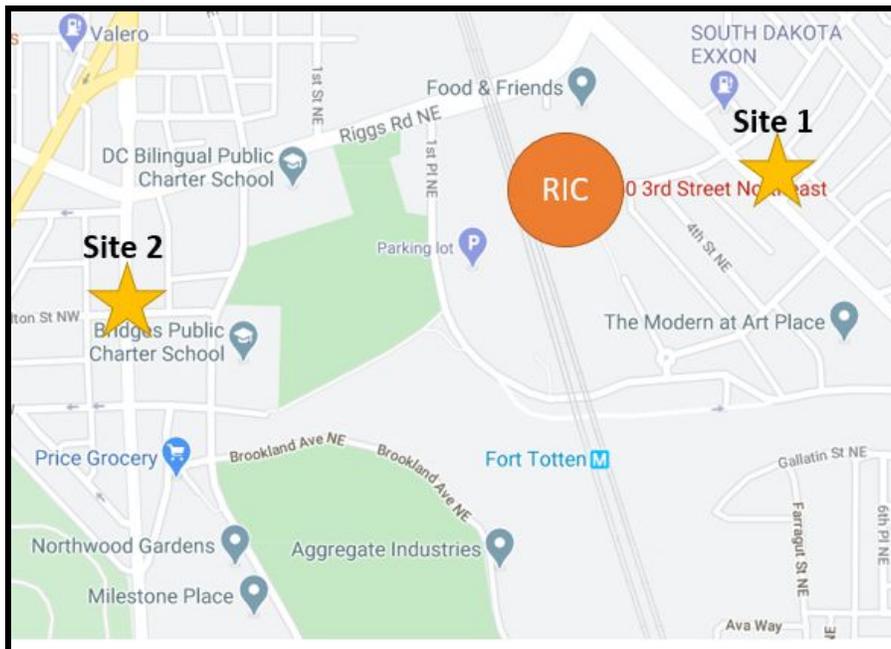
## SAFETY PLANS

Safety is our first priority. To make sure our staff and students know what to do in case of an emergency, we follow a rigorous calendar of staff trainings, safety team meetings, campus walkthroughs, and safety drills. Every school is equipped with a detailed Health and Safety Plan that contains our emergency response plans, including plans for earthquakes, fire, severe weather, and lockdowns.

### Primary and Secondary Evacuation Sites

Our school has two evacuation sites. Our primary evacuation site is 395 Ingraham ST NE, Washington, DC 20011. We will use this evacuation site when it is safe to remain near campus.

Our secondary evacuation site is located off campus at 100 Gallatin ST NE, Washington, DC 20011 (see map below). If there is a disaster at the school site or the campus is unsafe for some reason, we will evacuate to this site. *During an emergency dismissal, we may ask parents to meet us at this secondary evacuation site. Please be familiar with this location so you know where to go in case of an emergency dismissal.*



### Emergencies

In order for us to keep our campus safe during an emergency, we need our families to understand the following:

- In the event of an emergency, we will share information with families via our automated calling system. Please make sure your updated contact information is in our system.
- If there is an incident on or near our campus, please stay at home and wait for instructions from our school leaders. We need the public to stay away while we secure our campus and account for all students. When it is safe to come to the school, you will be contacted.
- After an emergency incident, we may need to change the way we dismiss students. You may be asked to present a photo ID in addition to your child's Walker/Rider card. Please wait for instructions from school leaders before coming to campus.
- If the school campus is not safe, we may need to dismiss students from our secondary (off-campus) evacuation sites. It is important that you know where this secondary evacuation site is located (see above).

## **WEAPONS AND FIREARMS**

Rocketship Public Schools prohibits any weapons, imitation firearms or dangerous objects of any kind in school buildings, on school grounds or buses, or at off campus school-related or school sponsored activities.

## **DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO**

Rocketship Public Schools is committed to maintaining campuses free of alcohol, smoke, and illegal drugs. Do not smoke on campus and do not bring alcohol or illegal substances of any kind to our school. If a student is found in possession of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products, he/she will be subject to discipline and possible suspension or expulsion under Rocketship's discipline policies.

## **INTERNET SAFETY**

Rocketship uses advanced education technology to support personalized instruction for all students. Rocketship adheres to the federal requirements and guidelines set forth in the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Rocketship's Internet system is limited to educational purposes. Acceptable activities include classroom activities and high-quality research. Rocketship computers are not to be used for entertainment purposes unless specifically authorized by a staff member in accordance with this policy.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Internet Safety Policy.

## **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

All school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect. Mandated reporters are required to report when they know or suspect that a student has been or is in danger of being subjected to any of the following: mental injury; physical abuse; physical assault; neglect; sexual abuse; sexual exploitation; sexual assault; exposure to illegal drug-related activity, including ingestion of an illegal drug due to parent/guardian neglect; or exposure to domestic violence in the student's home. Additionally, mandated reporters must make a report when they suspect or know that a student has been injured by a bullet, knife, or other sharp object.

No one in the workplace, even a supervisor, is permitted to suppress, change, or edit a report of abuse. A mandated reporter who fails to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect is subject to punishment under DC law.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

### ROCKETSHIP'S COMMITMENT

***Rocketship Commitment*** - At Rocketship, we fully commit to our families and students in the following ways:

- We will create a safe place to learn.
- We will respect the background, culture, and individuality of each child.
- We will communicate regularly with you about your child's progress and special needs.
- We will hold high expectations for all students.
- We will work hard to help your child feel successful and increase their sense of self-worth.
- We will provide your child with the academic base and moral compass they need to be successful through college and the rest of their lives.
- We will provide support to you and your child as you determine the best educational path upon graduating from Rocketship.

### PARENTS'/GUARDIANS' COMMITMENT

***Parents'/Guardians' Commitment***- We fully commit to Rocketship in the following ways:

- We will always help our child in the best way we know how, and we will do whatever it takes for him/her to learn and prepare for college and life by supporting him/her and encouraging him/her to adhere to his/her "commitment to excellence."
- We will make sure our child arrives at school on time every school day.
- We will make arrangements so our child can remain at school until the end of the school day each day and be picked up when school ends.
- We will follow all arrival and dismissal regulations and parking and busing procedures.
- We will make sure our child follows the Rocketship dress code.
- We will ensure that our child is reading or being read to every night.
- We will check our child's homework every night, sign his/her agenda, and we will carefully read and sign (if requested) all the papers our school sends home to us.
- We will meet regularly with teachers to discuss our child's progress and support their work to help our child excel.
- We will participate in as many school activities including parent/family meetings, exhibition nights, community meetings, open house nights, conferences, etc. as reasonably possible.
- We will strive to contribute as many partnership hours to the school community as reasonably possible.

- We, not the school, are responsible for the behavior of our child.

## PARENT PARTNERSHIP

Engaged parents are a core pillar of Rocketship's model and critical to our Rocketeers and their long-term success. By actively being included and involved in our schools and their Rocketeers' learning, parents become integrated into the fabric of the school community. An active partnership between families and Rocketship faculty and staff benefits our Rocketeers as they see their parents on campus, and families as they gain a deeper understanding of Rocketship's model and are positioned to reinforce Rocketship's core values at home.

Rocketship asks that families participate in 20 Parent Partnership Hours each year per family by supporting or participating in various school activities. Participating in Parent Partnership Hours is encouraged, but NOT required. If families do not realize 20 Parent Partnership Hours annually, there is no consequence or penalty.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Parent Partnership Policy.

## HOME VISITS

Studies have shown that meaningful parental involvement in the education of their children can have dramatic effects on student achievement. Home visits help parents and teachers come together as equal partners to form a trusting relationship centered on student learning, establish goals for the individual child and the parent-teacher relationship, and invest families in the Rocketship community.

Each Rocketship student will receive a home visit from their core classroom teachers during the beginning of each school year. Teachers will reach out to families to schedule the home visit in advance. Home visits typically last for about one hour.

What happens during home visits may vary according to both parent and teacher preference, but typically home visits include:

- Collaborative academic and personal goal-setting for the student
- Discussion of the student's (and the family's) hopes and dreams
- Discussion of the student's interests both inside and outside of the classroom
- Discussion about communication preferences during the school year
- Explanation about Rocketship's policies and procedures that parents have questions about
- Talking about the history of Rocketship and the mission of the network and school
- Conversations about why the family chose Rocketship, how long they have lived in their community, etc.

- Invitation to an upcoming event at the school (i.e. Back to School Night, community meeting)
- Conversation about the teacher's background

Home visits may also include a tour of the house, including the space where the child will do homework; a performance by the student; a shared meal; and show-and-tell of an artifact that is important to the student (i.e. a photo, trophy, favorite shirt).

## PARENT OPPORTUNITIES ON CAMPUS

We provide many different opportunities for you to stay involved with your child's education. These include (but are not limited to):

- **Orientation.** Before school begins each year, parents will receive an invitation to an Orientation. All parents must attend this event.
- **Conferences.** A parent/guardian must attend conferences to meet with teachers to go over student's progress report and/or report card.
- **Exhibition Nights.** All parents/guardians should attend the scheduled Exhibition Nights. If you cannot attend, a family representative can attend in your place. During these meetings, parents have the opportunity to see student presentations and discover what their child has learned for the past 9-12 weeks.
- **Community Meetings.** All parents/guardians are invited and strongly encouraged to attend the scheduled Community Meetings. These meetings will help you stay informed regarding your school procedures and policies and become actively involved in further developing the school's mission.
- **Parent/Family Meetings.** All parents/guardians are invited and strongly encouraged to attend the scheduled Parent/Family Meetings to maintain an active role in their child's learning. These meetings are open to the entire family and typically take place on the weekends or on a weeknight.
- **Leadership groups at the school.** This may include a Parent Leadership group or other parent groups organized at the school.

## NOTIFICATIONS OF RIGHTS AND ASSURANCES

### PUPIL RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records.

Please see the Appendix for a full copy of the FERPA policy.

### EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (“the McKinney-Vento Act”) is a federal law that ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) Rocketship’s policy is written in compliance with the requirements under the McKinney-Vento Act. Please see the appendix for more details.

### COMPLAINT PROCESS

Rocketship values the concerns of our parents, staff, students, and community and takes all concerns and complaints seriously. Please see the Appendix for a full copy of the Rocketship complaint process.

### NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Rocketship does not discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic.

Rocketship adheres to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

Rocketship is committed to providing a work and educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment under Title IX (sex), Title VI (race, color, or national origin), and Section 504 and Title II of the ADA. Rocketship prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based upon pregnancy,

childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religion, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. Rocketship does not condone or tolerate harassment of any type, including bullying, discrimination, or intimidation, by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which the Rocketship does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This applies to all employees, students, or volunteers and relationships, regardless of position or gender. Rocketship will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of harassment and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted.

## **SECTION 504**

Rocketship recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program of Rocketship Public Schools. Any student who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity, including, but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodations by Rocketship. The parent/guardian of any student suspected of needing or qualifying for accommodations under Section 504 may make a referral for an evaluation to the school Principal.

A copy of Rocketship's Section 504 policies and procedures are available upon request.

## **ESSA PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW**

Pursuant to Section 1112(e)(1)(A-B) of the Every Student Succeeds Act, a student's parent may request, and Rocketship will provide the parents upon request (and in a timely manner), information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including at a minimum the following:

- Whether the teacher has met State qualifications for grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other professional status that the State has waived;
- Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher;
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and if so their qualifications.

## COPPA

Rocketship schools use several computer software applications and web-based services, operated not by schools in our network, but by third-party vendors. We use these tools to provide students with the most effective software and web-based services for learning. In accordance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), Rocketship consents to the vendors' collection, use, and disclosure of information obtained directly from students. Rocketship gives this consent on behalf of parents.

Under COPPA, each software provider or website operator is bound to maintain the confidentiality of the information collected, and must provide parental notification and obtain parental consent before collecting personal information from children under the age of 13. The law permits schools such as ours to consent to the collection of personal information on behalf of all of its students, thereby eliminating the need for individual parental consent given directly to the web site operator. For more information on COPPA, please visit <http://www.ftc.gov/privacy/coppafaqs.shtm>.

A complete list of the software and services used by RSED, with the privacy policy for each, can be found in the appendix and on our network website at: <https://www.rocketshipschools.org/<link to list of programs>>.

Upon request from Rocketship, vendors must provide the school a description of the types of personal information collected; an opportunity to review a child's personal information and/or have the information deleted; and the opportunity to prevent further use or online collection of a child's personal information.

Parents retain the right to request review of their child's personal information and/or have information deleted. Parents also have the right to opt their child out of participating in educational activities that involve the collection, use, or disclosure of personal information collected from their child.

## APPENDIX: SCHOOL POLICIES

### ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT POLICY - 401.2

Rocketship schools are free, open-enrollment public schools for District of Columbia children who meet our age and residence requirements, as further described below. This policy covers our admissions assurances; procedures for applications, lottery, and wait list; and registration process, including age and residency requirements.

#### I. Admissions Assurances

Rocketship shall not administer any test or assessment to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into Rocketship. Rocketship will not limit enrollment on the basis of a student's race, color, religion, national origin, language spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a student with special needs.

#### II. Application and Public Random Drawing

Rocketship will accept applications during a publicly-advertised open application period each year for enrollment in the following school year. Following the open application period each year, applications will be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability.

In this event that this occurs, each Rocketship school in DC will hold a public random drawing to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students, who are guaranteed enrollment in the following school year.

In accordance with 48 DCR 1694, 1701, enrollment preferences in the case of a public random drawing will be allowed in the following order of preference:

1. Siblings of currently enrolled students
2. Children of the paid staff of Rocketship

Students qualifying for more than one preference group will be considered part of the highest preference in which they qualify.

#### III. Enrollment

During the application process, parents are expected to correctly identify their child's age and grade level in both the current (where applicable) and upcoming school year. Upon acceptance to Rocketship, all students will be enrolled in the next consecutive grade level that follows their current grade level. Students will be admitted to Kindergarten only in accordance with the

statutory age requirements described below in this policy. Schools will typically not make any retention or promotion decisions during the enrollment process. Parents are not permitted to unilaterally make any retention or promotion decisions for their child during the application process.

A student who has been expelled from another educational institution may be admitted to a Rocketship school in the discretion of the Rocketship Board on a case-by-case basis, as further described in Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

#### **IV. Wait List**

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, Rocketship will notify the families of all applicants to inform them of their acceptance status. All students who were not granted admission due to capacity will be given the option to put their name on a wait list in the order according to their draw in the public random drawing. This wait list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the school year. Once on the wait list, the student will remain until he/she is offered a spot in the school or the parent/guardian confirms in writing that the student no longer wishes to remain on the wait list. The wait list will not carry over from year to year.

If families from the wait list are offered a position, they must accept that position within two weeks. If a family declines or fails to respond within two weeks, they may be removed from the wait list or placed at the bottom of the wait list.

If a former Rocketship student who is withdrawn from a school seeks to re-enroll in the same school, and that school is at capacity for the student's grade level, that student shall be added to the wait list in the same manner as any other student seeking enrollment.

#### **V. Registration Process**

Upon selection for admission pursuant to public random drawing, the registration process will include the following:

- Proof of immunization and physical health examinations in accordance with Rocketship policies;
- Home Language Survey;
- Completion of medication authorization forms;
- Proof of minimum age requirements (i.e. birth certificate).
- Proof of residency, further described below.

Rocketship feels strongly that success for students requires a commitment, from both students and parents, to the school's mission and vision. During the registration process, all parents/guardians will be asked to sign a commitment letter indicating that they understand Rocketship philosophy, program, and volunteer policies. Students will not be denied admission or dis-enrolled for a parent/guardian's failure to sign the commitment letter.

## VI. Age and Residency Requirements

Pursuant to DC Code § 38-202(a), all students entering kindergarten at Rocketship must be five years of age on or before September 30<sup>th</sup> of the current school year.

Pursuant to 48 DCR 1964, 1701-03, parents/guardians of students enrolling in Rocketship must provide documents showing that the parent/guardian is a resident of the District of Columbia.

Parents/guardians can submit one of the following documents:

- Pay stub (must be issued within 45 days of Rocketship's review and must indicate DC withholding for the current tax year);
- Official Documentation of financial assistance from the Government of DC (within the past 12 months: TANF, Medicaid, SCHIP, SSI, Housing Assistance or Other Programs)
- Certified Copy of Form D40 (current or most recent tax year)
- Military Housing Orders (Example: DEERS statement or other official communication on military letterhead)
- Embassy Letter (within the past 12 months: with an official embassy seal)
- Alternatively, parents/guardians can submit any two of the following, and each must contain the parent/guardian's name and the DC residential address and the address listed as the student's residence on school forms:
  - Valid, unexpired DC driver's license or non-driver's identification;
  - Unexpired vehicle registration;
  - Valid, unexpired lease and rent receipts for a period within two months immediately preceding consideration of residency;
  - Deed/title to the property of residence;
  - DC voter registration card; and
  - Utility bills (gas, electric, water) with paid receipts or cancelled checks from a period within the two months immediately preceding enrollment.

In the case of a youth who is a ward of the District of Columbia court system but resides outside of the District, the school must have proper documentation on file, such as a signed court order placing the student in a facility/home in Virginia or Maryland.

An alternative form of verification of residence may include a written statement from a DHS assigned social worker.

Rocketship shall not inquire relative to a parent's citizenship or immigration status when the student is registered and proof of residence is shown.

In the unlikely event that Rocketship is unable to reach full enrollment with D.C. residents, the school will recruit and enroll non-D.C. residents. In this scenario, Rocketship will comply with all requirements to ensure that these non-resident families reimburse Rocketship the amount of their child's tuition that would normally be provided by D.C. per pupil funding. (48 DCR 1694, 1701)

**ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY POLICY - 407.2**

Tardiness and absences can be detrimental to a student’s academic and social progress. Rocketship makes every effort to ensure that students are on time and present every school day. This policy addresses excused and unexcused absences, late arrivals and early departures, and the definitions and consequences of truancy. The policy applies to Rocketship schools in all regions, with the exception of the definitions and consequences of truancy, which are written in accordance with applicable state laws.

**I. Excused and Unexcused Absences and Tardies**

All students are expected to be on time and present in school every day. In DC, an absence is a full or partial school day that a student is not physically in attendance at scheduled periods of instruction. A “partial school day” is defined as at least 20 percent of the instructional hours regularly provided on a single school day.

Proper notification and/or documentation is required for a student’s absence from school to be marked as excused on the student’s attendance record. Documentation must be presented within 48 hours of the student’s absence.

Excused Absences

The charts below explain the type of notification and/or documentation required to excuse absences.

