

# Wednesday, September 10, 2025 Rocketship Public Schools National Board of Directors Meeting (2025-26 Q1) - Day 1

Meeting Time: 12:00pm

Public Comment: Members of the public can make comment on off-agenda items at the start of the meeting, and on agenda items immediately preceding the board's discussion of each item. You will be recognized once the public comment time begins, and be permitted to make comment for a duration of up to 3 minutes.

Meeting Location: 2055 Gateway Place, San Jose, CA 95110

#### **Teleconference locations:**

198 W Alma Ave. San Jose, CA 95110
2960 Story Rd San Jose, CA 95116
1700 Cavallo Road, Antioch, CA 94509
370 Wooster Ave. San Jose, CA 95116
70 S. Jackson Ave. San Jose, CA 95116
2351 Olivera Rd, Concord, CA 94520
331 S. 34th St. San Jose, CA 95116
788 Locust St., San Jose, CA 95110
950 Owsley Ave, San Jose, CA 95122
1440 Connecticut Drive, Redwood City, CA 94061
3173 Senter Road San Jose, 95111
2249 Dobern Ave. San Jose, CA 95116
683 Sylvandale Ave San Jose, CA 95111

16620 Lower Valley Ridge Dr, Brookfield, WI 53005

9112 Vendome Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817

111 East 24th Street; New York, NY 10010

### 1. Opening Items

- A. Call to Order
- B. Public comment on off-agenda items

#### 2. Consent Items

- A. Approve minutes from the July 1, 2025 Special Meeting of the Rocketship Board of Directors
- B. Ratify appointment of Patrick McGovern to the Rocketship Wisconsin Board of Trustees and Wisconsin Business Committee for a two-year term through September 2027
- C. Ratify appointment of Andrew Haag to the Rocketship Wisconsin Board of Trustees for a two-year term through September 2027

#### 3. Information Items

A. Board Updates

# 4. Action Items: Agreements - Review and Approval

- A. Approve Master Services Agreement with EdTheory LLC
- B. Approve Professional Services Agreement with Welldom, Inc NPA

#### 5. Action Items: Operations - Review and Approval

- A. Approve Rocketship Spark Academy and Rocketship Delta Prep Charter Renewal Petitions
- B. Approve Artificial Intelligence for Instructional and Assignment Purposes Policy
- C. Approve Section 504 Policy

### 6. Action Items: Finance - Review and Approval

- A. 2024-25 End of Year Review and Approval of Revised 2025-26 Budget, including all School Level Budgets
- B. Review and Approve Revised Rocketship Fiscal Policies

#### 7. Action Items: National CMO Decision - Resolution - Review and Approval

A. Approve Resolution #2025-06 Rocketship Tennessee Bond Financing

#### 8. Break

#### 9. Information Items

- A. 2024-25 Achievement Recap and 2025-26 Response
- B. DC Charter Review and Regional Support Plan
- C. Growth Updates

#### 10. Adjourn

#### A. Adjourn Meeting

THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND TIMINGS MAY BE CHANGED WITHOUT NOTICE: Notice is hereby given that the order of consideration of matters on this agenda may be changed without prior notice, provided that the Board takes action to effectuate such change.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION WILL BE PROVIDED FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY: Pursuant to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, any individual with a disability who requires reasonable accommodation to attend or participate in this meeting may request assistance by contacting us at compliance@rsed.org.

SPANISH & VIETNAMESE TRANSLATION: If you need Spanish or Vietnamese audio translation in order to access the Rocketship Board meeting, please send a request to compliance@rsed.org at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting. If you would like to make a public comment in Spanish or Vietnamese and would like us to translate to English for the Board, please send a request to compliance@rsed.org at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting.

Si necesita traducción de audio al español para acceder a la reunión de la Mesa Directiva de Rocketship, envíe una solicitud a compliance@rsed.org por lo menos 24 horas antes del inicio de la reunión.

Si desea hacer un comentario público en español y desea que lo traduzcamos al inglés para la Mesa Directiva, envíe una solicitud a compliance@rsed.org por lo menos 24 horas antes del inicio de la reunión.

# Rocketship Public Schools Board of Directors Summary of Consent Items - September 10, 2025

Item 2A. Approve minutes from the July 1, 2025 Special Meeting of the Board of Directors We held our last Board of Directors meeting on July 1, 2025 and this agenda item puts forth the minutes from that meeting for approval.

