



YEAR IN REVIEW

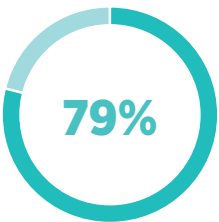
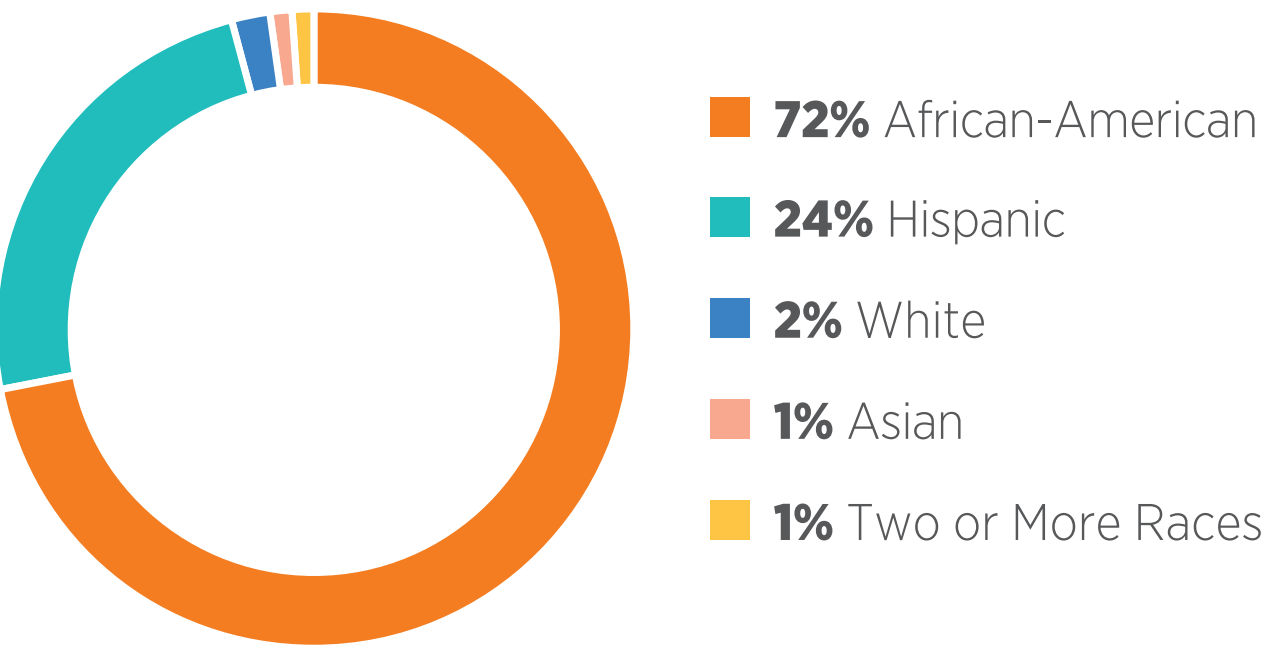
ROCKETSHIP
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
T E X A S

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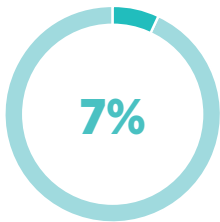
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Serving Communities with the Highest Need



Economically Disadvantaged



Emergent Bilinguals

Dear Friends of Rocketship Texas,

The beacon of quality education has flickered dimly in the Stop 6 and surrounding communities. Today, amid the joyous sounds of laughter and learning, a new light ignites. I commend our faculty, families, and community's unwavering dedication to ensuring equal access to opportunities for all. It's heartening to witness the commitment of talented educators and the inspiring efforts of our Rocketeers as they strive to unlock their full potential.

This community holds a special place in my heart, having played a pivotal role in shaping who I am today. I'm honored to launch Rocketship Dennis Dunkins and Rocketship Explore Elementary, symbols of academic excellence seamlessly integrated into our community. Our classrooms buzz with the energy of inquiry-based learning, where children explore the wonders of math through movement, unravel history through play, and weave narratives that paint their dreams onto the canvas of tomorrow.

Last year, we intentionally opened our first campus with third grade, knowing the challenges we would face. We also understood these challenges were exacerbated by the recent Covid-19 school closures. You can see our results highlighted on page 8. Acknowledging the work needed with and for our families, we take full responsibility for our students' achievement results and the work that follows. At Rocketship Texas, every educator is committed to ensuring our Rocketeers not only catch up but exceed grade-level expectations.