Reason for Absence	Documentation Needed	Other Notes
Illness	Written notice from parent/guardian. A physician’s note is required for three or more consecutive sick days.	
Health-related appointments/treatments	Signed note from physician’s office.[R3]	
Death in the family	Written notice from parent/guardian.	
Extra-curricular activities	Participation approved by Principal.	Approved at the discretion of Principal.

Personal/family emergencies.	Written notice from parent/guardian.	Approved at the discretion of Principal.
Head lice	Written documentation of head lice.	Return to school subject to note and inspection under Rocketship's Head Lice Policy.
Religious holiday/ceremony.	Parent/guardian call to school required.	
Exclusion due to quarantine, contagious disease, infection, infestation, or other conditional requiring separation from other students for medical or health reasons.	As directed by local health department.	
Parent/guardian serving in the armed forces	Written notice from parent/guardian. For longer absences, additional documentation may be required.	One day for deployment; one day for return; up to 10 days when service member is granted temporary rest/recuperation leave.
Lawful suspension	Documentation of suspension pursuant to Rocketship Suspension & Expulsion Policy.	
Court appearances.	Documentation from Court.	

### Unexcused Absences

Some kinds of absences may not be considered excused, even with proper documentation. These include, but are not limited to, the following: non-documented appointments, sick days with no parent notification of the school, oversleeping, car problems, cutting classes, errands, babysitting, and vacationing outside of scheduled school breaks. The Principal, in consultation with his/her supervisor when necessary, has the discretion to determine whether an absence should be excused or unexcused.

### Notifying Parents of Unexcused Absences

Rocketship will make reasonable and diligent attempts to make personal contact with a student's parent/guardian on the same day and each time a student has an unexcused absence, with daily follow-ups as necessary.

## II. **Leaving School During the Day**

Under no circumstances may a student go home without the permission of a parent or guardian. We expect that parents/guardians will make every effort to schedule appointments after school. However, if an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, the student must bring a signed note from his/her parent/guardian at the beginning of the day that includes the reason for the partial absence, the time of departure from school, and the estimated time of the student's return to school. If the student has a doctor's appointment, the student must bring a note from the doctor upon return. Whenever possible, students are expected to return to school after the appointment.

Early departures for reasons that do not directly involve the student (i.e. appointment for another family member) are generally not allowed but may be approved at the discretion of the Principal.

Students who become ill at school must check in at the office and remain at school until the child's parent/guardian arrives or gives permission for the student to leave campus in accordance with Rocketship's Student Release Policy.

## III. **Vacations**

Rocketship builds vacations into its school calendar. Family vacations should be planned around these dates. Students who take additional vacation time are not assured make-up work or credit.

## IV. **Chronic Late Arrivals, Absences, and Truancy**

### Recurrent Late Arrivals

Recurrent late arrivals may subject families to interventions. After a student accumulates five late arrivals (excused or unexcused), the family will be asked to participate in an Attendance Expectations Meeting at the school. After a student accumulates ten late arrivals (excused or unexcused), the family will be asked to attend a meeting with a School Leader and to sign an attendance contract. The Principal has the discretion to waive the intervention requirement in rare cases, depending on the circumstances. If a parent/legal guardian does not show up or refuses to attend an attendance meeting when ample time has been provided, an intervention plan may still be enacted. A copy of the contract will be sent or delivered to the student's home on file.

### Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism may also subject families to interventions, at the discretion of the Principal in consultation with other members of the School Leadership team. Students who are chronically absent may also be subject to other consequences, such as missing out on field trip privileges.

### Truancy Procedures

In DC, "truancy" is defined under DCMR tit. 5 § A2199 as any absence from school without a valid excuse. The chart below describes the procedures for responding to truancy in accordance with DC law.

<p><b>Five Unexcused Absences</b></p>	<p>Within two school days after a student has accumulated five or more unexcused absences, the student and the student’s parent/guardian will be referred to a school-based student support team, to meet within five days of the referral, to review the student’s attendance, address underlying causes, discuss any appropriate school and community resources to abate truancy, and develop an action plan. The Student Support Team will include the Principal, a classroom teacher, an Individualized Learning Specialist, and the student’s parent/guardian. Depending on the circumstances, the Student Support Team may also include a school nurse or psychologist, special education personnel, the McKinney-Vento homeless liaison, a guardian ad litem, and/or representatives of CFSA. (DCMR § A-2103.2(c)(3))</p>
<p><b>Chronically Truant (10 unexcused absences)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within two school days after a student has accumulated 10 unexcused absences, the Student Support Team will notify the Principal of a plan for immediate intervention, including delivery of community-based programs and any other assistance or services to identify and address the student’s needs on an emergency basis.</li> <li>• The school must provide written notice to the student’s parent/guardian warning of the legal consequences of being a chronic truant and insisting that the student be compelled to attend school immediately. (60 DCR 9839 (§ 101(c))</li> <li>• Within two school days after a student has accumulated 10 unexcused absences, Rocketship may refer the student’s parent/guardian to OSSE.</li> <li>• Truancy charges may be filed against the student alleging that the student is a “Person in Need of Supervision,” and parents may be convicted of violating the compulsory school attendance law and face fines and possible incarceration. (D.C. Code § 4-1321(a-1) (2012 Supp.))</li> </ul>

**“No Shows”**

If a student accumulates 20 or more consecutive unexcused absences without notifying the school of the reason for the absence, and Rocketship is unable to get in touch with the student’s parent/guardian after reasonable and good faith efforts, Rocketship will drop the student from the school’s roster and his/her space will be given to a student on the waitlist. If a student fails to show up to school during the entire first week of the instructional school year, and the family does not notify Rocketship in advance, the student may forfeit his/her seat at the school and be placed on the wait list.

## CAMPUS ACCESS AND VISITOR POLICY - 301

Rocketship strives to create campuses that are welcoming to families, volunteers, and community members while maintaining a safe and secure environment for students and staff. This policy addresses management of the campus access points; prohibitions against loitering; procedures for visitor registration; procedures to follow when arranging for a campus visit; and barring an individual from campus. "Campus" in this policy is defined as the entire indoor and outdoor premises, including the school building(s), sidewalks, parking lots, driveways, playgrounds, and courtyards.

### I. Campus Access Points

At all times ~~whenever students are in the building, during the school day,~~ the front office and all controlled access points to each Rocketship campus will be supervised by a Rocketship staff member. ~~Visitors will also be required to adhere to any other security measures (i.e. sign-in/sign-out sheets) that the school has implemented.~~

Ensuring that the front office is manned at all times is a primary responsibility of the school's Office Manager. If the Office Manager is unable to be at the front desk for some reason, he/she is responsible for finding another Rocketship staff member to be present. Individuals who are not Rocketship staff members should NOT be asked to cover the front desk.

All doors leading into school buildings should remain closed and locked at all times and only opened by authorized staff members.

### II. Loitering

Parents/guardians and other visitors, including children who are not students at the school, shall not loiter on the school premises, including in the parking lot and outside school buildings. This includes children of staff members who are students at another school. The parking lot shall be used for picking up and dropping off students, and while conducting business.

Parents/guardians and other visitors are expected to leave the campus premises upon the conclusion of any business matters or after dropping their student off at school. If a parent or guardian wishes to visit the school to view the educational program, the visitor must adhere to the following procedures, which have been developed to ensure the safety of students and staff as well as to minimize interruption of the instructional program.

### III. Visitor Registration and Passes/Badges

- All visitors (including Rocketship Public Schools regional and national staff members) are required to register with the front office immediately upon entering any school building or

grounds at any time that students are in the building. ~~during school hours.~~ Schools will be required to provide a sign-in sheet for any event held on campus.

- The Principal, or designee, may refuse to register an outsider if he or she has a reasonable basis for concluding that the visitor's presence or acts would disrupt the school, its students, its teachers, or its other employees; would result in damage to property; or would result in the distribution or use of unlawful or controlled substance.
- Visitors in disguise or costume will not be allowed entrance onto campus without prior agreement with the school administration.
- After registering in the front office, visitors who are not Rocketship employees will be issued a Visitor's Pass that they must display at all times while on campus. Rocketship regional/national staff ("Network Support") will receive personal identification badges from the Rocketship Human Resources department. Network Support staff must display their badge on their persons at all time while at a school site. If a Network Support staff member forgets his/her badge, he/ she will need to obtain a Visitor's Pass from the front office.
- All visitors must also sign out when leaving the campus.
- Any visitor may be asked to provide personal identification at any time.
- The Principal or designee may withdraw consent for an individual to be on campus, even if the visitor has a right to be on campus, whenever there is reasonable basis for concluding that the visitor presence on school grounds would interfere or is interfering with the peaceful conduct of the activities of the school, or would disrupt or is disrupting the school, its students, its teachers, or its other employees.
- The Principal or designee may request that a visitor who has failed to register, or whose registration privileges have been denied or revoked, promptly leave school grounds. When a visitor is directed to leave, the Principal or designee shall inform the visitor that if he/she reenters the school without following the posted requirements, law enforcement may be notified and he/she may be guilty of a misdemeanor.

#### **IV. Arranging for a Campus Visit**

Visits during school hours by non-Network Support or other Rocketship staff members should be arranged with the teacher and Principal (or designee) in advance. Teacher conferences should be arranged by appointment in advance and must be scheduled to take place during non-instructional time. Parent/guardians who want to visit a classroom during school hours should first obtain

approval from the classroom teacher and the Principal or designee. Classroom observations should be requested in advance and are approved at the Principal or designee's discretion.

**No electronic listening or recording device may be used by students or visitors in a classroom without the teacher's and Principal's written permission.** Failure to abide by this is a violation of this Policy and may subject a visitor to losing his/her privilege to be on campus in accordance with Section III above.

## **V. Visitor Conduct**

All visitors, regardless of their reason for being on campus, are expected to act in accordance with all Rocketship rules and policies while on the school premises. Visitors are strictly prohibited from having any physical contact with any student for any reason, including touching, grabbing, or holding a student. Visitors are also strictly prohibited from scolding, disciplining, or yelling at any student. If a visitor has a concern about a student's conduct, the visitor should promptly alert a Rocketship staff member.

## **VI. Barring Individuals From Campus**

Rocketship recognizes that situations could arise where it may become necessary for the Principal and/or the Principal's supervisor to prohibit an individual from entering or remaining on a Rocketship campus. Such situations may include an individual engaging in violence, threats of violence, harassment, or any other behavior that the Principal deems to be disruptive of the learning environment. Such actions will comply with any relevant state law requirements.

Barring is specific to each individual Rocketship campus and its related activities. Principals generally have the authority to bar a disruptive individual, but they must follow Rocketship's internal protocol and comply with all applicable state laws. Principals may not bar an individual beyond his/her particular campus, unless specific authorization is granted by the Director of Schools or the legal department. It is the responsibility of the Business Operations Manager, Office Manager, and school security to:

- Enforce photo identification verification 100% of the time to ensure no barred individuals enter the building.
- Document and maintain procedures for pick-up, drop-off and any documentation related to the barring notice at the front desk.
- Determine, at the time of the incident and in collaboration with the Principals, whether the local police must be contacted.
- Maintain an accurate and current list of individuals who have been issued a barring notice.
- Enforce the barring notice by escorting individuals out of the building and off school grounds in a peaceful, quiet, and orderly fashion.
- Not engage any barred individual off school grounds using combative language, tone, or action.

- Contact the local police department in the event that an individual becomes physically confrontational or refuses to comply with the barring notice.

## **VII. Refusal to Leave Campus**

Anyone who refuses to leave after being asked by the Principal, or who enters the premises (including parking lots, playground, sidewalks, and school building) without proper authorization in accordance with this policy, may become subject to the local criminal laws regarding trespass and unlawful entry.

Further conduct of this nature by the visitor may lead to the School's pursuit of a restraining order against such visitor which would prohibit him/her from coming onto school grounds or attending School activities for any purpose for a statutorily prescribed period.

The Principal or designee may seek the assistance of the police in dealing with or reporting any visitor in violation of this policy.

## CHILD FIND POLICY - 501

Rocketship Public Schools provides a free, appropriate public education to students with disabilities according to state and federal mandates. To be eligible for special education services, the child must be of school age, need specially designed instruction, and meet eligibility criteria for one or more of the following disabilities as set forth in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (the federal law which outlines legal responsibilities related to special education):

- Autistic-like Behaviors
- Blindness/Visual Impairment
- Deaf Blindness
- Deafness/Hearing Impairment
- Emotional Disturbance
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Physical Disability
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech and Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury

Rocketship has systems in place that assist the school in determining whether a student may have a disability. These include a specific “Child Find” form that is completed by parents upon enrollment in a Rocketship school. This also includes a Student Study Team (SST), or pre-referral, process in which school teams analyze data to identify students who are struggling academically, socially, or behaviorally and develop interventions to support the student. Rocketship has additional evidence-based interventions that are made available to students who require it; these include both differentiated instruction in the classroom and supplemental interventions in the learning lab and classroom. School teams monitor the progress of every child who receives intervention services in order to be able to identify any student who is not responding to interventions. Students who don’t respond adequately to pre-referral interventions are referred for a more intensive level of support, which may include a formal evaluation to determine if the student is eligible to receive special education services as a child with a disability.

If you have a concern regarding your child’s academic or social functioning, contact his or her classroom teacher, or a school leader at your school site.

## COMPLAINT POLICY - 110.2

Rocketship values the concerns of our parents, staff, students, and community and takes all concerns and complaints seriously. The following complaint procedure should be employed to ensure that complaints receive full consideration.

### I. Use of Complaint Process

Rocketship's complaint process should be used as follows:

1. to deal with complaints and concerns pertaining to the educational environment, employment arrangements, or interpersonal conflicts;
2. to allege violations of federal or state law, or of the school's charter;

### II. Who May File a Complaint

The procedures set forth below may be used by complainants who are employees, students, parents, or visitors. Employees and contractors should refer to the Employee Handbook to follow procedures for filing complaints.

### III. Confidentiality

All documentation and information related to an investigation conducted as a result of a complaint is considered confidential and is not to be revealed or discussed by any participant with persons not involved with the complaint or decision-making process.

### IV. Informal Complaints

Because most difficulties can be resolved by communicating a concern to someone, complainants are encouraged to discuss their concern or complaint promptly and candidly with their immediate supervisor, student's teacher, or the school principal. The complainant is not required to discuss his/her complaint with the alleged harasser or perpetrator in any manner or for any reason prior to initiating a formal complaint.

### V. Complaint Process Regarding School Procedures, Practices, and Policies

Complaints should follow the process outlined below when they wish to file a formal complaint described in Section I above. This process is available to complaints against employees, students, parents, or visitors.

1. Fill out a Complaint Form, available at the school's front office. In the Complaint Form, complainants should describe the nature of the complaint and any steps taken so far to resolve the issue. The Complaint Form should be submitted to the school Principal. Complaint Forms must be submitted within 90 days of encountering the issue that is the subject of the complaint.

3. The Principal will timely initiate an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of the complaint. This will include interviewing witnesses, obtaining any relevant documents, and allowing parties to present evidence. The investigation is considered highly confidential and is not to be revealed or discussed by any participant with persons not directly involved with the decision-making process. The investigation will be concluded within 10 school days of receiving the complaint unless “exceptional circumstances” justify a more expedited response. The amount of time granted for an exceptional circumstance will be determined on an individual case basis.

Upon receiving a complaint, the Principal shall also promptly notify the designated Rocketship Regional Director.

4. The Principal will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint, the nature of the complaint, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for recommendation. The Principal should report any incident found to be discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying based on membership in a protected class, along with the results of the investigation, to [compliance@rsed.org](mailto:compliance@rsed.org) within 24 hours of the conclusion of the investigation.
5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Principal’s response, he/she may appeal to the Principal’s direct supervisor. All appeals must be in writing and include the reason for appeal. Appeals must be submitted to the appropriate party within 10 school days of receiving the response.
6. The Principal’s supervisor will conduct an investigation upon receiving the appeal. This process may include an interview with the decision-maker to discuss the rationale. The supervisor will issue a written resolution within 15 business days of receiving the appeal.
7. If the complainant is not satisfied with the supervisor’s resolution, he/she may file a final appeal to a Review Committee to be comprised of one Board member, the Regional Director, and either the Senior Director of Schools or the Chief Talent Officer. The Review Committee will conduct an investigation upon receiving the appeal. This process may include an interview with the decision-maker to discuss the rationale. The Review Committee will issue a written resolution within 15 business days of receiving the appeal. Any decision of the Review Committee shall be final. The Review Committee shall hear appeals in its reasonable discretion.

If the original complaint pertains to the school Principal, complainants should begin by filing their complaint with the Principal’s direct supervisor as described in Steps 4-5 above. Appeals will go to the Review Committee as described in Step 6.

## VI. **Prohibition Against Retaliation**

Rocketship will not retaliate against any person who files a complaint in accordance with this policy, or any person who participates in proceedings related to this policy.

In addition, Rocketship will not tolerate any form of retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report or complaint about perceived acts of harassment, discrimination, or concern, or who cooperates in an investigation of harassment, discrimination, or a concern. Any person who is found to be engaging in any kind of retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## VII. **Modification**

Rocketship may approve modification of the foregoing procedures in a particular case if the modification is for good cause and does not violate the due process rights or the complainant or any policies of Rocketship.

## VIII. **Contact Information**

The contact information for the school principal can be found on the school's website. The school principal shall assist any complainant in obtaining the proper contact information for the principal's supervisor, should the complainant wish to pursue an appeal as described in Section V above.

Complainants also have the right to file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights by:

1. mailing the complaint to Director, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475;
2. faxing it to 202-453-6021; or
3. filing electronically at [www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html](http://www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html).

## IX. **Other Remedies**

This complaint process does not bar complainants from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state and federal law.

## CONCUSSION POLICY - 428

The following policy is written in accordance with state law and applies to any athletic program offered by any Rocketship charter school. This policy does NOT apply to athletic activities that are offered during the regular school day or as part of a physical education course.

### I. Suspected Concussion Protocol

Any athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in an athletic activity shall be immediately removed from the athletic activity for the remainder of the day, and shall not be permitted to return to the athletic activity until he or she is evaluated by a licensed health care provider. The athlete shall not be permitted to return to the athletic activity until he or she receives written clearance to return to the athletic activity from a licensed health care provider. If the licensed health care provider determines that the athlete sustained a concussion or a head injury, the athlete shall also complete a graduated return-to-play protocol of no less than seven days in duration under the supervision of a licensed health care provider.

For the purposes of this policy, “licensed health care provider” means a licensed health care provider who is trained in the management of concussions and is acting within the scope of his or her practice.