Item 2B. Ratify appointment of Patrick McGovern to the Rocketship Wisconsin Board of Trustees and Wisconsin Business Committee for a two-year term through September 2027

#### Patrick McGovern

Pat McGovern is a 30-year professional in marketing and advertising. He has worked with clients in travel, higher education, and manufacturing—helping brands grow through thoughtful planning and execution. Currently, he is the head of Marketing and Sales at Ascedia, a digital agency located in Milwaukee.

In addition to his work at Ascedia, McGovern is the host of Over A Pint Marketing. This podcast dives into the many sides of marketing through candid conversations with industry professionals. Now in its fifth year, the show reflects his ongoing curiosity and passion for the field. He is also the VP of Programming for the American Marketing Association Milwaukee chapter. He is married. He and his wife have two daughters and a goofball of a dog!

Item 2C. Ratify appointment of Andrew Haag to the Rocketship Wisconsin Board of Trustees for a two-year term through September 2027

#### **Andrew Hagg**

Andrew Haag is an executive leader with over 20 years of experience delivering value in the manufacturing and distribution industries. He strives to connect people with the right opportunities to help optimize their success. Andrew currently serves as the Founding National Practice Partner at Expense Reduction Analysts (ERA). Before ERA, Andrew was a Managing Partner at Lube-Tech & Partners and EVP at Lubrications Technologies, a Minneapolis – based lubricant distribution, packaging manufacturing, and equipment & vehicle wash installation company.

A few of Andrew Haag's professional achievements include:

- Served in a leadership role at a company that placed as a "Top Place to Work" from 2011-2021.
- Brought EOS "Traction" to two companies, which created focus and alignment, and outcomes that generated results above plan.
- Led or was an instrumental part in integrating 10+ acquisitions in 8 years.

Andrew holds an EMBA from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and a B.B.A. from Western Michigan University. He serves on the Lubrication Technologies and Atlas World Sports board and has held past board positions at Froedtert Hospital, Best Buddies of Wisconsin, United Way, and

Rotary – Downtown Milwaukee. Andrew is active in YPO (Young Presidents Organization) and has held regional and local chapter roles.

In his spare time, Andrew speaks to groups on Succession Planning in Family Business.

# Special Meeting of the Rocketship Public Schools National Board of Directors (2025-26 Q1) (Tuesday, July 1, 2025)

Generated by Cristina Vasquez on Tuesday, July 8, 2025

#### 1. Opening Items

#### A. Call to order

At 8:32am, Mr. Jordan took roll call. With a quorum of board members present, Mr. Jordan called the meeting to order. *Present:* Alex Terman, April Taylor, Brian Kilb, Deb McGriff, Derwin Sisnett, Greg Stanger, Hugo Castaneda, Joey Sloter, Julie Miller, Malka Borrego, Michelle Mercado, Mike Fox, Rajen Sheth, Tamara Peterson, Louis Jordan *Absent:* Charmaine Detweiler, Dan Sanchez, Daniel Velasco, Ray Raven, Yolanda Bernal-Samano

#### B. Public comment on off-agenda items

At 8:34am, Mr. Jordan called for public comment on off-agenda items. No members of the public provided comment.

#### 2. Consent Items

#### A. Approve minutes from the June 11, 2025 meeting of the Board of Directors

At 8:35am, Mr. Sisnett made a motion to approve the consent items. This motion was seconded by Ms. Miller, and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Y: Alex Terman, April Taylor, Brian Kilb, Deb McGriff, Derwin Sisnett, Greg Stanger, Hugo Castaneda, Joey Sloter, Julie Miller, Malka Borrego, Michelle Mercado, Mike Fox, Rajen Sheth, Tamara Peterson, Louis Jordan N: --

Abstain: --

#### 3. Action Items: Agreements - Review and Approval

#### A. Approve the Master Services Agreement with Amergis Healthcare Staffing, Inc.

At 8:36am, the board discussed action item 3(A).