Your generous support fuels the realization of this dream. With the same enthusiasm as last spring, we aim to accelerate our results this year. Your partnership enables us to deliver:

- 1. Rigorous Academics:** A curriculum that sparks curiosity, challenges minds, and instills a lifelong love for learning.
- 2. Nurturing Environment:** Small class sizes, dedicated teachers, and personalized attention for every child.
- 3. Community Connection:** Bridging gaps between families, educators, and local partners to create a vibrant hub of learning and support.

Together, we can rewrite the narrative of educational disparities in Stop 6 and similar communities. I invite you to join us in shaping today's dreamers' dreams and fostering tomorrow's Texas leaders. We are truly dreaming and achieving together.

Let's illuminate the potential within every child and witness them shine as beacons of hope and progress in our community. Together, we can turn this vision into reality.

In partnership,

SaJade J. Miller

SaJade J. Miller
Superintendent,
Rocketship Public Schools Texas



Dear partners,

As we reflect on the opening of our first two schools, I'm filled with immense pride in what Rocketship Texas has achieved. This past year, we witnessed our students' resilience, our teachers' dedication, and the unwavering support of our families and partners. And it's this support from people like you that gives us the strength to keep pushing boundaries and empowering young minds.

This year, we've seen:

- 1. Academic Growth:** We're focused on attaining more than one year of growth per student. Understanding that as our students grow with us, their achievement will elevate to grade-level proficiency and beyond. We're nurturing a love for learning that transcends textbooks with personalized learning.
- 2. Breaking Barriers:** We proudly offer a welcoming environment for diverse learners, ensuring every student has the opportunity to reach their full potential. Our commitment to cultural celebration resonates throughout our classrooms and hallways.
- 3. Community Engagement:** We've hosted advocacy workshops and events open to the public, fostering a vibrant atmosphere of collaboration and shared purpose. We are developing partnerships with local community organizations that support our families.

But we've only just begun.

Partnership with Rocketship Texas isn't just about bricks and mortar, it's about building brighter futures. You'll be planting seeds of knowledge, cultivating curiosity, and equipping young minds to become the next generation of Texas leaders, innovators, and changemakers.

Please take a moment to review our Year In Review, which delves deeper into our achievements and plans for the future. We invite you to visit our schools, meet our students and teachers, and witness firsthand the magic unfolding within our walls.

Sincerely,

Peter Philpott

Peter Philpott
Board Chair,
Rocketship Public Schools Texas



Major New Stanford Study Highlights “Gap-Busting” Public Charter Schools

One of the benefits of being a Rocketship school is being a part of a strong network.

A major new Stanford CREDO study of more than 3 million public school students found that students at public charter schools outperform traditional public school students. More notably, the study highlighted Rocketship Public Schools as one of the charter sector’s “gap-busting” networks that are providing empirical proof that high-quality public education is possible anywhere.

The study also pushed back on a common, unfounded claim that charter schools “cherry pick” the best students as a way to improve their results. In multiple analyses, this major study found the opposite is true. Charter schools enroll students who are disproportionately lower achieving than the students in traditional schools. Charter schools are serving the students most in need and realizing stronger results.

Margaret “Macke” Raymond, founder and director of CREDO, put it best when she said that:



What you’re looking at is really the only story in U.S. education policy where we’ve been able to create a set of conditions such that schools actually do get better.