If an athlete has been removed from athletic activity due to a suspected concussion, the youth sports organization shall notify a parent or guardian of that athlete of the time and date of the injury, the symptoms observed, and any treatment provided to that athlete for the injury.

### II. Concussion Information Sheet

On a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet shall be signed and returned by the athlete and the athlete’s parent or guardian before the athlete initiates practice or competition.

### III. Concussion Training for Coaches

On a yearly basis, Rocketship shall offer concussion and head injury education, or related educational materials, or both, to each coach and administrator of any Rocketship athletic program. Each coach and administrator shall be required to successfully complete the concussion and head injury education offered pursuant to this policy at least once, either online or in person, before supervising an athlete in an activity of the youth sports organization.

## DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING POLICY - 403.2

Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological and academic impact on bullies, victims and bystanders. In response to increasing public awareness of childhood bullying and the adverse

health effects associated with it, nearly all states and the District of Columbia have enacted anti-bullying legislation requiring schools to have policies that address and prevent discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Rocketship's policy has been written in accordance with the relevant DC laws and regulations. It addresses definitions of bullying and harassment; prohibitions against bullying; requirements for reporting incidences of bullying; procedures for investigating incidents; and sanctions, remedies, and appeals.

## I. **Definitions**

In accordance with DC Code § 2-1535.03(b)(1), "bullying" is defined as any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct whether physical, electronic, or verbal that:

- May be based on a youth's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, place or residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on a youth's association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics; and
- Can reasonably be predicted to:
  - Place the youth in reasonable fear of physical harm to their person or property;
  - Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the youth's physical or mental health;
  - Substantially interfere with the youth's academic performance or attendance; or
  - Substantially interfere with the youth's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by an agency, educational institution, or grantee.

"Cyberbullying" includes the transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. "Cyberbullying" also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

## II. **Prohibitions Against Bullying**

Acts of bullying, including cyberbullying, whether by youth, volunteers, or staff, are prohibited:

- On Rocketship grounds and immediately adjacent property, at Rocketship-sponsored or related events on and off Rocketship grounds, on any vehicle used for Rocketship business, at any transit stop at which youth wait to be transported to Rocketship business, or through the use of any electronic devices owned by Rocketship, leased by Rocketship, or used for Rocketship business; and
- At a location or function unrelated to Rocketship, through the use of any electronic devices, including those not owned or leased by Rocketship, if the acts of bullying or

cyberbullying create a hostile environment at the agency for the victim or witnesses, infringe on their rights at Rocketship, or materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of Rocketship.

Retaliation against a youth, volunteer or staff member who reports bullying, provides information about an act of bullying, or witnesses an act of bullying is also prohibited. (DC Code § 2-1535.03(b)(2-3;9))

### **III. Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation**

In accordance with DC Code § 2-1535.03(1)(6), Rocketship expects all staff members and volunteers to report incidents of bullying or retaliation they witness or are made aware of. \ Staff members should immediately report all such incidents to the Principal, who will create a written report of a bullying incident.

Youth, parents, guardians, and community members are encouraged by Rocketship to report any incidents of bullying that they witness or become aware of. Reports of bullying may be made to the school Principal, or through an anonymous drop box at the front office of the campus.

Reports of bullying by youth, parents, guardians and community members may be made anonymously, but disciplinary action cannot be taken by Rocketship solely on the basis of an anonymous report. However, such a report may trigger an investigation that will provide actionable information. All oral reports received as part of this process will be transcribed into writing and included in Rocketship's bullying database, further described below.

Rocketship will ensure that there are reporting materials available in a wide variety of languages and that information about reporting is communicated to youth connected to Rocketship in an age appropriate manner. Information on how to report incidents of bullying will also be included as appropriate in Rocketship mailings to youth and their families. The school Principal is available to assist in reporting incidents of bullying.

Reports of bullying not received by the Principal will be transmitted to the Principal within one day of their receipt or creation by the staff member who reported the initial incident.

Note that, at any time, individuals may file a formal complaint regarding an incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying through Rocketship's Complaint Policy. Any such complaint will be investigated in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Complaint Policy.

### **IV. Data Collection**

All Rocketship schools in DC will collect the following pieces of information about reported incidents of bullying and provide aggregate data annually as determined by the Mayor pursuant to DC Code § 2-1535.07(a)).

- Name(s) of the victim, bully, and any witnesses
  - Reliable contact information for the victim, bully and any witnesses
- Relevant attributes about the victim, bully and any witnesses including:
  - Any prior incidents involving either the victim or bully
  - Connection of the victim, bully, and any witnesses to the incident (i.e. are they students, staff, volunteers, etc.)
- The nature of the bullying incident
  - Where the incident took place
  - What time the incident took place
  - What type(s) of bullying it was (physical, verbal, cyber, relational, etc.?)
  - What factors drove the incident of bullying (social status, personal appearance, race, sexual orientation, etc.)
  - What adult supervision was in place
  - Context of the incident

Rocketship will only attempt to collect this information insofar as it does not jeopardize the safety of the victim and witness(es) and allows non-staff reports of bullying to be made anonymously.

#### **V. Investigating Incidents of Bullying**

In accordance with DC Code § 2-1535.03(1)(7), prior to the investigation of an incident, the school Principal will take steps to ensure the safety of the alleged victim referenced in a reported bullying incident. These steps will be designed to restore a sense of safety to the victim and to protect them from further incidents if necessary. Examples of such steps taken include designating a staff member to serve as that alleged victim's "safe" person, altering the alleged bully/bullies' seating or schedule to reduce access to the alleged victim or creating a safety plan in consultation with the alleged victim. Once an investigation is concluded, further steps will be taken as needed to assure the continued safety of the victim from additional incidents of bullying or retaliation.

Once a report of bullying has been received by the school, the following groups will be notified as needed by the Principal so long as, in the absence of legal imperative, the parent or guardian's written consent is obtained prior to notification.

- Parents and guardians: Rocketship will notify the parents or guardians of victims, bullies, and if appropriate, witnesses to an incident of bullying behavior about the nature of the incident and the procedures and steps in place for responding to it. The school Principal will determine if parents or guardians should be informed prior to or after the investigation of an incident.

- Law enforcement agencies: If Rocketship determines that the reported incident may involve criminal activity or the basis for criminal charges, information about the incident must be conveyed to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. As part of making this determination, the Principal may wish to consult with either a law enforcement officer or legal counsel. Law enforcement shall only be contacted if all other available remedies have been exhausted.

Rocketship will notify these groups of incidents of bullying only to the extent allowed by law. Notification will be undertaken solely to ensure that services are provided to victims and bullies and to protect victims from further or sustained victimization. Rocketship will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of those who report bullying incidents.

The school Principal is responsible for investigating reports of bullying. An investigation of an incident will be initiated no more than one day after the Principal receives a report of bullying and will conclude no later than 30 days after the receipt of such a report. As part of the investigation, the Principal will interview any involved or relevant parties including alleged victims, bullies, witnesses, staff, parents or guardians.

The school Principal will provide confidentiality as far as possible to relevant parties as part of the investigation, and inform all relevant parties that retaliation for reporting acts of bullying is prohibited. Written records of the investigation process should be maintained and may be included in the bullying database to generate a more accurate picture of bullying behaviors at Rocketship. Where necessary, provisions will be made to include the advice of legal counsel.

In investigating an incident of bullying, the Principal will seek to ensure that the reported incident is one of victimization, a sign of bullying, rather than of conflict. Thus when investigating a reported incident the Principal will attempt to determine, through interviewing the victim, what mechanisms the victim had and has access to for halting the incident that occurred, and preventing future such instances. If the victim reports a few or no mechanisms for ending the incident or constructively dealing with future instances, that information will serve as compelling, though not conclusive evidence that the reported incident was an incident of bullying.

The Principal is charged with making determinations as to whether a reported incident constitutes a case of bullying. These determinations will be made in consideration of the totality of the facts and the circumstances surrounding the incident. If the Principal determines that an incident of bullying has occurred, they should take response steps to prevent the recurrence of an incident and restore the safety of a victim.

The Principal should report any incident found to be discrimination or harassment based on membership in a protected class, along with the results of the investigation, to [compliance@rsed.org](mailto:compliance@rsed.org) within 24 hours of the conclusion of the investigation.

If the Principal determines that additional support is needed to conduct a thorough and equitable investigation, he/she will contact Rocketship's Legal team and/or the citywide prevention coordinator.

## **VI. Sanctions**

Rocketship Public Schools recognizes that for sanctions to be an effective component of a bullying prevention plan, they must be applied consistently, fairly, and equitably. To this end, Rocketship Public Schools shall ensure that staff follow these guidelines as closely as possible, while allowing for flexibility to adapt sanctions to individual contexts. (DC Code § 2-1535.03(b)(5)). Furthermore, to ensure equitability in applying sanctions, measures will be applied on a graduated basis determined by the nature of the offense, the disciplinary history of the youth involved, and the age and developmental status of the youth involved. Responses to incidents of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- Reprimand
- Deprivation of Rocketship privileges
- Bans on participating in optional Rocketship activities
- Deprivation of Rocketship services
- Suspension or expulsion, in accordance with Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy

Sanctions will be applied within one day of the determination that an incident of bullying has occurred, unless an appeal of the incident by the bully has been received in that time as described in the Appeals section of this policy. To ensure that single incidents of bullying do not become recurring problems, Rocketship will always refer victims and bullies involved in an incident to services in addition to imposing sanctions on bullies.

Rocketship does not endorse the use of punitive strategies associated with "zero-tolerance" policies when applying sanctions to an incident of bullying. Rocketship shall communicate to youth in contact with Rocketship, the consequences that youth can expect for participating in bullying behavior.

## **VII. Appeals**

Pursuant to DC Code § 2-1535.03(b)(8); § 2-1535.04, parties dissatisfied by the outcome of a bullying investigation may appeal the determination to Rocketship's Vice President of Schools. This appeal should be submitted no later than 30 days after the initial determination. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Vice President of Schools must conduct a secondary investigation within 30 days of the receipt of an appeal. This 30 days may be extended up to an additional 15 days if the Vice President of Schools sets forth in writing the reasons why more time is needed to conduct an

investigation. Additionally, upon the receipt of an appeal, the Vice President of Schools must inform the party making the submission of their ability to seek additional redress under the DC Human Rights Act.

#### **VIII. Publication and Contact Information**

In accordance with DC Code § 2-1535.03(f), this policy will be made available on Rocketship's website. The policy, and age appropriate versions thereof, will be distributed to youth and parents of youth in contact with Rocketship annually, and Rocketship will emphasize that the policy applies to participation in functions sponsored by Rocketship.

The Principal of each Rocketship campus is responsible for coordinating Rocketship's bullying prevention efforts. All questions, comments and concerns about the bullying policy and Rocketship prevention efforts should be able to be directed to the campus Principal.

## EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH POLICY - 416.2

In accordance with Section 1112(c)(5)(B) of ESEA (20 U.S.C. §6312(c)(5)(B)), all LEAs, in collaboration with the District of Columbia Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), must ensure the implementation of the foster care provisions under ESEA.

### Designated Point of Contact (POC)

The designated Point of Contact (POC) serves as a liaison with CFSA. Rocketship's current designated POC is: Leydi Cottrill, [lcottrill@rsed.org](mailto:lcottrill@rsed.org).

### I. Educational/School Stability Protections

Taking into account the child's best interest, a child in foster care should remain in the same school that he or she attended before placement (the "school of origin"). CFSA is tasked with making the best interest determination and will seek input from the school serving as the child's school of origin.

When a determination is made that it is NOT in the child's best interest to remain in the school of origin, the child must immediately be enrolled in the new school, regardless of whether the child's records or other documentation typically needed for school enrollment can be produced. The enrolling school must immediately contact the previous school to obtain academic and other records.

### II. Transportation

Rocketship and the CFSA shall complete a student-level transportation agreement for every foster child who requires school stability transportation services in order to get to and from their school of origin. The transportation agreement must identify all the resources, including no-cost and low-cost options such as public transportation; foster parent or other family members who may be willing and able to transport the student; special education services if the student is eligible; and any other public or private transportation resources either agency has at their disposal to provide transportation to the student. Upon identifying these resources, Rocketship and the CFSA POCs must weigh the options identified to determine which mode of transportation is most immediately available, cost-effective, and appropriate to meet the child's needs given their developmental age and individual capacity.

If additional costs are incurred in providing transportation, Rocketship shall provide such transportation if the local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse Rocketship for such costs; Rocketship agrees to pay for the cost; or Rocketship and the local child welfare agency agree to share the cost. In D.C., Local Education Agencies can use Title I funding to support additional costs of school stability transportation.

### **III. Effect of Absences on Grades**

The grades of a student in foster care shall not be lowered for any absence from school that is due to either of the following circumstances:

- A decision by a court or placement agency to change the student's placement, in which case the student's grades shall be calculated as of the date he/she left school.
- A verified court appearance or related court-ordered activity.

### **IV. Definitions**

“Children awaiting foster placement” means children who have been removed from their homes by CFSA and who are in emergency or interim placement but for whom a decision to secure formal foster care placement has not been made. Usually this is a very temporary (i.e. 24-48 hour) circumstance.

“Foster care” means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from parents or guardians and for whom CFSA has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placement in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes.

“School of origin” means the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care. If a child’s foster placement changes, the school of origin will be the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of the placement change.

## EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH (McKINNEY-VENTO) POLICY - 417

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (“the McKinney-Vento Act”) is a federal law that ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) This policy is written in compliance with the requirements under the McKinney-Vento Act. It addresses relevant definitions; Rocketship’s Designated Homeless Liaison; general assurances regarding the education of homeless children and youth; procedures for identification and reporting; school selection; enrollment and records; transportation rights; and the enrollment dispute resolution process.

### I. Definitions

“Homeless children and youth” means children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes children and youth who are:

- Living in a primary nighttime residence that is a private or public place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, such as cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings or substandard housing (for example, condemned buildings or garages), bus or train stations, or other similar settings. In determining whether a housing arrangement may be deemed “substandard, the school may consider whether the setting lacks one of the fundamental utilities such as water, electricity, or heat; is infested with vermin or mold; lacks a basic functional part such as a working kitchen or toilet; presents unreasonable dangers to adults, children, or persons with disabilities. or is otherwise defined as “substandard” under local housing codes.
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks (does not include trailers or mobile homes in a mobile home park), or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Abandoned in hospitals.
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.
- Unaccompanied youth includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
- A child or unaccompanied youth shall be considered homeless for as long as he/she is in a living situation described above.

### II. Designated Homeless Liaisons

The Rocketship Public Schools Homeless Liaison serves Rocketship students in the designated region(s) below.

Leydi Contrill  
350 Twin Dolphin Drive, Suite 109  
Redwood City, CA 94065  
[lcontrill@rsed.org](mailto:lcontrill@rsed.org)  
1-877-806-0920 ext. 300

The Homeless Liaison is required to:

- Ensure that homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through outreach and coordination with other entities and agencies.
- Ensure that homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in, Rocketship schools.
- Ensure that homeless families, children, and youth have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible.
- Ensure that homeless families, children, and youth receive referrals to health, dental, mental health, and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.
- Ensure that parents and guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
- Ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated where children and youth receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act.
- Ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the dispute resolution provisions.
- Ensure that the parent/guardian of a homeless child or youth, or any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services and is assisted in accessing transportation services, if available and feasible.
- Ensure that school personnel receive professional development and other support.
- Assist unaccompanied youth in placement/enrollment decisions.
- Ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment or placement.
- Assist homeless children and youth who do not have immunizations, or immunization or medical records, to obtain necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records
- Collaborate and coordinate with state coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youth.

### **III. General Assurances**

Rocketship provides the following general assurances:

- Homeless children and youth shall not be segregated into a separate school or program based on their status as homeless and shall not be stigmatized in any way.
- Homeless children and youth shall be provided services comparable to those received by other students in the school, including transportation services, and education programs for which students meet eligibility criteria, such as services provided under Title 1 or similar state and local programs; programs for students with disabilities; programs for students with limited English proficiency; vocational or technical programs; gifted and talented programs; and school nutrition programs.
- Homeless children and youth will have access to district administrative level reservation of funds (set-asides) for serving homeless students.
- Rocketship shall provide homeless students with access to education and other services necessary for these students to meet the same challenging academic standards as other students.
- Rocketship shall provide and post notices of the educational rights of homeless children and youth.

### **IV. Identification and Reporting**

Rocketship will include the identification of homeless students and their unique educational needs in its targeted work to raise achievement for all students. Homeless children and youth will be identified through:

- The application process for enrollment (self-identification)
- School personnel recommendations
- Coordinated activities with other entities and agencies

Rocketship will comply with all federal, state, county, and other data collections and reporting requirements regarding homeless children and youth. Materials will be provided for students and parents in a language easily understood by families and students. If students or families are unable to read, additional support should be provided to explain student rights.

### **V. School Selection**

Homeless students have a right to select from the following schools:

- The school he/she attended when permanently housed (School of Origin)
- The school in which he/she was last enrolled (School of Origin)
- The school in the attendance area in which the student currently resides (School of Residency)

A homeless child or youth's right to attend their school of origin extends for the duration of homelessness. If a child or youth becomes permanently housed during the academic year, he/she is entitled to stay in the school of origin for the remainder of the academic year.

## **VI. Enrollment and Records**

Homeless students may be identified at the time of enrollment (through self-reports). As all Rocketship schools are independent charter schools, and therefore schools of choice rather than assigned district schools, placement decisions are based solely on parent request through the application process. In order to provide equal access to its schools, the Rocketship annual student recruitment plan shall include efforts to reach homeless families, children, and youth via free public events, community centers, and local homeless service providers.

Homeless youth will not be discriminated against in the application process. Homeless children and youth will be allowed to apply for enrollment in accordance with current Rocketship enrollment policies even if the parent/guardian is unable to provide the school with the records normally required for enrollment such as previous academic records, birth certificate, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation. The Rocketship designee shall immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain the relevant records. If the student needs to obtain immunizations or does not possess immunization or other medical records, the designee shall refer the parent/guardian to the homeless liaison. The liaison shall assist the parent/guardian in obtaining the necessary immunizations or records for the student.

In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the Designated Homeless Liaison shall assist in the enrollment process. Unaccompanied youth shall be immediately enrolled if space is available even if unable to provide the school with the records normally required for enrollment (as above), and despite lack of parent or legal guardian's supervision or permissions, or "power of attorney" by supervising adult.