At 8:37am, Mr. Stanger made a motion to approve the action item 3(A). This motion was seconded by Ms. Taylor, and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Y: Alex Terman, April Taylor, Brian Kilb, Deb McGriff, Derwin Sisnett, Greg Stanger, Hugo Castaneda, Joey Sloter, Julie Miller, Malka Borrego, Michelle Mercado, Mike Fox, Rajen Sheth, Tamara Peterson, Louis Jordan

N: --

Abstain: --

#### 4. Closed Session

# A. Conference with Legal Counsel -- Anticipated Litigation: Potential/threatened litigation pursuant to California Government Code § 54956.9. Number of cases: 1

At 8:38am, Ms. Sloter made a motion to move to Closed Session. This motion was seconded by Mr. Stanger, and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Y: Alex Terman, April Taylor, Brian Kilb, Deb McGriff, Derwin Sisnett, Greg Stanger, Hugo Castaneda, Joey Sloter, Julie Miller, Malka Borrego, Michelle Mercado, Mike Fox, Rajen Sheth, Tamara Peterson, Louis Jordan

N: --

Abstain: --

At 8:39am, Dan Sanchez joined the meeting.

At 9:00am, Ms. Borrego left the meeting.

At 9:54am, Mr. Sisnett, Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheth and Ms. Peterson left the meeting.

#### 5. Agenda Items: Report Out

#### A. Public report on actions taken in closed session

At 9:55am, Mr. Jordan called the open session back to order and reported that no actions were taken on item 4(A) during the closed session.

#### 6. Adjournment

At 9:57am, Ms. Sloter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Ms. Miller, and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Y: Alex Terman, April Taylor, Brian Kilb, Deb McGriff, Greg Stanger, Hugo Castaneda, Joey Sloter, Julie Miller, Michelle Mercado, Louis Jordan, Dan Sanchez

N: --

Abstain: --



To: Board Members

From: Preston Smith, Co-Founder & CEO

Date: September 10, 2025

Re: CEO's Update

This memo provides an update on our progress, learnings, and opportunities since our June board meeting as we enter the 2025-26 school year with growing momentum and sharpened focus.

# **QUALITY SCHOOLS**

Operate high-performing elementary schools to enable Rocketeers to matriculate to middle school on a college-ready trajectory and put pressure on the systems of schools in RPS communities to improve quality.

The 2024-25 school year marked a major step forward in our academic recovery and acceleration. In both Math and Reading, we saw our largest Fall-to-Spring absolute change since 2020—an early indicator that our curriculum and investments to better integrate the materials, programs, and data into our personalized learning model are paying off. Our Rocketeers achieved an average of 1.25 years of growth in Math and 1.18 years in ELA, driven by strong academic achievement and momentum across most regions.

In California, our Rocketeers realized the strongest growth in years and continue to make significant progress on absolutes. CA Rocketeers made major academic progress realizing ~1.25 years of growth

in Math and ~1.50 years in ELA for the entire school year. The state has not yet released final public data to report specific scores or compare our performance to neighboring schools and across the state. At this point, we can only report on our performance compared to previous years. This past year increased the percent of met/exceeded in math and ELA. In 2025-26, we expect to see continued momentum in the region, especially in growing absolutes for our Rocketeers so that we can ensure that our Rocketeers are competing with all students in the state regardless of demographics.



In Wisconsin, our team continued to build momentum and elevate achievement across the region. Our team realized strong levels of student growth and achievement on NWEA and led the network in overall student growth in math with  $\sim 1.47$  years <u>and</u> ELA with  $\sim 1.60$  years. Most importantly, these results were very much fueled by Rocketship Transformation Prep. We are proud of our Rocketeers



both on the southside and northside of Milwaukee, which is a powerful demonstration of the efficacy of the Rocketship model regardless of demographics. Although there is still necessary progress on absolutes, we now have a very solid foundation to build upon and expect to see continued momentum and elevation of student achievement. Like in California, the state has not yet made results public so we cannot compare our performance to similar schools or state averages. However, we are feeling confident as we saw significant gains in absolutes in math and ELA.