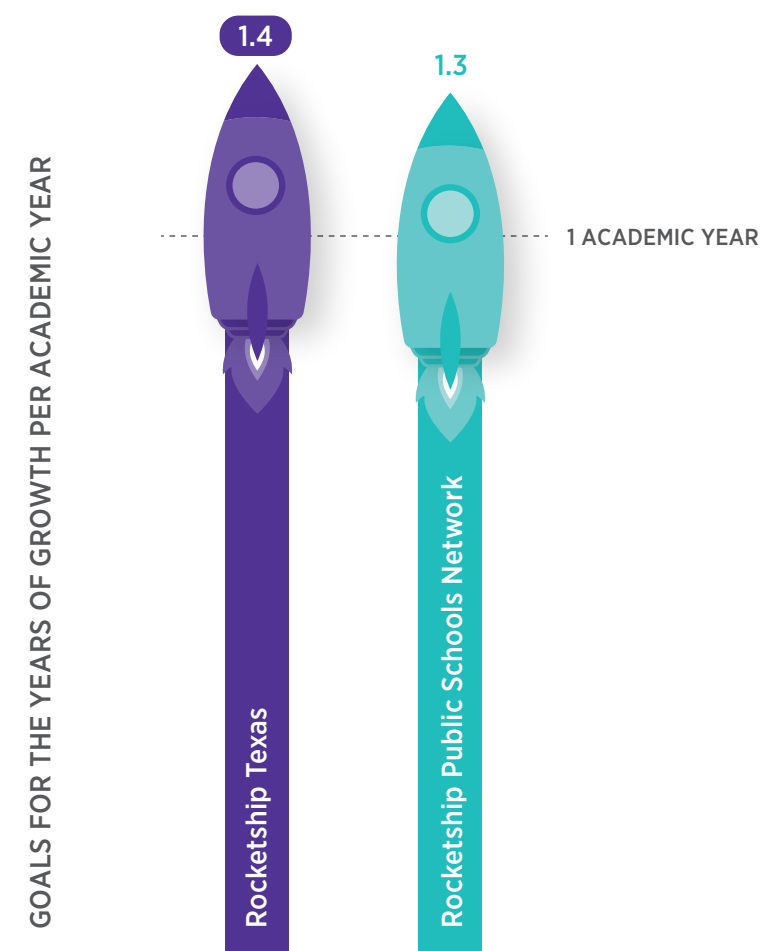
Indeed, this study makes it clear that public charter schools are driving significant progress in public education. And at the core of that progress is our commitment to continuous learning, innovation, improvement, and meeting the unique needs of all students and families. All of us at Rocketship are tremendously proud to play a significant role in demonstrating what is possible in public education.



Propelling Performance in Texas

Our promise to parents is if they will stay with us through grade 5, their child will read and do math at or above grade level. Rocketship Texas educators are committed to ensuring Rocketeers exceed grade-level expectations. Most of our students show up 2+ years below grade level. We made significant progress in our first year, exceeding one year of academic growth. Our ambitious goal for the 23-24 school year is to close the achievement gap with our students in Fort Worth.

Committed to our Growth Goals



We Own Our Results

When Rocketship Texas launched our first campus in Fort Worth, 40% of our Rocketeers started the school year two or more grade levels behind. We originally planned to open Rocketship Dennis Dunkins Elementary with students up to second grade. But community needs revealed the need to pivot and open with third grade in our inaugural year.

Out of the 44 Rocketship Dennis Dunkins third graders who took the STAAR assessment, 9% were at or above grade level in math, and 23% in reading. This means that compared to their peers across Texas, the majority of our students started in the bottom quartiles of performance.

These results are shocking. But they do not surprise us. We own our results.

The enormous gaps our students started with were a powerful and sobering reminder of the tremendous need in our great city. Every year a student spends in an underperforming school is another year they fall further behind their college-bound peers. Eventually, those gaps become insurmountable.

We understand that bridging these gaps, accumulated over several years in prior schools, cannot be achieved in a single academic year.

We are confident that our approach is effective. In the second semester of last year, our students showed promising results — exceeding one year of academic growth. We're committed to continuing to focus on improving student outcomes, and we're transparent about our progress. We will continue to share our data with the entire community to ensure we're held accountable.



Partnering with Parents from the Start

Our approach to personalized learning is focused on building deep relationships with our Rocketeers and their families. A strong relationship between the family and school is the backbone of child development. At Rocketship, this starts with our annual home visits. This annual practice enables our educators to learn about their students' home environment, family structure, unique interests and more. This allows us to meet our students where they are academically and emotionally.

Yet, parent-teacher partnership doesn't end there. In between our three family-teacher conferences over the course of the year, families receive weekly updates on how each student is progressing and work to find collaborative solutions to help students thrive. Our open-door policy also encourages families to join us to cheer and dance at morning Launch, sit in their child's classroom throughout the day, or volunteer at one of our many afterschool family events. We know that when parents are more involved in their child's education, Rocketeers have greater chances at excelling in school. By creating multiple opportunities for families to engage, we're able to support Rocketeers holistically and connect with families genuinely.