In accordance with current Rocketship enrollment policies and state regulations regarding charter schools, if the grade level for which a homeless child or youth has applied has more applicants than spaces available, a random public lottery will take place in order to determine enrollment for the following school year. An "in-district" or "in-county" (depending on the type of school the student has applied to) priority will apply during the lottery to homeless youth who self-identify as homeless during the application process so as to not discriminate against homeless children or youth due to lack of permanent housing. If a homeless child or youth applies for admission after the annual random public lottery, he or she will be placed on the wait list in the order in which the application was received, even if the application is incomplete at the time of submission.

Any confidential record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or medical records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or

programs, of each homeless child or youth will be maintained so that the records are available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school or school district.

Information about a student's living situation that is maintained by Rocketship is part of the student's record, subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In general, FERPA prohibits a school from disclosing personally identifiable information ("PII) from students' educational records without parental consent. One exception to this general consent rule is for information that the school has designated as "directory information," which is information that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. However, information regarding a student's living situation is not considered directory information and must be provided the same protections as other non-directory PII.

## **VII. Transportation**

Per the McKinney-Vento Act, Rocketship must provide services to homeless children and youth that are comparable to those received by other students in the school selected, including transportation. In addition, schools must provide transportation for homeless students to and from their school of origin, if feasible.

Rocketship, where feasible, at the request of the parent/guardian and/or in the best interest of the homeless child or youth, shall provide transportation to students experiencing homelessness to ensure the students are able to stay at the Rocketship school of their choice for the duration of their homelessness. Rocketship may work with the youth's district of residence or other agencies to provide transportation services.

## **VIII. Enrollment Dispute Resolution Process**

As required by 42 USC § 11432(g)(1)(C), schools must develop and implement written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law with regards to enrollment and school placement as covered by the McKinney-Vento Act.. The State Coordinator for the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program will provide technical assistance to interested parties as requested and as necessary.

If a dispute arises over enrollment or school placement:

1. the child or youth must be immediately enrolled in the school requested by the individual or organization submitting the complaint;
2. the parent/guardian of the affected student(s) must be provided a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision;
3. the child, youth, parent, or guardian must be referred to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaison for the corporation, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute; and

4. in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the Homeless Education Liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute.

#### Rocketship Dispute Resolution Process

Disputes may arise between a Rocketship school and a homeless student or homeless parent/guardian regarding, among other things, enrollment or transportation. At such a time, the Homeless Education Liaison immediately becomes involved, and Rocketship must follow a procedure that includes these steps:

1. A student must be allowed to attend or enroll in the school that is challenging the student's right to attend until a final decision is made regarding the dispute. The challenging school must provide transportation and other school services as needed to the student until the dispute is resolved.
2. The dispute resolution process begins at the time a school challenges the right of either a parent or guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, to enroll a child or youth in school, to continue enrollment in school, or to receive services such as transportation assistance.
3. When Rocketship challenges the enrollment or services of the child or unaccompanied youth, Rocketship must:
  - Provide notice of the challenge to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, through the Homeless Education, on the day of the challenge.
  - Provide notice of the right to appeal the challenge to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth. This notice must include a form to be completed by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth should he or she decide to appeal Rocketship's decision.
4. The Homeless Education Liaison will provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with written notice in clear, easy-to-understand language detailing the dispute resolution process.
5. Rocketship will have three working days to review its initial decision and make a final decision as to the position taken ( i.e. whether it will continue to challenge the right of the student to be enrolled). The decision must state all factual information upon which it is based and the legal basis in support thereof.

## FAMILY CUSTODY POLICY - 408

Rocketship will make every effort to ensure compliance, on the part of school staff as well as parents/guardians, with legal custody arrangements. This policy addresses custody records; student release to custodial parents; the rights of non-custodial parents; and Rocketship's role in custody disputes.

### I. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, Rocketship will adhere to the following definitions:

“Court Order”: An order issued by a court following a judicial proceeding to determine the custody rights of the parties. A court order will typically state the legal and/or physical custodial rights that the court has granted to each parent.

“Joint Custody”: Both parents have legal and physical custodial rights.

“Legal Custody”: The parent with Legal Custody has the right to make decisions about a child's upbringing. These types of decisions typically involve the child's education, religion, and medical care.

“Noncustodial Parent”: The Noncustodial Parent does not have legal or physical custody of a child.

“Physical Custody”: The right to have physical control of where the child lives and who may care for the child.

### II. Custody Records

Rocketship seeks to maintain accurate and updated custody records for all students. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of a student to provide the Rocketship Office Manager with accurate and updated court orders involving the custody rights of their children. Updated Court Orders should be provided to the Office Manager as soon as possible. All documentation provided to the school will be kept confidential and will only be accessed by members of the staff when necessary.

In the absence of a Court Order, Rocketship will assume that separated or divorced parents of a child have Joint Custody.

In Tennessee, pursuant to T.C.A. 36-2-303, the mother of a child born out of wedlock has default custody (both legal and physical) when the parents remain unmarried, absent a Court Order signed by a judge.

Without a Court Order or proof of adoption that affirmatively grants custodial rights, step-parents will not be considered to have Physical or Legal Custody of a child. Absent similar evidence, Rocketship will also assume that siblings, aunts/uncles, grandparents, cousins and others do not have Legal or Physical Custody of a child.

### **III. Student Release**

Any parent or guardian who has Physical Custody of a child, or retains specific custody rights granted via a Court Order that extends to after-school hours, may to pick the student up from school as well as authorize Rocketship to release the student to any other person; provided that, such arrangements are consistent with the terms of the Court Order. At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians will be asked to complete an Authorization to Release form.

Please see Rocketship's Student Release Policy for more information. At any time, either parent/guardian that has Physical Custody has the ability to add individuals to the Authorization to Release form.

Rocketship does not have the right to limit the rights of a parent of a Rocketship student without a Court Order. If one parent does not wish to allow the other parent/guardian the right to remove the child from school or visit the child in school, Rocketship must be provided with a Court Order limiting the other parent's rights.

### **IV. Rights of Non-Custodial Parents**

#### Inspection of Records

All parents, regardless of custodial rights, have the right to inspect, though not make changes to, copies of their child's educational records, unless a Court Order specifically limits the parent's rights in this regard. (Any inspection of records must be in accordance with Rocketship's FERPA regional Student Records policies.)

#### School Visitation

Parents without Physical Custody may not remove their children from class or visit them in school without the consent of the parent with the custodial rights or a Court Order.

### **V. Rocketship's Role in Custody Disputes**

It is the policy of Rocketship schools to remain impartial during custody disputes between family members of a Rocketship student. For this reason, Rocketship teachers, administrators, and school staff will refrain from taking any action which may be considered adverse to one parent or family member. These actions include, but are not limited to, writing letters of support for any adversarial proceeding and serving any person with court documents.

Furthermore, Rocketship shall not be responsible for, nor participate in, the monitoring or enforcement of any parental obligations or duties under a court order (i.e. sending a message to remind a parent of his/her designated pick-up days).

The previous paragraph notwithstanding, Rocketship will comply with requirements imposed by the State and local jurisdictions thereof. Rocketship will enforce any certified Court Orders presented to the school. When presented with a court subpoena or request for information by a public agency, Rocketship teachers, administrators and staff will comply and respond with information of which they have personal knowledge.

Rocketship will not deny a parent of any of their parental rights without being provided a Court Order indicating the State's desire to limit that parent's rights.

## FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) POLICY - 420

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 5 days after the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal or designee a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal or designee, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

2. The right to provide written consent before the School discloses personally identifiable information (“PII”) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to School officials with legitimate educational interests. A School official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the School board. A School official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the School who performs an institutional service of function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another School official in performing his or her tasks. A School official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

3. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from student's education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to School officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the School to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A School may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

1. To other School officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the School has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1)).
2. To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2)).
3. To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35).

4. In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4)).
5. To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7)).
6. To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8)).
7. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9)).
8. To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10)).
9. Information the School has designated as “directory information” under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11)).

“Directory Information” is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. In its discretion, the School may disclose directory information without a parent’s prior written consent. The School has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student’s name
- Student’s address
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees, honors, and awards received

If you do not want the School to disclose directory information without your prior written consent, you must notify the School in writing at the time of enrollment or re-enrollment.

\*\*Note: FERPA is a federal law that applies to all states. Many states have also enacted their own statutes related to the confidentiality, maintenance, release, and transfer of student records, which are designed to supplement FERPA requirements and apply to students enrolled in charter schools.

## FIELD TRIP POLICY - 302

Field trips are off-campus excursions designed by Rocketship staff to supplement the curriculum and to provide enrichment experiences for students. We value these enrichment opportunities and strive to ensure that these experiences are safe, organized, and efficient from beginning to end. This policy covers advance approval required to take students on field trips; permission slip requirements; chaperones; transportation; dismissal from field trips; and student behavioral expectations and consequences.

### **I. Advance Approval**

Teachers who wish to arrange a field trip must submit a written request to the Principal. This request must include the date/time of the proposed field trip, the plans for transportation to and from the field trip site, the plans for supervision (i.e. number of additional staff members and/or chaperones), and the rationale. Daytime field trips must be approved in writing at least three weeks in advance by the school Principal or Assistant Principal. Overnight or out of state field trips must be approved by the principal's manager in writing at least two months in advance.

Whenever a proposal for a field trip is approved, it is the responsibility of the Principal or Assistant Principal to oversee arrangements for that field trip. The Principal or Assistant Principal overseeing the field trip must also keep the written request and approval on file.

### **II. Permission Slips**

A student must submit a field trip slip signed by his/her parent or guardian to participate in a field trip. Field trip slips must be created using the official Rocketship Public Schools Field Trip templates.

The designated Principal or Assistant Principal overseeing the field trip will review field trip slips in advance to confirm that they follow the appropriate official template and are signed by the child's parent/guardian. Verbal permission for field trip participation is not acceptable.

The designated Assistant Principal or Principal will also review the roster for the field trip with appropriate school personnel to identify any students attending the trip who regularly take medication or require access to medication while on the field trip. The School Leader will ensure that a staff member attending the field trip brings along the student medication and is properly trained on how to assist in administering the medication and record the administration of that medication in accordance with Rocketship's Medication Administration policy.

Only Rocketship students who have submitted a valid permission slip will be allowed to attend the field trip. Teachers must bring along all permission slips during the trip, and keep the permission slips on file after the conclusion of the field trip.

### **III. Chaperones**

Chaperones must be cleared per the requirements of Rocketship's Volunteer Clearance Policy. The Principal or Assistant Principal overseeing the field trip must ensure that the school follows internal protocol to check the clearance status of all chaperones. Chaperones may not bring along other children (i.e. siblings of students attending the field trip) without advance permission from the supervising Principal or Assistant Principal.

### **IV. Transportation**

All Rocketship staff members (teachers and/or School Leaders) and parent chaperones are expected to be present with students on all transportation provided for a field trip unless they receive prior written approval from the school Principal to make an alternative transportation arrangement. If transportation is required for a field trip, Rocketship will provide this transportation. Should staff members and/or parents drive a vehicle in conjunction with a field trip, they will do so in accordance with Rocketship's Staff and Parent Driver Policy.

If the staff member organizing the field trip wishes to have the students walk or take public transportation to the field trip site, details of this arrangement must be included in the advance request submitted to the Principal or Assistant Principal. Principals and Assistant Principals have the discretion to approve the use of public transportation or travel on foot. Factors to consider for approval include the distance/time that students will be traveling, the age of the students, the season/weather during the travel, and the rationale for using this method of travel.

### **V. Dismissal from Field Trips**

After a field trip, students will be returned to the school site and will be dismissed according to regular dismissal procedures. All chaperones and students are expected to return to school and participate in dismissal. In exceptional cases, students may be dismissed from a field trip location with a parent/guardian chaperone, but this is subject to the discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal supervising the field trip. If a student needs to be picked up early from a field trip due to illness or another exceptional circumstance, he or she may be dismissed from the field trip site provided that the staff supervisors get in contact with the students' parent/guardian and the parent/guardian picks the student up or designates an authorized individual over the age of 18 to do so. Any authorized individual must provide proper identification prior to leaving with the student. The staff members supervising the field trip should contact the school's Office Manager to ensure that the child is appropriately signed out for the day.

### **VI. Student Behavior**

Students may be excluded from a field trip as a disciplinary measure. Students are expected to maintain high standards of behavior in accordance with Rocketship's Student Discipline Policy during a field trip. Students may be excluded from field trip activities or future field trips due to poor behavior or excessive absences/truancy.

**VII. Overnights on Campus**

If students wish to spend the night on campus, they must get advance approval and complete the Overnight Waiver.

## HEAD LICE POLICY - 410

Head lice are parasitic insects that are found on the head, eyebrows, and eyelashes of affected people. Head lice are spread through direct contact with the hair ~~of an infested person~~ and are often spread in elementary schools. This policy was created to minimize the potential for head lice outbreaks at Rocketship schools. The policy addresses examination protocols; notices to families; and the process for a student who has been infested to return to school.

### **I. Examination**

If student is suspected of having head lice (i.e. constant itching or tickling feeling in the hair), the school nurse or other trained school employee may examine the hair of the suspected student for live head lice.. In certain circumstances, the employee may also examine other members of that student's household.

### **II. Sending a Student Home**

If a student is positive for live head lice, the student is to be sent home at the end of the school day with information to the parents regarding treatment and control measures. Any absences related to head lice will be documented and counted as an excused absence in accordance with Rocketship's Attendance and Truancy Policy.

### **III. Exposure Notice**

If there are two or more students affected in any class, Rocketship will send home an exposure notice with information about head lice to all parents/guardians in that class. Rocketship will maintain the privacy of students identified as having head lice and excluded from attendance.

### **IV. Returning to School**

Rocketship will provide parents/guardians of affected students with instructions on how to conduct post-treatment examinations on their children. Parents/guardians may send their child back to school when they believe that the child's hair is no longer infested with head lice. Parents should not withhold the child from school for any days longer than necessary; typically, no more than three days. Any absences longer than three days require a doctor's note. If the family is unable to obtain a doctor's note, the family should arrange to have a meeting with the school to discuss the length of absence. The school has the discretion to excuse additional days if school staff determine this is necessary. The school nurse or other trained staff members may reexamine the student's hair upon return. If the student shows no trace of live head lice, the student may return to school.

## INTERNET SAFETY POLICY - 411

Rocketship strives to leverage advanced education technology to support personalized instruction and facilitate comprehensive data analysis. Rocketship adheres to the federal requirements and guidelines set forth in the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) (47 U.S.C. § 254(h)). This policy is written in accordance with CIPA and outlines relevant definitions; the educational purpose of Rocketship’s Internet system; technology protection measures; inappropriate network usage; supervising and monitoring; training; disciplinary actions; and liability for misuse.

### I. Definitions

“Minor” means any individual under 17 years of age.

“Technology protection measure” means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are

- Obscene, as that term is defined in 18 U.S.C. § 1460;
- Child Pornography, as that term is defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256; or
- Harmful to minors, as that term is defined below.

“Harmful to minors” means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that

- Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for
- minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

“Sexual act” and “sexual contact” have the meanings defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2246.

### II. Educational Purpose

Rocketship’s Internet system is limited to educational purposes. Acceptable activities include classroom activities and high-quality research. Rocketship computers are not to be used for entertainment purposes unless specifically authorized by a staff member in accordance with this policy.

### III. Technology Protection Measures

To the extent practicable, technology protection measures shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information. Specifically, as

required by CIPA, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

#### **IV. Inappropriate Network Usage**

In accordance with CIPA, the following uses of Rocketship Internet system are considered unacceptable:

- Unauthorized access, including “hacking.” This includes logging in through another person’s account and accessing another person’s files; making deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system; destroying data by spreading computer viruses; and downloading software without the explicit consent of a staff member. Rocketship students shall immediately notify a teacher if they have identified a possible security problem.
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors. This includes posting a student’s personal contact information (i.e. name, email address, home address, telephone number, school address) through email or through websites that solicit personal information, social networking websites, and Internet chat rooms.
- Illegal activities. This includes using the Internet to engage in any illegal act, including, but not limited to, arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, or threatening the safety of another person.
- Inappropriate online behavior. This includes using obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language while online; engaging in personal attacks or cyberbullying, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks; and knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization on any websites.
- Plagiarism.
- Accessing inappropriate material. This includes material that is designated for adults only or is profane or obscene (i.e. pornography), material that advocates illegal or dangerous acts, or material that advocates violence or discrimination.

#### **V. Supervising and Monitoring**

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Rocketship Schools team to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, CIPA,

the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of Rocketship's Vice President of Schools or his/her designated representatives.

## **VI. Training**

The Rocketship Regional Business Director or designated representatives will provide age-appropriate training for students who use Rocketship Internet facilities. The training provided will be designed to promote Rocketship's commitment to:

- The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in this policy.
- Student safety with regard to Safety on the Internet; appropriate behavior while online, on social networking Web sites, and in chat rooms; and cyberbullying awareness and response.
- Compliance with the E-Rate requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA").

Following receipt of this training, the student will acknowledge that he/she received the training, understood it, and agrees to follow the provisions of Rocketship's acceptable use policies.

## **VII. Disciplinary Actions**

Record maintenance and network monitoring may lead to the discovery that a student has violated this Policy and/or the laws. If there is reasonable suspicion, Rocketship will conduct a search of the student's Internet activities. A student's parent/guardian may request to see such activities.

Students who are found to have violated this policy or any relevant laws will be disciplined in accordance with Rocketship's Discipline Policy.

Rocketship will cooperate fully with local or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the school network.

## **VIII. Liability**

Rocketship Public Schools is not responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of its Internet system. A student's parent/guardian can be held financially responsible for any harm to Rocketship's Internet system arising from a student's intentional misuse.

## **LATE PICK-UP POLICY - 304**

Rocketship's goal is to dismiss our students safely, efficiently, and responsibly. We understand that occasional family emergencies may cause a child to be picked up late from school, but consistently failing to pick up students on time is costly to the school, burdensome to the school staff, and disruptive to our students' daily routines. This policy addresses procedures and consequences when a child is picked up late, including Late Pick-Up Incident Reports, extremely late pick-ups, and tiered consequences for recurring late pick-ups.

### **I. Notifying the School**

Parents/guardians are expected to make arrangements for their children to be picked up during their designated dismissal time every day, before the end of dismissal. That said, we do understand that there may be unpredictable situations that could cause a parent/guardian to pick up a student late on a given day (i.e. car problems, traffic, issue at work). In these cases, we ask that a child's parent/guardian contact the school by phone to let the staff know that their child will be picked up late that day. The parent/guardian will still be required to complete a Late Pick-Up Incident Report when they come to pick up their child, per the section below.