In Tennessee, our team realized moderate levels of student growth and achievement on NWEA -~1.07 years of growth in Math and ~1.30 years in ELA for the entire year. At two of our three schools (Rocketship United and Rocketship Dream) we were able to realize more significant growth and believe that each school is on track for a 'B' and 'A' rating. Although we are excited to see the strong achievement and growing absolutes at these campuses, it is impacted by the overall performance of Rocketship Nashville Northeast (RNNE) where our Rocketeers realized less than a year of

achievement in ELA and Math for the school year. This is a significant area of focus for our entire network in the 2025-26 school vear as we must elevate our investments and approaches so that we can fulfill our mission and commitment to our Rocketeers and families. On the state assessment our Rocketeers elevated their ELA and Math proficiency from last year, but similar to the above that is very much rooted in the performance of Rocketship United and Rocketship Dream. As we enter the 2025-26 school year we are focused on <u>all</u> of our Nashville schools realizing strong student achievement and most especially rapidly turning around the performance of our Rocketship Nashville Northeast Rocketeers through intensive interventions and resources. With the strength of our Rocketship TN team and lessons learned in partnering with our DC region last school



year, we are confident in the collective ability of our National and TN Program and School teams to fully address RNNE and enable strong outcomes throughout the TN region for our Rocketeers and drive towards achieving the state's "Reward" status for each of our schools.

In DC, while the year began with the challenge of significantly resetting the region and rebuilding, the second semester brought improved NWEA growth, most especially in ELA. As our DC team gained familiarity with the Rocketship model, data systems, and curricula they were able to translate this into stronger outcomes in the 2nd semester with our DC Rocketeers realizing ~1.01 years of growth in



Math and ~1.29 years in ELA. As we enter the 2025-26 school year, it is critical that our DC region continue to build upon this momentum and now replicate this level of growth and achievement throughout the entire school year. Overall, we are confident in the progress that our DC team has made and grateful for the region's incredible efforts and deep partnership with our National Program team. Throughout this collaborative effort, it has very much further informed our work, strengthened coaching and collaboration structures, further Rocketized curriculum resources, and helped elevate our approach to partnership.

While each region has unique strengths and areas for improvement, we are seeing early signs of "stacked growth" across years—returning to the compounding momentum that fueled our strongest pre-pandemic results. While there is still more for us to realize, especially in continuing to grow our Rocketeer's absolutes, I am excited by our momentum and our deep focus in 2025-26 on improving bottom-quartile growth, especially in early grades and reading.



#### **COMMUNITY POWER**

Growing the power and impact of our families to affect positive change in their communities through family organizing and leadership, civic engagement, and coalition building.

In 2025-2026 we have a series of charter renewals in both California and Washington DC. Charter renewals provide a powerful moment for our families to use their voice and exercise their power. Following our unanimous approvals of three schools in California and a school in Tennessee last year, we are hopeful for continued momentum and local support for high-quality public schools regardless of the type of school. California is again ramping up for a series of two renewals this fall with two different authorizers. Both schools met the state's requirement for reauthorization and we are hopeful that our high-quality schools will be unanimously renewed for 5 additional years. Similarly, in Washington DC, all three of our schools will be navigating the 10 year DC Charter review process with the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB). I look forward to partnering with public officials and authorizers in having high-quality reviews grounded in the best interests of our children and families.

#### SCALED IMPACT



Magnify our national impact by increasing the number of Rocketeers across current and future regions and by exploring innovative ways to deepen and extend our impact.

This fall, Rocketship Wisconsin proudly launched Rocketship Stellar—our first acquisition to expand our impact. Stellar was formerly part of the Carmen Schools of Science and Technology network, a longstanding middle school partner in Milwaukee. We are deeply grateful for our strong partnership with Carmen whose collaboration made this transition possible. This acquisition allows Carmen to deepen its focus on grades 6-12, while Rocketship brings its nationally recognized expertise in elementary education to serve Stellar's students. As Carmen CEO Aaron Lippman shared, "Rocketship, a nationally recognized charter



school network with a strong record of success, specializes in the elementary and middle grades and has an established presence in Milwaukee. They are uniquely positioned to provide the specialized support, resources, and experience that an elementary school like Stellar requires to flourish." With this milestone, our Wisconsin region now serves more Rocketeers than ever before—and is well-positioned to promote both sustainability and student achievement, raising the bar for what is possible in Milwaukee.

In Tennessee, we continue to actively pursue a Rutherford County Schools charter approval. We expect to have more concrete updates to share during our December 2025 board meeting following the Tennessee Commission's decision in October. Furthermore, we continue to explore growing our impact in Southern California. We are being actively invited into the region and there is clear community need as well, which suggests the potential for a sustainable and impactful expansion in the state. I am looking forward to diving in with our Board in the upcoming meeting and continuing to move forward with our greenlighting process towards a final decision in March 2026.