We strive to ensure each year

100% of students

receive home visits
from educators

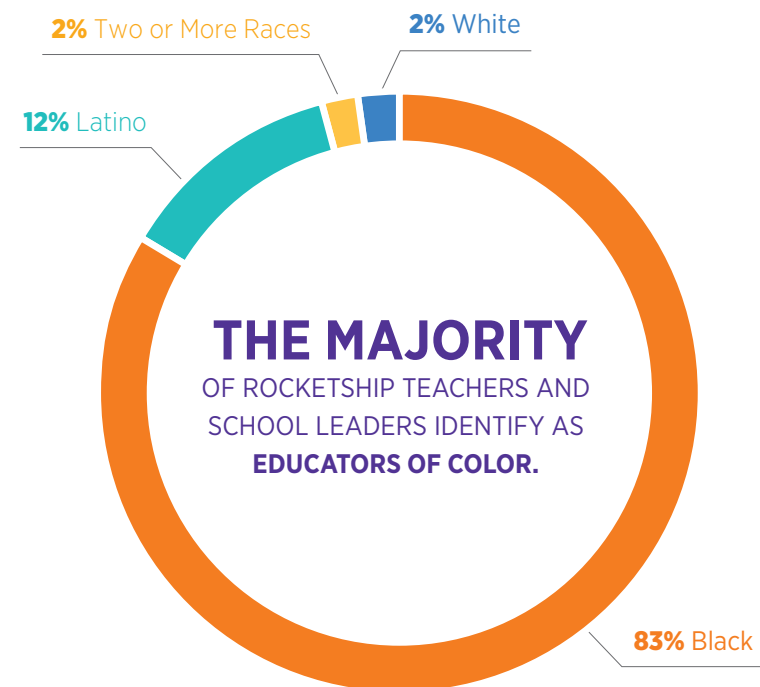


Educator Diversity Benefits All Students

An increasing body of research shows that student achievement and attendance go up and suspension rates go down when students have at least one same-race teacher. Yet national data from the Institute of Education Sciences shows that America's teaching force hasn't increased in diversity. In fact, 79% of the nation's public school teachers are white. In contrast, 45% of the nation's public school students are white, according to the National Center of Education Statistics. While there has been a slight increase in Hispanic public school teachers since 2015, the share of Black teachers has actually declined since the 1990s.

We are flipping the “diversity in education” script at Rocketship. **Our educators reflect the communities we serve. The majority of our educators—98%—identify as people of color.**

Equity in education is about providing each student with what they need to succeed. This includes learning from teachers who offer both windows and mirrors — people who bring new perspectives, as well as reflect their own background and experience. That is why Rocketship is working tirelessly to ensure that our Rocketeers are taught by a representative team of educators that bring experiences, ideas, and perspectives to our classrooms that truly connect with our kids and communities.



Rocketship students celebrate first-elected Hispanic woman to Fort Worth City Council.

Everyone is Welcome at Rocketship

We know that many families feel marginalized because they aren't seen or valued in the under-performing traditional public schools where they live. Many parents are uncertain that their children will be honored and celebrated for who they are and the potential they have to learn and grow.

Our model for engagement creates the conditions for inclusivity.

Rocketship Texas exists to disrupt that narrative. Every leader and educator at Rocketship Texas believes that all children are filled with greatness and unlimited potential. We work every day to ensure every Rocketeer has the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their background or circumstances.

We see diversity as a strength. We learn from one another and are better because of it. We know that every family is unique, and we celebrate the diversity of our students and their families.



ELEMENTARY- ONLY BY DESIGN



Improving The Public Education Ecosystem

Rocketship curates community school environments that meet students' needs both inside and outside the classroom. We coordinate with local support programs to provide healthcare, food assistance, counseling services, housing assistance, and more. Our schools emphasize authentic family engagement.

Rocketship's expertise in elementary education prepares students for the rigors of middle school and high school. This means middle schools are enrolling more students who are on grade level and ready to advance their education.

Rocketship also sends powerful parents off to join those middle school communities. They learn to hold leaders accountable and ensure their children continue to receive the same excellence in education that they experienced during their elementary years at Rocketship.

Rocketship's elementary-only model is designed to improve the entire public education ecosystem in the surrounding community. Our approach centers on improving outcomes for kids and deepening engagement with parents at the elementary level. By focusing on elementary education, Rocketship is creating a virtuous cycle that leads to stronger middle schools and high schools.



ROCKETSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

T E X A S

307
ROCKETEERS

79%
ECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED

24%
HISPANIC

72%
AFRICAN-
AMERICAN

In August 2022, Rocketship Public Schools Texas opened its first school in Fort Worth. The region is led by Superintendent SaJade Miller, a proven education leader born and raised in Southeast Fort Worth's Stop 6 neighborhood — the same community our first school serves. Mr. Miller has dedicated his entire career to working to eliminate the racial achievement gap in Texas and has a deep understanding of the strengths, opportunities, and challenges with public education in Fort Worth. He passionately believes that to create a more equitable and excellent public school system in Tarrant County, we need to innovate and we need to collaborate.