### **II. Late Pick-up**

School staff will attempt to contact a child's parent/guardian if a child is left on campus after dismissal ends and the parent has not notified the school pursuant to the above section. Staff may also contact individuals listed on the child's emergency contact card.

A parent/guardian (or otherwise authorized individual), in accordance with Rocketship's Student Release Policy who comes to pick up a child after the end of dismissal will need to complete a Late Pick-Up Incident Report and submit it to the staff member supervising their child before leaving campus. These reports will be kept on file at the school as a record of why the child was picked up late on that day.

### **III. Extremely Late Pick-up**

If a student is still on campus more than an hour after the end of dismissal and staff members have not been in contact with the student's parent/guardian, Rocketship staff must assume that the family has suffered an emergency and is unable to pick up the student. The Principal or another designated member of the School Leadership Team may contact the local authorities (i.e. police or CPS) and, if they have not already done so, call the individuals listed on the child's emergency contact card. The Principal or designee may release the child to an authorized individual or the police department.

#### IV. Recurring Late Pick-up

Rocketship will follow a tiered series of interventions/consequences for families who persistently pick up their child/ren late, as described below:

<b>Late Pick-Up</b> (each occurrence)	Must complete a Late Pick-Up Incident Report before leaving campus, as described above.
<b>Recurring Late Pick-Up</b> (three occurrences)	Parent/guardian must attend a meeting with a School Leader to review Late Pick-Up Incident Reports and create a verbal agreement and plan to prevent late pick-ups in the future. The School Leader may refer the family to local counseling or truancy resources.
<b>Habitual Late Pick-Up</b> (six occurrences)	A letter will be sent home to the student's parent/guardian specifying the date, time, and location of a meeting with a school leader. The parent/guardian must attend meeting with a School Leader and sign an agreement to pick up their child on time.
<b>Chronic Late Pick-Up</b> (more than six occurrences)	Parent/guardian may become subject to an intervention workshop with school staff, , comprised of including at least the Principal, Business Operations Manager, and Office Manager. In certain circumstances, Rocketship may also contact Child Protective Services, at the discretion of the Principal.

## MEAL POLICY

### Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals

Rocketship participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers meals to families who qualify for free or reduced rates. All families are encouraged to submit an application for free and reduced meals by the first week of school. Families can at any time submit a new application if there is a change in the household income or family household number. Applications can be received in the front office of your school or online at [www.mymealtime.com](http://www.mymealtime.com) with a student's identification number.

### **Meal Charge Policy**

Families are expected to provide money for student meals on a regular and consistent basis, unless they qualify for free meals.

During the first week of school, students who have not yet completed their applications for free and reduced price meals will be allowed to receive breakfast and lunch so as to not disrupt meal service and allow time to submit a meal application.

Students with no funds to purchase lunch will be allowed to charge up to \$25. Parent will be notified via a phone call and letter home of the negative balance, and will be expected to immediately submit a payment so that their child may continue to eat at school. At any time, parents may also submit an application for free and reduced meals if the household is experiencing hardship.

### **Student Pricing**

- Students who do not qualify for free or reduced price meals must pay \$3.00 for lunch.
- Students who qualify for reduced meals must pay \$.40 for lunch.
- Breakfast is free for all students.

### **Payment Options**

- Parents may pay cash or use credit cards for meals daily at the front office.
- Parents may pay using credit cards on Mealtimes Online at [www.mymealtime.com](http://www.mymealtime.com)
- Parents will be notified of a low balance at the register on a daily basis.

### **Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or

have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027), found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

## MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY - 413.2

Rocketship is committed to supporting the health of its students and meeting the needs of students with medical conditions, in compliance with DC laws. This policy addresses the requirements for students who need to take medication during the school day, including required documentation and training for staff members. The policy also addresses emergency medical situations and the use of epinephrine auto-injectors and asthma inhalers on campus.

### I. Student Possession and Self-Administration of Medication

A student may possess and self-administer medication at Rocketship, at Rocketship-sponsored activities, and while on Rocketship-sponsored transportation, in order to treat asthma, anaphylaxis, or other illness; provided that the student's parent/guardian has submitted a Medication Action Plan and adheres to all other procedures and requirements, as outlined in this policy.

### II. Medication Action Plan

In accordance with DC Code § 38-651.03, before medication can be kept or administered at Rocketship, a student's parent/guardian must complete and submit a Medication Action Plan. The Medication Action Plan must include:

- Written medical authorization, signed by a licensed health practitioner, that states:
  - The name of the student;
  - Emergency contact information for the student's parent/guardian;
  - Contact information for the student's licensed health practitioner;
  - The name, purpose, and prescribed dosage of the medication;
  - The frequency that the medication is to be administered;
  - The possible side effects of the medication as listed on the label;
  - Special instructions or emergency procedures;
  - In the case of self-administered medication, confirmation that the student has been instructed in the proper technique for self-administration of the medication and has demonstrated the ability to self-administer the medication effectively.
- o Written authorization, signed by the student's parent/guardian, that states:
  - That a trained employee or agent of the school may administer medication to the student in accordance with all applicable DC laws and regulations; or
  - in the case of self-administration, the student may possess and self-administer the medication at Rocketship, at Rocketship-sponsored activities, and while on Rocketship-sponsored transportation; and
  - that the name of the student may be distributed to appropriate school staff, as determined by the Principal.
- Written acknowledgment that the District of Columbia, Rocketship Public Schools, or an employee or agent of Rocketship Public Schools shall be immune from civil liability for the

good-faith performance of responsibilities related to this Policy; except that no immunity shall extend to criminal acts, intentional wrongdoing, gross negligence, or wanton or willful misconduct.

Immediately following any changes regarding the health or treatment of the student, the parent/guardian must submit an amended Medication Action Plan to Rocketship. All Medication Action Plans must be updated at least annually.

### **III. Staff Administration of Medication**

Pursuant to DC Code § 38-651.05, a Rocketship employee or agent trained and certified pursuant to this policy may administer medication to a student with a valid Medication Action Plan; provided that:

- The student's parent/guardian has delivered the medication to be administered to the school;
- The employee or agent is under the general supervision of a licensed health practitioner; and
- Except in emergency circumstances, as described below, the parent/guardian has administered the initial dose of a new medication.

School staff should NOT provide any over-the-counter medications or therapeutic/homeopathic remedies (i.e. cough drops, herbal teas) to students unless the student has

- a note from an authorized health care provider that prescribes the use of the remedy, including the amount or dose to be given, and the method and timing of the administration; AND
- a written statement from a parent/guardian permitting the use of the remedy at the school.

### **IV. Staffing and Training**

In accordance with DC Code § 38-621(a), each Rocketship school in DC will have a registered nurse and/or licensed practical nurse who is on campus a minimum of 20 hours per week.

All staff members who (1) administer medication to students with valid Medication Action Plans who are not authorized to possess that medication or are not competent to self-administer the medication; and (2) administer medication in emergency circumstances to any student experiencing an acute episode of asthma, anaphylaxis, or other illness, must complete training in accordance with DC Code § 38-651.04. All training must be conducted by a health care professional licensed in the District of Columbia. The health-care professional will provide Rocketship with written certification, which will be valid for three years, of successful completion of the training for each Rocketship employee.

### **V. Storage of Medication**

In accordance with DC Code § 38-651.09, Rocketship may receive medication from a student's parent/guardian to store for the treatment of asthma, anaphylaxis, or other illness for a student with a valid Medication Action Plan. The medication will be stored with Rocketship's school nurse or Office Manager in a location that is easily accessible during an emergency.

The medication must be labeled with the following information:

- Name of the student;
- Name of the medication;
- Dosage;
- Time of administration; and
- Duration of medication.

Under DC Code § 38-651.09, Rocketship is not required to store more than a three-day supply of any medication.

#### **VI. Emergency Situations**

Pursuant to DC Code § 38-651.09(a), Rocketship may procure and store medication for the treatment of asthma, anaphylaxis, or other illness for use in emergency circumstances. The medication will be maintained in an easily accessible location.

School employees are trained and expected to respond to emergency situations without discrimination. Under DC Code § 38-651.06(a), no employee is allowed to administer medication in emergency situations unless that employee has been trained in accordance with DC Code § 38-651.04 (further described above). A student need not have a known diagnosis or a medication action plan to receive treatment in emergency circumstances from a trained employee or agent of the school. (§ 38-651.06(c)). Parents/guardians may also request that the school not administer medication in an emergency situation. (§ 38-651.06(d)).

If any student or staff member needs resuscitation, staff shall make every effort to resuscitate him/her. Staff members are prohibited from accepting or following any parental or medical "do not resuscitate" orders. School staff should not be placed in the position of determining whether such orders should be followed, and such advance directives shall not be communicated to staff.

#### **VII. Student Access to Epinephrine**

Pursuant to D.C. Code § 38-651.04, OSSE is required to develop and implement an epinephrine administration training program, which shall provide training and certification of employees and agents of a public school on the storage and emergency use of an undesignated epinephrine auto-injector (UEA) on a person suffering an episode of anaphylaxis, Rocketship shall ensure that it has at least two employees certified in the use of a UEA who are available to administer epinephrine during all hours of the school day.

Under D.C. Code § 38-651.04(c), OSSE is required to procure and distribute UEAs to public schools and monitor the supply of UEAs, restocking as necessary. Rocketship must store, at all times, no fewer than two unexpired UEAs of each dosage available through OSSE's UEA Plan. UEAs shall be stored in a secure but easily accessible location in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

A Rocketship employee who is certified pursuant to D.C. Code § 38-651.04 may administer a UEA to a student who the employee believes in good faith to be suffering or about to suffer an anaphylactic episode.

UEAs may be used on Rocketship property, including the school building, playground, and school bus, as well as during school field trips or sanctioned excursions away from Rocketship property. The certified employee may carry an appropriate supply of the school's UEAs on field trips or excursions.

Within 24 hours of the administration of a UEA, Rocketship shall notify OSSE and the physician who prescribed the standing order for UEA. As soon as practicable following the administration of medication pursuant to D.C. Code § 38-651.04, Rocketship shall inform the student's parent/guardian that the medication was administered.

#### **VIII. Maintenance of Records**

Rocketship will create and maintain a list of students with valid Medication Action Plans, including the emergency contact information for each student. The Principal may distribute the list among appropriate employees or agents.

Rocketship will maintain accurate records of all its employees and agents who are certified to administer medication.

Rocketship will maintain accurate records of all incidents where medication was administered to a student in an emergency circumstance. (DC Code § 38-651.08)

#### **IX. Misuse**

A student who self-administers medication while at school, at a school-sponsored activity, or while on school-sponsored transportation for a purpose other than his or her own treatment will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Rocketship's Student Discipline Policy. . Such disciplinary action shall not limit or restrict the access of a student to his or her prescribed medication. Rocketship will promptly notify the student's parent/guardian of any disciplinary action imposed. (DC Code § 38-651.10)

## PARENT PARTNERSHIP POLICY - 424

Engaged parents are a core pillar of Rocketship's model and critical to our Rocketeers and their long-term success. By actively being included and involved in our schools and their Rocketeers' learning, parents become integrated into the fabric of the school community. An active partnership between families and Rocketship faculty and staff benefits our Rocketeers as they see their parents on campus, and families as they gain a deeper understanding of Rocketship's model and are positioned to reinforce Rocketship's core values at home. This policy describes the 30-hour suggested commitment; ways to satisfy hours; monitoring and tracking of hours; and clearance requirements.

### I. Thirty Hour Commitment

Rocketship asks that families participate in ~~2030~~ Parent Partnership Hours each year per family by supporting or participating in various school activities. Participating in Parent Partnership Hours is encouraged, but NOT required. If families do not realize ~~2030~~ Parent Partnership Hours annually, there is no consequence or penalty.

### II. Satisfying Parent Partnership Hours

Parents can satisfy their Partnership Hours through any of the following participation categories:

- Academic achievement (i.e. home visits with teachers/School Leaders, teacher conferences, take-home work to assist a classroom teacher, assisting the Office Manager)
- School community (i.e. attending community meetings, helping at special events)
- Education advocacy (i.e. attending Parent Leadership meetings or school hearings)

Rocketship will ensure that opportunities for Parent Partnership Hours occur both during the school day and after hours or on weekends in order to accommodate the work and personal schedules of our families.

Families may have extended family members (i.e. grandparents, aunts/uncles, cousins, siblings, etc.) participate in the school activities and realize Parent Partnership Hours.

### III. Monitoring and Tracking of Hours

Rocketship carefully tracks and monitors Parent Partnership Hours during each school year.

If the parent/family member is satisfying hours through an interaction with a classroom teacher, the teacher is responsible for tracking the time.

If the parent/family member is working at the school office, he/she must sign in with the Office Manager using the school's electronic or paper system.

If the parent/family member is attending a meeting or event (on or off campus), Rocketship will provide a sign-in sheet. The parent/family member must sign in. The school Office Manager will be responsible for inputting the relevant partnership hours.

Rocketship will implement a system to house the partnership data. Each school will provide regular status updates to help families keep abreast of their hours. Parents/families can also request this data from the Office Manager at any time.

#### **IV. Clearance Requirements for Volunteers**

The safety of our Rocketeers always comes first. Thus, every parent, guardian, or family member who chooses to volunteer on- or off-campus at Rocketship-sponsored events must apply to become a volunteer. Some volunteer activities will require a background check. For more information, see Rocketship's regional Volunteer Clearance Policy.

## RETENTION AND ACCELERATION POLICY - 202

Rocketship's instructional model is organized so that each student's learning plan is individualized in order to account for individual differences and promote academic and social growth. As such, we believe that retention should only be used in rare and exceptional circumstances, when the student's family is given notice well in advance and is fully in support of the retention decision. Rocketship's retention and acceleration policy is deliberately flexible so that teams can consider each student as an individual and make recommendations based on data and identified student need.

The purpose of this policy is to provide school teams with a framework for considering retention, promotion, or acceleration that is consistent with our philosophy of education. Additionally, the procedures are designed to ensure that retained students receive the supplemental, targeted instruction and support that they require in order to make adequate academic gains in subsequent years. This policy addresses guiding principles that will inform retention and acceleration decisions; considerations that Rocketship will use when promoting and accelerating students, and considerations for retention, including timelines for identification, factors that could lead to retention, retention procedures and appeals (including for students with IEPs), retention plans, and documentation requirements.

### **I. Guiding Principles for Retention, and Acceleration**

All Rocketship schools are expected to adhere to the guidelines below when making decisions on retention and acceleration.

- Students vary considerably in their rate of development. Factors that affect development include chronological age, communication skills, academic ability, social, physical, and emotional maturity, attendance, cognitive ability, etc.
- Some children may benefit from more time in a given grade level, if the curriculum is suited to their needs and they continue to be socially well-adjusted to their peer group.
- Children who perform at exceptionally high levels in relation to their grade-level peers and are developmentally (physically and mentally) on-level may benefit from acceleration to the next grade level.
- School teams must use great care when making recommendations regarding retention and acceleration in order to ensure the greatest likelihood that it is an effective intervention. Emotional maturity and social adjustment concerns should be evaluated when considering whether or not to retain or accelerate a student.

- Educators must consider the academic needs of a child when determining acceleration as well as emotional maturity, physical maturity, and social adjustment. School leaders will consider myriad factors including both absolute performance and growth/progress made on assessments when ascertaining whether or not students are academically prepared to move on to the next grade level.
- As described in Rocketship's Admissions Policy, schools typically should not make decisions regarding retention or acceleration during the enrollment process. Schools are expected to enroll all students in the next consecutive grade level and then assess students as needed. Students will be considered for retention or acceleration at the following grade levels:
  - Between grades 1 and 2
  - Between grades 2 and 3
  - Between grades 3 and 4
  - Between grades 4 and 5
  - Between grades 5 and 6

## **II. Considerations for Retention**

### Early Identification

Students will be identified as at-risk for retention as early in the school year as is practicably feasible. Parents will be notified no later than mid-school year when a student is identified as being at risk of retention. Parents will participate in the decision-making process when considering retention, as further described below.

### Indicators to Review When Considering Retention

The following indicators of academic achievement should be considered when making retention decisions:

- Consistent scores in the bottom quartile of assessments (i.e. state assessments, NWEA, math or ELA benchmarks).
- Failure to make adequate academic progress when compared to peers (i.e. data shows that rate of improvement is considerably less accelerated than class average).
- Failure to make adequate progress towards individual goals after receiving evidence-based interventions, implemented with treatment integrity.
- Severe social or emotional immaturity when compared to peers that causes harm to the student's academic, behavioral, and/or social-emotional development.
- Excessive absences (i.e. more than 20)."
- Recommendation of student's teachers that retention is or is not an appropriate option, with supporting rationale.

- Parent buy-in in regards to retention or not.

These indicators must be evident despite having received interventions before retention should be considered.

### Procedures for Retention

Student progress will be monitored using a variety of assessments (NWEA, statewide assessments, benchmark assessments, progress monitoring data, etc.) School staff will notify parents when a student is at risk for retention, Parents should be notified of the at-risk status as early as possible, and, to the extent feasible, no later than 60 calendar days prior to the end of the school year

If retention is being considered, a Student Study Team (SST) shall be convened consisting of at least a School Leader, the student's classroom teacher, an Individualized Learning Specialist, and the student's parent/guardian.

The SST will consult in accordance with the guiding principles described above and will arrive at a mutually agreed-upon decision. The Principal will have authority over confirmation of final retention decisions,

The parent of the student who is being considered for retention will be provided with objective evidence supporting the retention recommendation using the Retention Recommendation form. Parents must confirm their agreement with the recommendation for retention before the end of the school year in writing, via the Retention Recommendation form.

Kindergarten students who have completed one year of kindergarten shall be admitted to first grade unless the parent/guardian and Rocketship agree that the student shall continue in kindergarten for not more than one additional school year. Whenever a student continues in kindergarten for an additional year, the Chief Executive Officer shall secure an agreement, signed by the parent/guardian, stating that the student shall continue in kindergarten for not more than one additional school year.

### English Language Learners

For the English language learner, retention decisions shall be based on the student's rate of English acquisition rather than on lack of grade-level English language proficiency or mastery of core academic content standards.

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<sup>1</sup>In accordance with Wisconsin law, truancy and absences may NOT be considered when making retention decisions in Wisconsin.

### Retention Intervention Plans

For students who will be retained, the SST will develop an intervention plan which details the supplemental interventions and supports that will be made available to the student using Rocketship's "Retention Intervention Plan" template.