At the start of the 25-26 school year, all our regions are close to or exceeding their budgeted enrollment target for the 25-26 school year. We've made meaningful gains throughout this year toward strengthening our enrollment systems, strategies, and forecasting. Sustaining healthy enrollment is a challenge facing public schools across the country and I am very encouraged by our leaders across our network who are working together to navigate this challenge. California is 99% to their budgeted enrollment target, Tennessee is 102% to target, Wisconsin is 101% to target, and DC is 97% to target. We are starting this year on much stronger ground than we have any year post-COVID.



As we kick off the new fiscal year, I am pleased to report that we have secured some impressive gifts in just the first several weeks of FY26, including renewals and upgrades from existing donors, and new funders at National, WI, and DC. To date we have raised nearly \$13M across the entire network, and every region's pipeline looks strong as we kick off the new year. We are also continuing to reduce our reliance on philanthropy to support core operations. Last year, the national NeST revenue-expenditure gap shrank to 18%, down from 51% a decade ago. This progress underscores our belief that transformative education in high-need communities can be delivered sustainably through public revenue when paired with excellence and discipline.

# **CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE & BELONGING**

Building a culture where all team members strive for excellence and feel that Rocketship is a great place to work.

At Rocketship we have four tiers of teacher performance, which are primarily influenced by student outcomes on NWEA (growth and absolutes) along with other measures that impact achievement and student success (e.g., home visit completion). As we work to not only continue to grow our Rocketeer's achievement, but also their absolutes, growing and then retaining our teacher talent is essential. In the 2024-25 school year, nearly 50% of our teachers achieved the highest tiers (Tier 3 and 4) of student impact and achievement. Moreover, over 90% of these high performing teachers are returning to Rocketship for the 2025-26 school year, which is a testament to their leaders, teams, and our organizational culture. I look forward to our continued investment in and elevation of our professional development programs and real time coaching by our leaders to continue to grow the percentage of our teachers performing at Tier 3 and 4.

In addition, we continue to ensure that our Rocketeers and Rocketship community have access to a representative team of leaders and educators that provide both windows and mirrors to fuel their impact and achievement. Our team more deeply understanding the communities and experiences of our Rocketeers enables them to more ably connect with our students and families, build relationships, and truly partner with them in their learning and success. Thus, I am excited to share that as we enter the 2025-26 school year, 60% of our Network Executive Team and nearly 80% of our principals will be representative of the students and families that we serve.

As we head into 2025-26, we are positioned to push even further. We will deepen curriculum integration, strengthen lower-tier student growth, build sustainable enrollment pipelines, elevate our brand through the excellence of our results, continue to drive towards growth and impact, and work to realize our ambitious 5 Year Goals. I remain confident in our path forward and grateful for our team's tireless commitment to our Rocketeers and communities.



Executive Summary Rocketship Education Board of Directors September 10, 2025

Agenda Item: 4(A)	Х	OPEN/ACTION
		INFORMATION
Subject: Approve Master Services Agreement with Ed Theory LLC		CONSENT

#### **Recommendation:**

Staff members recommend that the Rocketship Education ("**RSED**") Board of Directors ("**RSED-Board**") approve the Master Services Agreement ("**Agreement**") with EdTheory LLC ("**EdTheory**").

The Agreement will enable RSED to continue its partnership with EdTheory, a staffing agency that supplies supplemental California Credentialed Special Education Teachers, State-licensed Speech Language Pathologists, and Occupational and Physical Therapists for the Integrated Special Education ("ISE") Program across all thirteen Rocketship schools in California. Approval would allow the schools to maintain consistent operations and minimize disruptions due to staff vacancies in the upcoming year.

#### **Background:**

Rocketship has been partnering with EdTheory for several years to address ISE coverage gaps at all 13 Rocketship schools in California, mainly providing supplemental staff and related services in the ISE program. They currently supply most of California's speech-language pathologists.

This contract requires board approval due to its projected fiscal impact and the strategic importance of the services being provided. The Regional Leadership Team recommends approval, as it will enable us to fulfill staffing needs throughout the year.

#### **Summary of Previous Board Action by Board:**

No previous action.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

This Agreement is projected to exceed \$800,000 for the 2025–26 school year. This amount reflects the expanded scope of ISE staffing services across all Rocketship schools in California and the anticipated increase in utilization as we extend support in the ISE program. A breakdown of fees by

role can be found in the attached Agreement. Funding for this contract will be allocated from existing school site budgets designated for coverage support.