Rocketship Texas is creating a diverse coalition of educators, community leaders, and parents who are working together to improve racial equity and excellence

in public education. The Rocketship Texas board brings deep expertise in public education, community organizing, financial management, and parent engagement. Together, they endeavor to establish an equitable and excellent educational environment that serves all children. By focusing exclusively on elementary education, our model is designed to help elevate the entire system of public education in Tarrant County. When our prepared students and engaged parents move on to different middle schools, those students will be ready for the rigors of middle school — and their parents will know how to advocate for their students, partner with educators, and hold leaders accountable. This is how our elementary-only model is designed to help elevate the entire public education system in Tarrant County.

Fueled by Local Leaders



Walter Dansby
Former Superintendent,
Fort Worth ISD



Vincent Davila
CPA,
Sproles Woodard



Peter Philpott
Director,
Robert W Baird and Co.



Loretta Burns
Executive Director,
AB Christian Learning



Alex Jimenez
Retd. Vice President,
TXU Corp.



SaJade Miller
Superintendent,
Rocketship Texas



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Victoria Puente
Founder,
Long Game Consulting, LLC



Michael Gonzalez
Retired Educator,
All Saints Episcopal School



Rocketship Dennis Dunkins Elementary Welcomes the Stop 6 Community

At Rocketship Dennis Dunkins Elementary, we are truly partnering with our parents to unleash the potential of all of our students and this entire community. Every morning when I see our parents at Launch, when they helped interview our teachers before our doors even opened, when we meet them in their homes before school starts, and every single day we deepen our relationships with them, we know that we are creating something truly special and transformative here at Rocketship.

The ribbon-cutting of our flagship school was about our parents. Our parents who chose a better future for their kids by sending them to Rocketship. Each of these families answered the call and chose to be a part of this adventure. Founding work is not easy but this community has been steadfast in supporting each other, our Rocketeers, our families, and elevating our collective mission. Thank you for your continued spirit of excellence and for always being ready for the collective growth and partnership that's to come!

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Dr. Dennis Dunkins, a pioneer in Tarrant County education, co-founded the Texas Alliance of Black School Educators in 1986 to champion opportunities for African-American students and address the unique challenges faced by their teachers and leaders. During his tenure at Fort Worth ISD, Dunkins spearheaded college visits for Black students and played a pivotal role in establishing magnet programs at local high schools. His unwavering commitment to educational equity and his passion for empowering youth earned him the admiration and respect of Tarrant County educators and residents alike.

Dennis Dunkins
Fort Worth Education Pioneer



SRI Spotlights Rocketship's Parent Power

A parent is a child's first teacher and lifelong advocate. Parents hold extraordinary power to change outcomes for their children and improve the quality of their community. But they often don't have a seat at decision-making tables. We're working to change that.

SRI International, an independent nonprofit research institute, spent months analyzing our parent leadership work and published a report detailing our model and results. The study authors noted that, "Rocketship parents are learning to use their voices to influence local and state policies that impact their families and communities."

We believe every parent can become a leader. Parents who get involved in this work typically do not have any experience in community organizing or advocacy. As they learn about new issues affecting their community and acquire new skills, our parents build power and create change in their communities. Rocketship families have pushed for better traffic safety measures, raised awareness about the importance of voting, participated in marches and rallies, and advocated for policies that are improving excellence and equity in public education. For many parents, these experiences have led to increased self-confidence, lasting friendships and, in some cases, jobs in advocacy and government.



“

Rocketship parents are learning to use their voices to influence local and state policies that impact their families and communities.

– SRI International

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Voices for Change:
Parent Leadership &
Advocacy at Rocketship
Public Schools

SRI International®

Families Come Together to Get Out the Vote!

As a public school network, we believe it is our responsibility to not only teach our students about the bedrock of our democracy but also engage their parents to ensure they are exercising their rights as citizens. That is why we coordinated an effort across all our schools nationwide to register families to vote and drive voter mobilization. This included family sessions to learn about the right to vote, communications campaigns about election logistics, one-on-one conversations to answer questions and a student curriculum about what voting means in America's democracy, with a home-to-school connection to encourage families to have conversations about voting at the dinner table. We worked individually and in small groups to make sure everyone knew how to access their vote: the requirements for registering, relevant deadlines, voter registration forms, polling locations, and more.