During the subsequent school year, school leaders are responsible for continuing to monitor the academic progress of all retained students and reconvening the SST to make changes to the intervention plan when necessary.

### Documentation

At the end of the school year, the Principal is responsible for maintaining documentation of the following information.

- The student's name;
- The underlying reason for the retention decision;
- Whether the principal identified the student as at risk of retention;
- Whether the principal provided written notice to the student's parents within 60 calendar days of the last day of school.

### **III. Considerations for Acceleration**

Acceleration is the process of advancing students at a more rapid rate than experienced by most, and may be considered when students are performing significantly above grade level.

#### Procedures for Acceleration

A student may be recommended for acceleration by a teacher, counselor, or the parent/guardian if the student is exceeding grade level standards in reading and/or math.

A student recommended for acceleration will take the NWEA MAP or other state assessments at the grade level for which he/she is recommended.

If acceleration is being considered, a Student Study Team (SST) shall be convened consisting of at least a The Principal, School Leader, the student's classroom teacher, an Individualized Learning Specialist, and the student's parent/guardian. The SST will consult to review the student's performance in accordance with the guiding principles described above and will arrive at a mutually agreed-upon decision. The SST Team should consider the following indicators when determining whether a student should be accelerated to another grade level.

- Exceeding grade-level standards on school work, such as classwork, quizzes, tests, and Projects.

- Scoring in the 99th percentile on state testing. Scores in the 75th percentile on standardized assessments in the grade level to which the student is being recommended for acceleration (i.e. NWEA MAP, math or ELA benchmarks).
- Academic, behavioral, and/or social-emotional development.

The Principal will make the final acceleration decision based on the SST's recommendation. The parent of the student who is being considered for acceleration will be provided with objective evidence supporting the acceleration recommendation. Parents must confirm their agreement with the recommendation for acceleration before the end of the school year in writing.

#### **IV. Students with IEPs**

At Rocketship Public Schools we support every Rocketeer to be successful both academically and in their social emotional development. Rocketship Education is committed to making our schools a viable option for all students and families, including students with disabilities. As our population of students with more significant disabilities has increased over the last several years, the Special Education team has been hard at work developing innovative systems for supporting these students. At all of our campuses, students have the right to access the full continuum of services. One of the structures within Rocketship that supports this program is our Specialized Inclusion Program, which is housed at select Rocketship sites. For students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), the full continuum of services includes access to a special day class, nonpublic school, or residential care, while enrolled at RPS, as required by state and federal law and according to each students' respective Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Decisions regarding retention or acceleration for a student with an IEP **are made in consultation with the IEP team and review of the Individualized Education Program. We follow the acceleration or retention process for students with IEPs to ensure we are thoughtfully considering a student's IEP and progress.** ~~will be made by the IEP team according to the provisions of the student's IEP, using all available data and in consultation with the student's parent. Students with IEPs are not to be recommended for retention or acceleration outside of the IEP process.~~

#### **V. Appealing Retention or Acceleration Decisions**

The Principal must notify parents/guardians in writing of their right to appeal a retention or acceleration decision. Parents must submit an appeal in writing to the Principal within ten (10) days of the decision. Appeals shall be heard by a designee of the Board of Directors' Academic Affairs Committee, who will consider information provided by Parent, the SST recommendation, and any other information shared by the Principal. The designee's decision shall be final.

## SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY - 310

On rare occasions, Rocketship may decide to alter the regular schedule of the school day by closing school for a day, starting the school day late, or releasing students early at one or several campuses due to snow, rain, severe weather, natural disasters, or other emergency conditions. Rocketship recognizes that closing school or shortening the instructional day is disruptive for students, staff, and families and will only make this decision when it is necessary for the safety of our school community. Whenever possible, Rocketship will provide families and staff with advance notice of the decision or possible decision to shorten the instructional day or close school.

This policy covers procedures for closing school due to weather conditions and other hazardous conditions; the procedure for notifying families of school closure; work requirements and compensation implications for salaried and hourly staff members during school closures; and implications of school closure on the instructional calendar in each region.

### **I. Weather Conditions**

All Rocketship schools in a particular region will coordinate the decision to close school, release students early, or start school later than usual on a given day because of weather conditions. If it is known in advance that severe weather is impending, the principals of all Rocketship schools in that region should remain on alert. Rocketship's Schools and Operations teams are responsible for monitoring the weather and discussing together whether or not school should be closed. The decision on whether to close school will be made by representatives from the Schools and/or Operations teams.

In general, Rocketship schools will observe the same decisions as local districts in case of closure or early closure due to weather conditions. All Rocketship schools in a region will observe the same schedule in case of a weather-related situation, with the exception of any school authorized by the Achievement School District (ASD) in Tennessee.<sup>1</sup>

Rocketship will notify families as early as possible of decisions to close school or start school late due to weather conditions will be made public. Decisions to release students early due to weather conditions will be made public, whenever possible, at least one hour before the start of the early dismissal. Schools may need to alter their dismissal process or staging location in case of an emergency on campus.

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<sup>1</sup>The ASD requires that all ASD-operated schools must follow the decision of the Superintendent or his/her designee regarding school closings. To the fullest extent possible, the ASD attempts to coordinate closures with Metro Nashville Public Schools.

## **II. Other Hazardous Conditions**

In case of an unforeseen unsafe condition at the school campus (such as a leaking pipe or fire), the Principal of that school is responsible for informing his/her supervisor and helping the supervisor decide whether or not to close school, release students early, or start school later than usual. To the extent practicable under the circumstances, the Principal must consult and get approval from his/her supervisor as well as Rocketship's Operations team when making a decision to alter the school schedule.

With support from other school staff, and, when necessary, Rocketship's Schools and Operations teams, the Principal is responsible for notifying families, staff, vendors, and others (e.g. afterschool program coordinators) that school has been closed. This decision may be announced through email or telephone calls, by notifying a public radio or television station, and/or sending an announcement to families over the automated calling system. Families are responsible for providing the school with updated contact information so that they can be reached in case of change to the school schedule.

## **III. Considerations for Staff**

If school is closed for an entire day due to severe weather in the area, neither students nor staff will be expected to come to school unless otherwise notified by the Principal due to a critical need at the site. This includes all teachers, School Leaders, and support staff. Salaried staff members will be expected to work remotely during severe weather closures and will be compensated as usual. Hourly staff members who were already scheduled to work during a severe weather closure will be compensated as usual for their scheduled hours. When practical, an hourly staff member's manager may assign him/her work to complete remotely. All staff members should check with their managers for details on where and how to complete their work during severe weather closures.

If school is closed for a reason other than severe weather (i.e. water damage at the school site), students will not be expected to come to school but staff may be asked to report to work, or to work remotely or at an alternative site. All school staff members should check with their manager for details on where and how to complete their work during non-severe weather closures. Salaried staff members will be compensated as usual, and hourly staff members will be compensated for their scheduled hours.

If school remains open but an employee is unable to safely report to school due to extreme circumstances, the employee's manager has the discretion to approve that the employee work remotely or from another location and get compensated as planned.

## **IV. Considerations for the Instructional Calendar**

Local laws in each region govern the number of instructional days per school year that students must receive. In California, Rocketship's charter mandates a minimum of 175 instructional days in addition to the instructional minutes set forth in CA Ed Code §47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D). In DC, Rocketship's charter mandates a minimum of 185 school days. In Tennessee, the law requires 180 school days. (T.C.A. § 49-6-3004(a)(1)). In Wisconsin, charter schools are exempt from instructional hours/days requirements pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 121.02(1)(f) but Rocketship's charter mandates at least 180 instructional days.

In the case of a cancellation, late start, or early dismissal, Rocketship may fall short of this minimum, in which case additional days will be added or used.

The Vice President of Achievement, in collaboration with the Schools and Operations teams, is responsible for making decisions to adjust the school instructional calendar in case of cancellation or closure, guided by the following rules:

- Rocketship schools must include at least the number of minimum instructional days.
- Rocketship schools must meet all local requirements for instructional minutes.
- Rocketship schools must aim to create as many coherent, uninterrupted weeks of instruction as
- possible.

To the extent possible, schools should communicate all make-up dates to families and staff by April 1st each year so families and staff can plan around any updates to the instructional calendar.

## SCHOOL SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY - 313

### **School Facebook Groups: Community Guidelines for Families**

Rocketship school Facebook groups are safe online communities created for current Rocketship families, teachers, and staff members. Facebook groups are an additional channel of communication where we share events, updates, information, and photos and videos of our school. Families can ask questions, post photos and videos and contribute to a positive school culture. All Facebook groups are subject to the below Community Guidelines:

#### **Membership:**

Rocketship school Facebook groups are reserved only for parents and guardians of currently enrolled Rocketship students. Extended family members, alumni, perspective Rocketeers, or interested member of the community will not be able to join our school group, but are invited to follow us on our public social media channels. The Rocketship [Facebook page](#) and [Instagram account](#) both feature updates and photos from all our schools.

#### **Member Posting:**

We welcome conversations that are focused on our school community:

- Photos and videos of Rocketeers learning at home or in school
- Posts celebrating student achievement or core values
- Questions and clarifications about school related activities
- Resources around learning

It is important that conversations in groups are productive and respectful. We ask all members to follow our Community Fundamentals:

- Share and react with empathy
- Keep questions or concerns constructive
- Assume good intentions when providing feedback
- Maintain a supportive environment
- Abstain from inappropriate, vulgar, or abusive language

We do not allow the following:

- Bullying or harassment
- Promotion of prejudice, violence, or hatred against people based on their race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, political beliefs, disability, disease, age, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression
- Threats or encouragements of violence against anyone, either seriously or humorously
- Asking for or sharing medical or legal advice
- Questioning other people's experiences

- Violations of privacy, including revealing information about others that they would not want to make public
- Promotion of goods or services
- Inappropriate conversation, as determined by the group moderators

Group admins reserve the right to remove members, suspend accounts, or remove posts, without notice and for any reason, to protect the community. If you see anyone violating these Community Guidelines or behaving in a way that makes you uncomfortable, please take action. You may report any violations to the admin, or use Facebook's [reporting tool](#).

## **SECTION 504 POLICY - 508**

The Board of Directors of the Rocketship Education recognizes the need to identify and evaluate students with disabilities in order to provide them with a free, appropriate public education and its legal responsibility to ensure that “no qualified person with a disability shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” This policy and the related administrative regulation has been developed to ensure the implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), and its implementing regulations as amended, which pertains to public schools. The intent is to ensure that all students with disabilities, who are eligible under Section 504, are identified and evaluated and have access to a free, appropriate public education (“FAPE”). The policy covers the applicability of Section 504; the roles and responsibilities of the Section 504 Team; Section 504 Plans; Section 504 procedures; and parental rights under Section 504.

### **I. Section 504 Applicability**

Under Section 504, individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities, including learning, are entitled to receive regular or special education and/or related aids and services designed to meet their individual needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students are met. Major Life Activities include functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working, as well as the operation of a major bodily functions, including functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. Students may be disabled and entitled to services under Section 504 even though they are not eligible for services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEA”).

The School’s Principal or designee shall ensure that this policy and set of procedures is implemented and followed. Whenever there is reason to believe that, because of a disability, a student needs regular or special education and/or related aids and services (and the student has not been found eligible under IDEA) that student will be evaluated under this policy’s administrative regulation.

### **II. Section 504 Team**

A Section 504 Team will be convened to determine the student’s need for regular or special education and/or related aids and services. The 504 Team will include persons knowledgeable about the Section 504 standards, the student’s individual needs and school history, the meaning of evaluation data, and placement options. The student’s parent/guardian shall be invited to

participate in this 504 Team and shall receive notice of procedural safeguards guaranteed by law. If Rocketship does not assess a student after a parent has requested an assessment, the School shall provide notice of the parent's/guardian's procedural safeguards.

### **III. Section 504 Plans**

If the student, due to disability, is found to require regular or special education and/or related aids and services under Section 504, the Section 504 Team shall develop a 504 plan for the provision of such services to the student. The student shall be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's individual needs. The student's parent/guardian shall be provided a copy of the 504 plan and shall receive notice of procedural safeguards guaranteed by law. Rocketship shall periodically review the student's progress and placement.

Rocketship will implement this policy through its corresponding 504 Procedures.

### **IV. Identification, Evaluation, and Education Under Section 504 Procedures**

#### Definitions

- Academic Setting – the regular, educational environment operated by Rocketship Education
- Individual with a Disability under Section 504 – An individual who:
  - has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
  - has a record of such an impairment; or
  - is regarded as having such an impairment.
- Evaluation – procedures used to determine whether a student has a disability as defined within these Procedures, and the nature and extent of the services that the student needs. The term means procedures used selectively with an individual student and does not include basic tests administered to, or procedures used with, all students in a school, grade or class.
- 504 Plan – is a plan developed to identify and document the student's needs for regular or special education and related aids and services for participation in educational programs, activities, and school-sponsored events.
- Free Appropriate Public Education ("FAPE") – the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet the individual needs of persons with disabilities as adequately as the needs of persons without disabilities are met.
- Major Life Activities - Functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending,

speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, and working. A major life activity also includes the operation of a major bodily function, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, special sense organs and skin, normal cell growth, digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, and reproductive functions.

- Physical or Mental Impairment
  - Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory; including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genitourinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or
  - Any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.
- 504 Coordinator – The school Principal Education Specialist shall serve as Rocketship’s Section 504 coordinator. The parents or guardians may request a Section 504 due process hearing from, or direct any questions or concerns to the 504 Coordinator.
- Has a record of such an impairment - means has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- Is regarded as having an impairment - means
  - An individual meets the requirement of 'being regarded as having such an impairment' if the individual establishes that he or she has been subjected to an action prohibited under this Act because of an actual or perceived physical or mental impairment whether or not the impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major life activity.
  - Being regarded as having an impairment shall not apply to impairments that are transitory and minor. A transitory impairment is an impairment with an actual or expected duration of 6 months or less.

#### Referral, Assessment and Evaluation Procedures

- Rocketship will evaluate any student who, because of disability, needs or is believed to need regular or special education and/or related aids and services.
- A student may be referred by anyone, including a parent/guardian, teacher, other school employee or community agency, for consideration as to whether the student qualifies as a student with disabilities under Section 504. Requests for evaluation shall be made in writing, and a copy of said request will remain in the student’s file regardless of the final determination. This referral should be made to the Section 504 Coordinator who will

convene a 504 Team. Any requests made to another Rocketship employee will be forwarded to the Section 504 Coordinator.

- Rocketship has the responsibility to ensure that students with disabilities are evaluated. Therefore, it is important that students who are or may be disabled are referred to the Section 504 Coordinator so that the assessment process is initiated.
- The 504 Team convened by the Section 504 Coordinator will be composed of the student's parents/guardians and other persons knowledgeable about the student (such as the student's regular education teachers), the student's school history, the student's individual needs (such as a person knowledgeable about the student's disabling condition), the meaning of evaluation data, the options for placement and services, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities.
- The 504 Team shall promptly consider the referral and determine what assessments are needed in all suspected areas of disability to evaluate whether the student is a student with a disability under Section 504 and what special needs the student may have. The decision regarding what assessments shall be undertaken shall be based on a review of the student's school records (including academic, social and behavioral records), any relevant medical records, and the student's needs. Students requiring assessment shall be provided appropriate assessments administered by qualified assessment specialists.
- The 504 Team will consider the following information in its evaluation of the student:
  - Tests and other evaluation materials that have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel;
  - Tests and other evaluation materials including those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient; and
  - Tests are selected and administered so as to best ensure that, when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level or whatever factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure.)
- The evaluation of the student must be sufficient for the 504 Team to accurately and completely describe: (a) the nature and extent of the disabilities; (b) the student's special needs; (c) the impact upon the student's education; and (d) what regular or special education and/or related aids and services are appropriate to ensure that the student

receives a free appropriate public education. All significant factors relating to the learning process for that student, including adaptive behavior and cultural and language background, must be considered. The evaluation may include, but is not limited to, classroom and playground observation, performance-based testing, academic assessment information, and data offered by the student's teachers and parent/guardian.

- The parents/guardians shall be given an opportunity in advance of 504 Team meetings to examine assessment results and all other relevant records.
- If a request for evaluation is denied, the 504 Team shall inform the parents/guardians in writing of this decision and of their procedural rights as described below.

#### 504 Plan

- When a student is identified as disabled within the meaning of Section 504, the 504 Team shall determine what, if any, services are needed to ensure that the student receives a free, appropriate public education ("FAPE").
- The 504 Team responsible for making the placement decision shall include the parents/guardians and other persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options.
- For each identified disabled student, the 504 Team will develop a 504 Plan describing the student's disability and the regular or special education and/or related aids and services needed. The Plan will specify how the special education and/or related aids and services will be provided to the disabled student and by whom. The 504 Plan will also identify the person responsible for ensuring that all the components of the Plan are implemented.
- The student's teacher and any other staff who are to provide services to the student or who are to make modifications in the classroom for the student shall be informed of the services or modifications necessary for the student and, if appropriate, provided a copy of the 504 Plan. A copy of this plan shall be kept in the student's cumulative file in a manner that limits access to those persons involved in the 504 process and/or the provision of services and modifications.
- The disabled student shall be placed in the regular education environment unless it is demonstrated that the student's needs cannot be met in the regular education environment with supplementary aids and services. The disabled student shall be educated with students who are not disabled to the maximum extent appropriate to his/her individual needs.

- The referral, assessment, evaluation and placement process will be completed within a reasonable time. It is generally not reasonable to exceed fifty (50) school days in completing this process.
- The parents/guardians shall be notified in writing of the final decision concerning the student's identification as a person with disabilities, the educational program and services to be provided, if any, and of the Section 504 procedural safeguards, as described below, including the right to an impartial hearing to challenge the decision.
- If the 504 Team determines that the student is disabled but that no special services are necessary for the student, the 504 Plan shall reflect the identification of the student as a disabled person under Section 504 and shall state the basis for the decision that no special services are presently needed.
- The 504 Plan shall include a schedule for annual review of the student's needs, and indicate that this review may occur more frequently at the request of the parent/guardian or school staff.
- Rocketship shall immediately implement a student's prior 504 Plan, when a student enrolls at Rocketship. Within thirty (30) days of starting school, Rocketship shall schedule a 504 Team meeting to review the existing 504 Plan. Rocketship shall request a copy of the prior 504 plan from both the prior school and the parent/guardian.

#### Review of the Student's Progress

- The 504 Team shall monitor the progress of the disabled student and the effectiveness of the student's 504 Plan. According to the review schedule set out in the student's 504 Plan, the 504 Team shall annually determine whether the services and modifications are appropriate.
- A reevaluation of the student's needs shall be conducted before any subsequent significant change in placement.

#### Procedural Safeguards

- Parents/guardians shall be notified in writing of all decisions regarding the identification, evaluation or educational placement of students with disabilities or suspected disabilities. Notifications shall include a statement of their rights to:
  - Examine relevant records
  - Have an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parents/guardians and their counsel
  - Have the right to file a Uniform Complaint pursuant to Rocketship policy

- Seek review in federal court if the parents/guardians disagree with the hearing decision.
- Notifications shall also set forth the procedures for requesting an impartial hearing. Requests shall be made to the 504 Coordinator or the school Principal. Notifications shall advise that reimbursement for attorney's fees is available only as authorized by law.
- Rocketship shall maintain a list of impartial hearing officers who are qualified and willing to conduct Section 504 hearings. To ensure impartiality, such officers shall not be employed by or under contract with any district within the SELPA or the County Office of Education in any capacity other than that of hearing officer and shall not have any professional or personal involvement that would affect their impartiality or objectivity in the matter.
- If a parent/guardian disagrees with the identification, evaluation or educational placement of a student with disabilities under Section 504, he/she may request a hearing to initiate due process procedures. The parent/guardian shall set forth in writing his/her request for a hearing. A request for hearing should include:
  - The specific decision or action with which the parent/guardian disagrees.
  - The changes to the 504 Plan the parent/guardian seeks.
  - Any other information the parent/guardian believes is pertinent.
- Within five (5) calendar days of receiving the parent/guardian's request for a hearing, Rocketship may offer the parent/guardian an optional alternative dispute resolution process. However, the timeline for the hearing shall remain in effect unless it is extended by mutual written agreement of the parent/guardian and Rocketship. Alternative dispute resolution options include:
  - Mediation by a neutral third party.
  - Review of the 504 Plan by the Director or designee.
  - Within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the parent/guardian's request, the Director or designee shall select an impartial hearing officer. These 10 days may be extended for good cause or by mutual agreement of the parent/guardian and Director.
  - Within thirty-five (35) calendar days of the selection of the hearing officer, the due process hearing shall be conducted. These thirty-five (35) days may be extended for good cause or by mutual agreement of the parent/guardian and Director.
- The parent/guardian and Rocketship shall be afforded the rights to:
  - Be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training related to the individual needs of students who are qualified as disabled under Section 504.
  - Present written and oral evidence.
  - Question and cross-examine witnesses.

- Receive written findings by the hearing officer.
- The hearing officer shall issue a written decision within ten (10) calendar days of the hearing.
  
- If desired, either party may seek a review of the hearing officer's decision by a federal court. The decision shall be implemented unless the decision is stayed, modified or overturned by a court.

#### Suspension and Expulsion, Special Procedures for Students with Disabilities

Rocketship shall follow the suspension and expulsion policy and procedures as set forth in the charter. A pupil identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act ("IDEA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education pupils except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. Charter School will follow the IDEA, Section 504, and all applicable federal and state laws when imposing any form of discipline on a pupil identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such pupils.

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY - 404

Safety, order, and student discipline are fundamental to learning at Rocketship. Rocketship expects all students to behave in a way that fosters a safe and welcoming environment for other students, Rocketship staff, and community members.

Students will be subject to disciplinary action if they engage in prohibited conduct while on school property, when attending any school-sponsored activity, or while in transit going to or coming from a Rocketship campus. Students may also be subject to disciplinary action for off-campus behavior if it creates a substantial disruption to the school environment or interferes with another student's ability to participate in the school program.

Some disciplinary infractions are so serious that they may subject a student to suspension and/or expulsion. A list of these infractions can be found in Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy, along with the procedures that Rocketship will take when considering suspension or expulsion of a student. This Policy outlines the Rocketeer Code of Conduct that we expect students to follow; expectations for students; examples of prohibited conduct that will subject a student to in-school disciplinary action; and disciplinary actions that Rocketship may take in response to behavioral infractions, including In-School Suspension.

### I. Rocketeer Code of Conduct

The Rocketship Code of Conduct includes the following non-negotiable expectations for our Rocketeers:

- Adherence to the Rocketship Commitment to Excellence.
- Adherence to the Rocketship Core Values: Respect, Responsibility, Persistence, Empathy, and the fifth campus-specific Value chosen by each school.
- Adherence to the Rocketship Creed:

I am a Rocketship Rocketeer at home, at school, and in my community  
I show respect to myself, my neighbors, and the environment  
I take responsibility for my learning and actions  
I have empathy, supporting others in need  
I show initiative by solving the problems I see  
And I am persistent in attaining excellence.  
Together, we are all Rocketship Rocketeers.

### II. Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct is prohibited by Rocketship and may subject a student to in-class disciplinary action in accordance with this policy.

- Engaging in acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying as defined by Rocketship’s bullying prevention policies.
- Insubordination (including, but not limited to, refusing to follow directions, refusing to identify oneself to a staff member, running away from a staff member, talking back to a staff member).
- Fighting or engaging in behaviors that threaten the safety of oneself or others.
- Disrupting school activities.
- Playing in the hallways or bathroom.
- Dishonesty/lying to staff members.
- Theft of property.
- Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism or cheating.
- Inciting or attempting to incite others to violence or disruption.
- Aiding or abetting the infliction or attempted infliction of violence on another.
- Committing an obscene act or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Recording or photographing students or staff members without their prior knowledge and consent.
- Using computers for non-school related activities, including viewing or accessing prohibited sites.
- Using cell phones or other personal electronic communication devices on school property, during school hours or during school functions, except when under express permission and supervision of a staff member
- Trespassing (including being on school grounds while school is not in session, being in unauthorized areas of the building, and use of the bathroom without permission)
- Leaving the classroom, school building, school property, or school activity without permission
- Intentionally altering, falsifying, destroying, or fabricating any official document (including 9-1-1 phone calls and setting off fire alarms).
- Repeatedly violating Rocketship’s Student Dress Code.
- Violating Rocketship Public Schools’ Code of Conduct, as described above.

### **III. In-school Disciplinary Actions**

Rocketship relies on proactive, preventive supports to promote positive behavior at school. Rocketship has implemented a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework in all schools. The fundamental purpose of PBIS is to create learning environments that are more consistent, predictable, positive and safe. Key PBIS practices include clearly defined behavioral expectations and consequences, systems for recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors, data-based decision making, multi-tiered systems of support, and the implementation of core social-emotional learning curricula.

Rocketship classrooms also use a variety of management systems to address behavioral issues. These may include color-coded card chart systems and other tiered consequences.

In the event that Rocketship's PBIS infrastructure and classroom management systems are insufficient to prevent disciplinary infraction, or a disciplinary infraction is serious enough to immediately warrant additional discipline, Rocketship may take alternative in-school disciplinary action. These actions depend on the circumstances of the offense and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sending the student to the Principal's office.
- Excluding the student from classroom activities or privileges through a "time out" or temporary placement in another classroom.
- Calling or writing/emailing the student's parent/guardian.
- Arranging a conference with the student, parent, teacher and/or administrator.
- Implementing an individualized behavior plan for the student.
- Implementing counseling sessions with a designated staff member.
- Sending the student to a peer mediation.
- Requiring that the student complete a reflective essay or assignment.
- Requiring that the student take actions to counteract/ameliorate a problem (i.e. fixing something the student broke).
- Referring the student to a Student Support Team.
- Restricting the student's participation in after-school/extra-curricular activities or field trips.
- Holding the student for detention or additional instructional time during lunch or before/after school.
- Confiscating inappropriate items related to the disciplinary infraction.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. "Corporal punishment" includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, "corporal punishment" does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property. (See also Rocketship's Seclusion and Restraint Policy.)

As described above, severe infractions that threaten the safety or health of students, staff or others, may be cause for suspension or expulsion, as outlined in Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

#### **IV. In-School Suspension**

In-school suspension ("ISS") provides an alternative to out-of-school suspension. ISS allows students to be counted present and provides an in-school opportunity for them to complete and receive credit for class assignments. During ISS, students will complete school work in a location separate from their class. ISS is not intended to be an alternative to or long-term replacement of the student's regularly scheduled class.

ISS may be used in the event that a student is engaging in prohibited conduct that is making the classroom environment physically or emotionally unsafe for other students or that severely disrupts a class or school-sponsored activity;

Only the Principal or Assistant Principal, with prior approval from his/her supervisor, shall assign a student to ISS. Students assigned to ISS must have written notification of the date and duration of the ISS assignment. Assignment to ISS and the scheduling of the days assigned are at the Principal's discretion.

Principals should place the student in ISS as soon as possible after the infraction is reported. The principal will ensure that:

- Students assigned to ISS are provided a safe, positive environment
- Students assigned to ISS are properly supervised; and
- Students assigned to ISS are allowed to complete class work assigned during his/her placement in ISS.
- All class work for students is obtained, academic assistance is provided as necessary, and completed work is returned to the student's classroom teacher.
- Activities of academic value are provided for the student when the classroom teacher's work is not provided or is insufficient for ISS time assigned.
- Additionally, classroom teachers will:
  - Provide classwork commensurate to the work missed for a student in ISS.
  - Record a student in ISS as present. There will be no attendance-related penalty for assignment to ISS.
  - Evaluate the student's work completed in ISS and give credit for work completed in ISS.
  - Ensure that students in ISS receive credit for attendance and full credit for work completed.

The student's parent/guardian must be notified of a student's assignment to ISS at the time that the ISS placement is scheduled. The Principal should contact a parent/guardian by phone or in-person meeting. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached in this manner, the Principal or his/her designee may make contact through email.

## STUDENT DRESS CODE - 406

Student uniforms help minimize disruption during the school day, promote respect for oneself and others, and foster school/community spirit. This policy addresses Rocketship's dress code requirements; dress code violations; and consequences for students who do not abide by the dress code.

### I. Dress Code Requirements

All students are expected to wear the Rocketship uniform to school every day. The Rocketship uniform consists of a khaki bottom (pants, shorts, dress, skirt, or skorts) and a white, green, or dark purple collared shirt. Students may also wear a Rocketship polo shirt, which can be obtained from a designated vendor. Each school Principal has the discretion to set more detailed dress codes on his/ her campus that align with this policy. Shirts must be tucked in at all times, which Rocketship considers being "dressed for success."

Students should also wear closed toe shoes. Sandals are not considered to be safe or appropriate for school.

### IV. Dress Code Violations

The following are considered to be dress code violations and are NOT permitted on any Rocketship campus:

- Dresses and shorts which are shorter than mid-thigh
- Spaghetti straps (smaller than two inches, or the width of a credit card)
- Tank tops (including white, ribbed undershirts)
- Clothing or accessories that are sexually provocative
- Clothing or accessories that identify a student with non-school clubs, profanity, obscenity, references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gangs (red or blue color) or prison culture name insignia
- Attire with writing that degrades individuals or groups Body piercings that create a safety hazard are not acceptable; moderate sized earrings are acceptable
- Platform shoes or high heels over 2.5 inches high
- Underwear or undergarments that are visible
- Tops that show the midriff area
- Pants that sag around the waist
- Intentionally torn pants or jeans
- Untied shoelaces
- Bandanas, hairnets, headbands, doo rags, and non-Marshall hats (also includes beanies, baseball caps, etc.)

- Sunglasses or Marshall hats may not be worn in the building, but may be worn outside to protect from the sun

### **III. Consequences of Dress Code Violations**

Students who repeatedly do not come to school in uniform may lose privileges in accordance with Rocketship's Student Discipline Policy. In addition, Rocketship may contact the student's parent/guardian to discuss the dress code violation.

## STUDENT RELEASE POLICY - 303

Rocketship will make every effort to ensure that all students get home safely when they leave school each day. This policy addresses dismissal cards; emergency cards; authorizing individuals to pick up a child; emergency dismissal; and Protection of Students.

### I. Dismissal Cards

At or before the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians shall be issued a Dismissal Card with the student's name, grade, and homeroom. Parent/guardians or other individuals authorized to pick up a child (see below) will display this card to school staff during dismissal. If a parent/guardian or other authorized individual forgets to bring the Dismissal Card to dismissal, they will need to check in with the front office and get a new Dismissal Card or a temporary pass.

### V. Emergency Cards

At the beginning of the school year, parent/guardians shall complete and submit an Emergency Contact Card to be kept on file at the school. Parents/guardians will be asked to include the names of individuals to be contacted in case of an emergency if attempts to contact the parent/guardian fail. Any person listed as an Emergency Contact will also be considered to be authorized by the child's parent/guardian to regularly pick them up from school unless the parent/guardian indicates otherwise. At any time during the year, parents/guardians may request to update the Emergency Card. Upon updating the Emergency Card, all previous versions become void.

### VI. Authorizing Individuals to Pick Up a Child

Parents/guardians may authorize Rocketship to release their child to other people by completing the Authorization to Pick Up section of the Emergency Contact Card. Parents/guardians are asked to include the name, phone number and relationship to the child for each person they wish to allow their child to be released to. This section of the Authorization to Pick Up may be updated by the parent/guardian at any time by visiting the school front office. Rocketship staff may ask the authorized individuals for identification when they pick the child up from school.

Rocketship's general policy prohibits releasing students to minors. The only exception is that parents/guardians may authorize Rocketship to release their child to a relative who is a minor (between the ages of **14-18 years old**) by completing the Authorization to Pick Up form *and* a Release to Minor waiver form. A duplicate Dismissal Card with printed authorization for the release to the minor relative must be printed for the minor relative, and the minor relative must bring this authorization each day they will pick up the Rocketeer. Proper identification will also be required.

Rocketship recognizes that there will be situations in which a person not listed on the Emergency Contact Card will need to pick the student up from school. In these rare instances, the parent/guardian should call the school to inform school staff that they authorize school staff to

release the student to another person that day. If a person that is not listed on the Emergency Contact Card form comes to pick the student up and the school has not already been contacted by the parent/guardian, the school will need to speak to the parent/guardian by phone prior to releasing the student. In addition, whenever feasible, parents/guardians should provide the authorized person with a signed note indicating their desire to have the person pick the child up on the day in question.

#### **VII. Emergency Dismissal**

In case of an emergency dismissal, parents/guardians must wait for instructions from school leaders before coming to campus to pick up their child. School leaders will provide parents/guardians with updated information on the dismissal process using the automated calling system. Parents/guardians should expect that the dismissal location and procedures could be different than on a regular day. Parents/guardians should be prepared to present photo identification when picking up a child after an emergency on campus.

#### **VIII. Protection of Students**

Rocketship is responsible for protecting the health and safety of all Rocketship students while the students are on Rocketship premises. If Rocketship has any reason to suspect that the health or safety of any Rocketship student would be endangered by releasing the student to an individual, even if that individual is authorized to pick up the student, Rocketship has the right to hold the student on campus and contact the parent/guardian or other valid emergency contact.

## SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY - 405.2

When disciplinary infractions occur on campus, our Principals are expected to respond in accordance with our Student Discipline Policy, which encourages positive behavioral interventions and supports and outlines available in-school disciplinary actions. Suspension should only be considered in cases of egregious behavioral infractions – and, even then, should be viewed as a last resort—as we believe that our students are best served when they are present at school every day. Recommendations for expulsion should not be pursued except in the most extreme cases, as our policy is to do whatever it takes to serve every student who enrolls in a Rocketship school.

If a situation does arise where a Principal feels that the student should be suspended or recommended for expulsion, this policy was written to guide the process. The policy has been written in accordance with relevant federal and state laws and regulations. It addresses grounds for suspension and expulsion; suspension and expulsion procedures; the maintenance of disciplinary records; student appeal rights; rehabilitation and readmission; and special procedures for the consideration of suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities.

### I. **Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion**

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at a Rocketship school or at any other school or a school-sponsored event at any time including but not limited to: while on school grounds; while going to or coming from school; during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; and during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity. Students may also be subject to suspension or expulsion for off-campus behavior if it creates a substantial disruption to the school environment or interferes with another student's ability to participate in the school program.

Students in DC may, at the discretion of the Principal in consultation with his/her supervisor, be suspended or recommended for expulsion for any of the following offenses:

- Possessing a bomb/facsimile or making a bomb threat.
- Possessing, selling, or attempting to sell a weapon (including, but not limited to, firearms, knives, razor blades, mace/tear gas/pepper spray, or any other dangerous objects) including replicas, toys, and fakes.
- Causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause physical injury to another person, or willfully using force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
- Making terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. purposes of this Policy, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to

another person, or property damage in excess of \$1000, with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.

- Possessing, using, selling or otherwise furnishing, or being under the influence of any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- Offering, arranging, or negotiating to sell any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then selling, delivering or otherwise furnishing to any person another substance or material represented to be a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- Possessing, using, selling, or attempting to sell tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel.
- Possessing, offering, arranging, or negotiating to sell any drug paraphernalia.
- Committing or attempting to commit robbery or extortion.
- Stealing or attempting to steal school property or private property.
- Knowingly receiving stolen school property or private property.
- Abusing, destroying, or attempting destroy school property or private property.
- Gambling.
- Gang-related incidents and/or evidence of Gang affiliation (including, but not limited to, engaging in Gang-related activities, Gang-related attire, Gang-related graffiti, evidence of Gang-affiliation, the writing of anything Gang-related). For the purposes of this policy, "Gang" is defined as a group of individuals that are involved in illegal, intimidating or harassing conduct.
- Hazing or attempting to haze. the purposes of this policy, "Hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a student organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective student. For purposes of this Policy, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

- Harassing, threatening, or intimidating a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- Engaging in Bullying/Harassment. For the purposes of this policy, “Bullying” and “Harassment” are defined as any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct whether physical, electronic, or verbal that may be based on an individual’s actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, or place of residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on an individual’s association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics in a manner that can reasonably be predicted to place the individual in reasonable fear of physical harm to their person or property, cause a substantial detrimental effect on the individual’s physical or mental health, substantially interfere with a student’s academic performance or attendance or a staff member’s performance of his/her job duties, or substantially interferes with the individual’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school. Discipline for bullying/harassment will be issued in accordance with the “Sanctions” section of Rocketship’s Bullying Prevention Policy.
- Engaging in arson or firesetting or possessing matches, lighters, or any other incendiary device.
- Committing or attempting to commit a Sexual Act or Sexual Harassment. For the purposes of this Policy, “Sexual Act” has the same definition as in the DC Criminal Code. “Sexual harassment” is defined as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes sexual violence, which the Rocketship defines as physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person’s will or where a person is incapable of giving consent.