“

“Family Civic and community engagement is at the core of the Rocketship parent power model and, as trusted school communities, we are uniquely positioned to ensure our families can access their right to vote. At Rocketship Texas, we believe in the power that our families have to lead change in their communities. Our parents register together, go to the polls together, and support their community with getting out to vote, as well. As their students' first teachers, parents and caregivers set an example for their kids so by engaging in these activities, they are helping to shape the next generation of voters.”

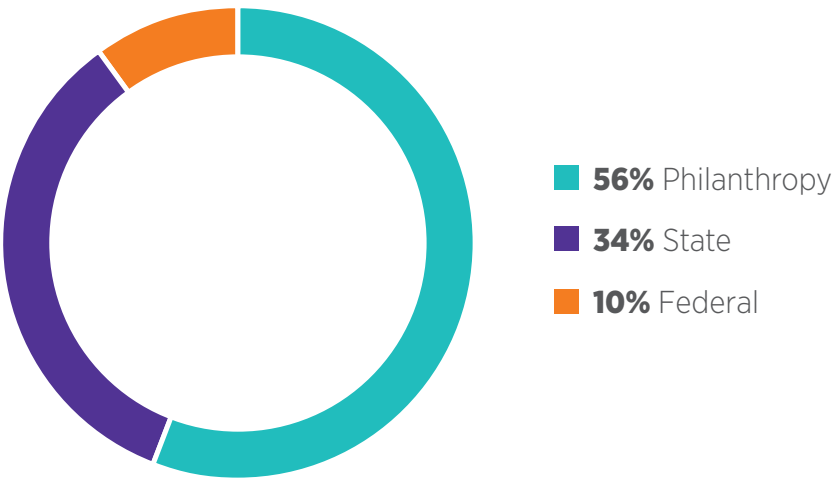
Lety Gomez,
Senior Education Organizer

FINANCIALS

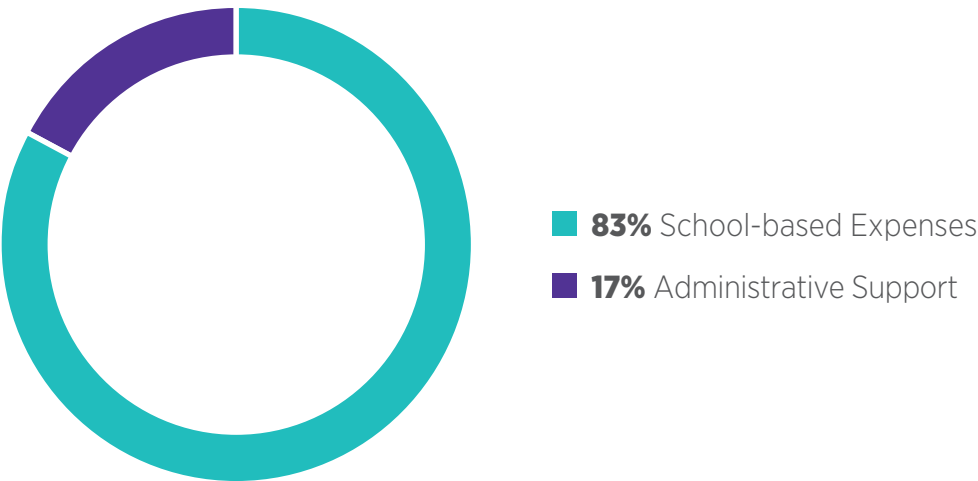
Rocketship is building a scalable and financially sustainable non-profit school model that propels student achievement in underserved communities across the country.

Fully enrolled schools reach financial sustainability within three to five years of launching.

REVENUE



EXPENSES



SUPPORTERS

TEXAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Peter Philpott, Chair
- Alex Jimenez
- Michael Gonzalez
- Derek Carson
- Loretta Burns
- MiShon Landry
- Vincent Davila
- Victoria Puente
- Walter Dansby
- Cynthia Prince (Term has ended)

AUTHORIZERS

Rocketship couldn't do this work without the partnership, support, and expertise of our authorizers, Texas Education Agency and The State Board of Education.

MAJOR DONORS

Thank you for your generous support of our educators, communities, and Rocketeers. Below are supporters who gave \$1,000 and above.

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