#### Grounds for Suspension

Additionally, students may be suspended for any of the following offenses. (Alternatively, students may be subject to in-school discipline as described in Rocketship’s Student Discipline policy.)

- Inciting or attempting to incite others to violence or disruption.
- Aiding or abetting the infliction or attempted infliction of violence on another.
- Engaging in behaviors that threaten the safety of oneself or others.
- Intentionally contaminating the food of another.

- Administering medication to self or others for purposes other than student treatment under authorized medication administration plans.
- Disrupting school activities or otherwise defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, or other school staff members or personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
- Committing an obscene act or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Recording or photographing students or staff members without their prior knowledge and consent.
- Using computers for non-school related activities, including viewing or accessing prohibited sites.
- Using cell phones or other personal electronic communication devices on school property, during school hours or during school functions, except when under express permission and supervision of a staff member.
- Trespassing (including being on school grounds while school is not in session, being in unauthorized areas of the building, and use of the bathroom without permission).
- Leaving the classroom, school building, school property, or school activity without permission.
- Intentionally altering, falsifying, destroying, or fabricating any official document (including 9-1-1 phone calls and setting off fire alarms).

#### Suspension and Expulsion of Pre-K Students

Under DC law, out-of-school suspensions of pre-K age students are prohibited except for the following limited situations:

- A school may suspend a pre-K student for up to three days if the student willfully caused or attempted to cause bodily injury, unless the injury was caused in self-defense.
- A school may suspend a pre-K student for up to three days if the student threatened seriously bodily injury, unless the threat was made in self-defense.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- “Pre-K age” is defined as children who are 3 or 4 years of age, and children who turn 5 after September 30th)
- Out-of-school suspension is defined as any removal of a student from school attendance for an entire school day or longer.
- “Bodily injury” is defined as a cut, abrasion, bruise, burn, or disfigurement; physical pain; illness; impairment of a function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; or any other injury to the body, no matter how temporary.
- “Serious bodily injury” is defined as bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

## **II. Suspension Procedures**

A suspension is a temporary dismissal of a student from the regular school program and school-sponsored events for the allotted time assigned by a school administrator. Suspensions can range from one to five school days, depending on the seriousness of the violation. Students are expected to complete all work assigned while they serve their suspension.

Suspensions at Rocketship will adhere to the following procedures:

#### Conference

When feasible, suspension may be preceded by a conference conducted by the Principal or designee with the student and his/her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor, or school employee who referred the student to the Principal. The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference in an emergency situation, both the parent/guardian and student shall be given the opportunity to conference within two school days.

At the conference, the student shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him/her and shall be given the opportunity to present his/her version and evidence in his/her defense.

Absent an emergency situation, the conference must occur before the student is sent home on suspension.

No penalties may be imposed on a student for failure of the student's parent/guardian to attend a conference with school officials. Reinstatement of the suspended student shall not be contingent upon attendance by the student's parent or guardian at the conference.

#### Notice to Parents/Guardians

At the time that the decision is made to suspend a student, the Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the student's parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall also be notified in writing of the suspension, the reason for the suspension, the length of the suspension, the student's right to return to school at the end of the suspension, and any conditions for that return (i.e. a return conference with the parent/guardian) and the date of return following suspension. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

A copy of this notice will also be filed in the student's cumulative folder in the school.

#### Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five consecutive school days per suspension. In calculating days of suspension, days served will not include days when school is not in session for students, including but not limited to school closure days, school holidays, spring break, and summer break. If the student leaves school on the day that the suspension was imposed, this day will be counted as part of the suspension if the student was denied class participation prior to 12 noon of that day. The suspension shall terminate at midnight on the day listed as the last day of the suspension.

Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Principal or Principal's designee, the student and the student's parent/guardian or representative will be invited to a second conference to determine if the suspension for the student should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following determinations: (1) the student's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or (2) the student poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

Students who are suspended shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension.

### **III. Authority to Expel**

An expulsion is the permanent dismissal of a student from the Rocketship program. If an expulsion is approved, the parent/guardian has the responsibility to place the student in another school. The full authority of the Rocketship governing Board of Directors ("the Board") to hear and conduct expulsions shall be granted to the Academic Affairs Committee, a committee of the Board. The Academic Affairs Committee shall consist of three board members. The Academic Affairs Committee may expel any student found to have committed an expellable offense as listed in Section II above. Instead of conducting the hearing itself, the Academic Affairs Committee may appoint an impartial administrative panel of three or more persons, none of whom is a member of the Board or employed on the staff of the school in which the student is enrolled.

### **IV. Expulsion Procedures**

#### **Hearing**

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. The hearing shall be held within 20 school days after the Principal or designee determines that the student has committed an expellable offense, unless the student requests, in writing, that the hearing be postponed.

In the event an administrative panel hears the case, it will, within 10 days of the hearing, make a recommendation to the Academic Affairs Committee for a final decision whether or not to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session unless the student makes a written request for a public hearing three days prior to the hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the student. The notice shall include:

- The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
- A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based, along with a summary of the evidence against the student;
- A copy of Rocketship's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
- Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the school to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
- The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
- The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
- The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
- The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

#### Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses

Rocketship may, upon a finding of good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of a statement from the victim or witness, which shall be examined only by Rocketship or the hearing officer. Copies of these statements, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the student.

#### Presentation of Evidence

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel and decision by the Board to expel must be supported by a preponderance of the evidence that the student committed an expellable offense. Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay and written declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Board, Panel or designee determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and shall be made within three school days following the conclusion of the hearing.

If the expulsion hearing panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the student shall be returned to his/her educational program or become subject to discipline or suspension in accordance with this policy.

#### Written Notice to Expel

The Principal or designee, following a decision of the Board to expel, shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Board's adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following:

- notice of the specific offense committed by the student and
- notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with Rocketship.

#### Right to Appeal

The student/family shall have the right to appeal the decision to expel the student from Rocketship directly to the Academic Affairs Committee. If the Academic Affairs Committee made the final decision on the expulsion, the appeal shall go directly to the Executive Committee of the Board. The request to appeal must be made in writing and shall be submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee or Executive Committee within five business days of being made aware of the decision to expel the student. The appeal shall be heard by the Academic Affairs Committee or Executive Committee within 15 days of receipt of the appeal.

#### Expelled Students/Alternative Education

With the exception of students with disabilities under IDEA, students who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within their school district of residence.

#### Rehabilitation and Readmission

At the time of the expulsion order, students who are expelled shall be given a rehabilitation plan, to be developed by the Academic Affairs Committee in conjunction with Rocketship staff, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one year from the date of expulsion when the student may be reviewed for readmission to a Rocketship school.

The decision to admit a pupil who has been expelled from a Rocketship school shall be in the sole discretion of the Board following a meeting with the Principal and the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The Principal shall make a recommendation to the Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon Rocketship's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

The decision to admit a pupil who has previously been expelled from another school, school district or charter school shall be in the discretion of the Principal following a meeting with the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. Where applicable, the Principal may also consider whether the pupil has completed any rehabilitation plan or other improvement measures prescribed by the pupil's previous school. The Principal shall make a recommendation following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's admission is also contingent upon RSPS's capacity at the time the student seeks admission.

**V. Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities**

Services During Suspension

Students with disabilities pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Act ("IDEA") suspended for more than ten school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment or functional analysis, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, a manifestation determination shall take place.

"Change of Placement" includes a recommendation for expulsion, consecutive removal of more than ten school days, or a cumulative removal of more than ten school days in a school year. Rocketship, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine: (1) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or (2) the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP.

If Rocketship, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If Rocketship, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team shall:

1. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the school had not

conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;

2. If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
3. Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the school agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If the school, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a result of the failure to implement the IEP, then the school may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

#### Due Process Appeals

If the parent of a child with a disability disagrees with any decision regarding a disciplinary change in placement, or the manifestation determination, or the school believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, the parent or school may request an expedited administrative hearing through the regional administrative hearing office.

When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent or the school, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the 45-day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise.

#### Special Circumstances

Rocketship personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

The Principal or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:

- Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC § 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;

- Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

#### Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP team.

#### Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEIA and who has violated the Rocketship's behavioral policies may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if Rocketship had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

Rocketship shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if one of the following conditions exists prior to the behavior at issue:

- The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of Rocketship, or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education and related services;
- The parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child pursuant to §§ 300.300 through 300.311; or
- The teacher of the child, or other Rocketship personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the director of special education of the agency or to other supervisory personnel of the agency.

If the school knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the disciplinary protections available to IDEA-eligible children with disabilities.

If the school had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the proposed discipline. The school shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however the student shall remain in the education placement determined by Rocketship pending the results of the evaluation.

Rocketship shall not be deemed to have knowledge of that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

## **VI. Data Collection**

Pursuant to DC law, Rocketship will collect the following data related to student discipline:

- Total number of out-of-school and in-school suspensions for the student each school year.
- Total number of days excluded from school.
- Whether the student was referred to an alternative education setting.
- Whether the student was expelled.
- Whether the student voluntarily or involuntarily transferred or withdrew from the school during the school year.
- A description of the behavior that led to each suspension or expulsion.

The following data will be submitted to OSSE by August 15<sup>th</sup> of each year:

- Students suspended for one to five days.
- Students suspended for six to 10 days.
- Students suspended for more than 10 days.
- Students who received more than one suspension in a school year.
- Students who were expelled.
- Students who voluntarily or involuntarily transferred or withdrew from the school during the school year.
- Students who were referred to an alternative education setting during a suspension.
- Description of the behavior that led to each suspension or expulsion.

The data must be disaggregated by campus, grade, gender, race, ethnicity, special education status, ELL status, and at-risk status.

## TITLE IX POLICY - 116

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states, "No person ... shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Rocketship Public Schools (Rocketship) is committed to providing a learning and working environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each student and employee has a right to learn and work in an environment that is free from unlawful discrimination. No Rocketship student or employee shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender in any Rocketship educational program or activity.

### **I. Equal Treatment of Students in Educational Programs and Activities**

Under Title IX, Rocketship assures the equal treatment of students in educational programs and activities and specify that sex and gender equity shall be practiced in the following ways:

#### Programs and Activities

- Students have the right to equal learning opportunities in their school.
- Students may not be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to harassment or other forms of discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender in any program or activity.

#### Course Accessibility and Instruction

- Students may not be required to take and/or may not be denied enrollment in a course because of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender.
- Instruction in all courses and classes must be co-educational.
- Elementary and secondary units of instruction which deal exclusively with human sexuality may be conducted in separate sessions for boys and girls.
- Students have the right to be evaluated and graded without regard to their sex, sexual orientation, or gender.
- Instructional materials and textbooks shall not contain any matter reflecting adversely upon persons because of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender.
- Instructional materials and textbooks shall accurately portray the cultural, racial, gender, and sexual diversity of our society.

- Students shall be provided with counseling and guidance that is not discriminatory.

### Physical Education

- All physical education classes must be co-educational.
- Participation in a particular physical education activity or sport, if required of students of one sex, shall be available to students of each sex.
- Instruction and testing in all physical education classes are to be co-educational.
- Student grouping by ability is allowed. However, any grouping of students during physical education activities should be ongoing, flexible, and modified per unit activity and may not have a discriminatory impact.
- Students are to be assessed by objective standards of individual performance without regard to sex.

### Athletics

- Schools shall offer all students equal opportunities to play sports.
- Equipment and supplies, game and practice schedules, budgets, coaching, travel allowances, facilities, publicity, support services, and tutoring offered to teams shall provide comparable and equitable athletic opportunities for members of both sexes, without disparity or imbalance.

### Sexual Harassment

- Sexual harassment of or by school employees or students is a form of sex and gender discrimination and is prohibited.
- School personnel must respond to allegations of sexual harassment.

### Extra-Curricular Activities, Programs, and Clubs

- Participation in all extra-curricular activities, programs, and student clubs shall be available to all students without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability.
- All student clubs are to have equal access to facilities and a fair opportunity to meet.
- No extra-curricular activity, program, or club is to be labeled or scheduled with the result of the separation of students on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, and mental or physical disability.

Title IX does not apply to the following:

- YMCA, YWCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, and voluntary youth service organizations.
- Father-Son and Mother-Daughter activities-provided that comparable activities are offered for students of the other sex.

## **II. Title IX Coordinator**

The role of the Title IX Coordinator is to respond to any complaints of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment, as well as to provide support to schools to ensure compliance. Provisions should be made to facilitate the ability of non- and limited-English speaking students to access the Title IX Coordinator and file a complaint.

The Title IX Coordinator will communicate with and ensure that staff, students, and parents are informed of Rocketship's policy requiring the promotion of mutual respect and acceptance, as well as Rocketship policy regarding nondiscrimination and sexual harassment.

The Title IX Coordinator shall respond quickly to any complaints of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment and take action to address the behavior, as well as provide support, information, and options to students regarding sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment. This may include providing assistance with the filing of a formal complaint in accordance with Section V below. The Title IX Coordinator will refer any complaints about discrimination or sexual harassment involving an employee to the Vice President of Human Resources immediately.

The Title IX Coordinator is:  
Rachel Heredia  
[compliance@rsed.org](mailto:compliance@rsed.org)

## **III. Notification**

Rocketship's Nondiscrimination Statement and Sexual Harassment Policy shall be provided to all Rocketship employees on an annual basis at the beginning of each school year.

All required nondiscrimination notices to students and parents are provided in the Parent/Student Handbook. All schools are required to distribute the Parent/Student Handbook to all students annually and to every student at the time of initial enrollment.

## **IV. Confidentiality and Non-retaliation**

Complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment shall be handled in a confidential manner to respect the privacy of all parties to the fullest extent possible. Every effort shall be made to limit the distribution of information to those persons who need to know within the confines of Rocketship's reporting procedures and investigative process.

Rocketship will not tolerate retaliation against anyone for filing a complaint or participating in the complaint investigation process. These confidentiality and non-retaliation requirements extend to all parties involved.

## **V. Complaint Procedures**

### Informal Complaints

Informal resolutions of student discrimination and sexual harassment complaints should be addressed at the school site. Complainants are encouraged to discuss their concern or complaint promptly and candidly with their immediate supervisor, student's teacher, or the school principal. The complainant is not required to discuss his/her complaint with the alleged harasser or perpetrator in any manner or for any reason prior to initiating a formal complaint. The informal process should generally be bypassed if the complainant names a principal as a respondent or the complaint alleges school-wide discriminatory Practices. In those circumstances, the complainant may initiate a formal complaint.

### Formal Complaints

Formal complaints of student discrimination and sexual harassment shall be handled in accordance with Rocketship's complaint policies.

## VOLUNTEER CLEARANCE POLICY - 309.2

Engaged families are a core pillar of Rocketship's model and critical to the long-term success of Rocketship students. By actively being included and involved in our schools and their Rocketeers' learning, parents become integrated into the fabric of the school community. Rocketship asks that families participate in at least twenty (20) Parent Partnership Hours each year by supporting or participating in various school activities. (For more details, see Rocketship's Parent Partnership Policy.)

Parent Partnership Hours can be realized in many ways, including through volunteering on and off campus. Because Rocketship is deeply committed to ensuring the safety of all students, any parent, guardian, or family member who chooses to volunteer on- or off-campus at Rocketship-sponsored events must apply to become a volunteer and undergo any necessary background check procedures in accordance with this policy. All individuals who volunteer on campus must abide by the standards and procedures set forth in Rocketship's Campus Access and Visitor Policy.

This policy outlines volunteer positions that require criminal background checks; standards for serving as a volunteer; procedures for obtaining a valid background check; duration of background checks; traffic record checks; and penalties for providing false information.

### I. **Mandatory Criminal Background Checks**

All prospective volunteers who may interact with students in an unsupervised capacity and all volunteers who plan to regularly volunteer at a Rocketship school for more than 10 hours per week must undergo a criminal background check in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

Individuals who will have only supervised contact with students are not required to undergo a background check (i.e. volunteers who plan to visit a classroom to read a book to students or assist a teacher with a project). For the purposes of this policy, "supervised" means under the direct supervision, at all times, of an employee or a volunteer who has received a current, satisfactory criminal background check.

### II. **Disqualification of Prospective and Current Volunteers**

Rocketship will consider the results of the background check in determining whether to utilize an individual as a volunteer. A volunteer will be disqualified if the background check shows that the individual:

- has been convicted of a crime;
- has entered a plea of no contest;
- is on probation before judgment or placement of a case upon a stet docket;

- has been found not guilty by reason of insanity for any sexual offenses or intrafamily offenses;
- has a record of any of the following felony offenses in any state or territory:
  - murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, or arson;
  - assault, assault with a dangerous weapon, mayhem, malicious disfigurement, or threats to do bodily harm;
  - burglary;
  - robbery;
  - kidnapping;
  - illegal use or possession of a firearm;
  - sexual offenses, including indecent exposure; promoting, procuring, compelling, soliciting, or engaging in prostitution; corrupting minors (sexual relations with children); molesting; voyeurism; committing sexual acts in public; incest; rape; sexual assault; sexual battery; or sexual abuse;
  - child abuse or cruelty to children; or
  - unlawful distribution of or possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance.

Rocketship reserves the right to disqualify any other current or prospective volunteer in its reasonable discretion.

### **III. Background Check Procedures**

The background check will include a fingerprinting and a national criminal record check. Background checks may be obtained through the DC Metropolitan Police Department, US Department of Justice, or a private party authorized in accordance with DC Code § 4-1501.05.

Prospective volunteers who will have direct contact with children will not be allowed to begin volunteering in an unsupervised setting until the results of the criminal background check have been received by Rocketship and deemed to be satisfactory in accordance with this policy.

### **IV. Duration of Background Check**

A volunteer may use the same criminal background check for a period of two years. Rocketship will periodically conduct background checks on individuals who volunteer at least 10 hours per week, at least every two years.

### **V. Penalty for Providing False Information**

A prospective volunteer who intentionally provides false information in the course of the background check process shall be subject to prosecution pursuant to DC Code § 22-2405.

### **VI. Minor Volunteer Requirements**

Minor Volunteers CAN ONLY serve in roles that do not allow them to be alone with or otherwise supervise Rocketship students. Minor Volunteers cannot go on field trips. The Principal at the

school where the Minor Volunteer wishes to volunteer has total discretion to accept or reject a prospective

Minor Volunteer. Minor Volunteers will need to complete the following requirements:

- A Volunteer Application signed by the Minor Volunteer and the Minor Volunteer's parent/guardian.
- A behavior contract (available from the Office Manager) signed by the Minor Volunteer, the Minor Volunteer's parent/guardian, and the school leader at the school where the Minor Volunteer will be volunteering.