# Submitted by:

Emily Isenberg, Associate Director, CA Integrated Special Education



Phone: (925) 500-8383

#### MASTER SERVICE AGREEMENT

THIS MASTER SERVICES AGREEMENT ("Agreement") is entered on 7/2/2025 between EdTheory LLC. ("Provider"), with its principal place of business located at 6701 Koll Center Parkway # 250, Pleasanton, CA 94566 and Rocketship Education d/b/a Rocketship Public Schools ("Client"), with its principal place of business located at 350 Twin Dolphin Drive, Suite 109 Redwood City, CA 94065. Provider and Client may be referred to individually as "Party" and collectively as "Parties."

WHERE AS, Provider is engaged in the business of providing personnel for the performance of certain specified services ("Services").

WHERE AS, Client wishes to retain Provider to provide Services to Client in connection with the project or projects set forth in the Statement of Work attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference, and Provider wishes to be so engaged.

NOW, THEREFORE, Provider and Client agree as follows:

# 1. Scope of Services

A. Provider shall use reasonable efforts to provide the Services and provide certain personnel (the "Supplied Personnel") to perform the work (the "Work") described in Exhibit A: Statement of Work ("Statement of Work") for Client in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement. All Supplied Personnel will be screened to ensure Supplied Personnel are properly licensed, insured, in good standing, and are able to pass any and all applicable state and federal requirements related to the Supplied Personnel especially in the educational field.

- B. Provider shall not permit any of its personnel to come in contact with Client's students, in-person or virtually, until both the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have ascertained that the individual has not been convicted of a violent or serious felony. Provider shall also abide by any other federal and state background check and clearance requirements that pertain to individuals working in a public elementary school setting. Provider shall certify in writing to Client that it has completed all statutory background check and clearance requirements and that none of its employees who may come in contact with Client's students have been convicted of a violent or serious felony, as defined by state law.
- C. Any of Provider's personnel who plan to have frequent and/or prolonged contact with Client's students during the term of this Agreement must, at no cost to Client, have received a tuberculosis (TB) assessment that complies with the requirements of California Education Code section 49406.

Client may request at any time the permanent removal of any Supplied Personnel if Client reasonably believes the individual does not meet appropriate professional standards and Provider shall promptly comply with Client's request. Client may provide Provider with reasonable details pertaining to any incident leading up to any such request. Provider and any of its Supplied Personnel shall comply with applicable building standards and policies when performing Work. Provider will not subcontract all or any part of the Work without first obtaining Client's written consent.



Phone: (925) 500-8383

# 2. Price and Payment Terms

A. Client will pay Provider for the Services and Supplied Personnel at the rates set forth in the Statement of Work and will also pay any additional costs or fees set forth in this Agreement. Provider will invoice.

Client for services provided under this Agreement on a monthly basis. Payment is net thirty (30) days from receipt of invoice an undisputed, itemized invoice. Invoices will be supported by the pertinent time sheets or other agreed system for documenting time worked by the Supplied Personnel. Client's signature or other agreed method of approval of the work time submitted for Supplied Personnel certifies that the documented hours are correct and authorizes Provider to bill Client for those hours.

B. All invoices are due net thirty (30) days and shall be considered past due if no payment is received within 45 days of receipt of the invoice. A finance charge of 1.5% per month on the unpaid amount of an invoice, or the maximum amount allowed by law, will be charged on past due accounts.

C. Supplied Personnel are presumed to be nonexempt from laws requiring premium pay for overtime, holiday work, or weekend work. Provider will charge Client special rates for premium work time only when Supplied Personnel's work on assignment to Client, viewed by itself, would legally require premium pay and Client has authorized, directed, or allowed the Supplied Personnel to work such premium work time. Client's special billing rate for premium hours will be the same multiple of the regular billing rate as Provider is required to apply to the Supplied Personnel's regular pay rate. (For example, when federal law requires 150% of pay for work exceeding 40 hours in a week, Client will be billed at 150% of the regular bill rate.)

# 3. Relationship of the Parties

A. The Supplied Personnel are employees of the Provider. The provider is, for example, responsible for withholdings and payment of any applicable local, state or federal payroll taxes, and payment for workers' compensation protection. The provider will indemnify and hold the Client harmless against any claims made or brought by Supplied Personnel, government or taxing authority relating to such payments or withholdings.

B. Provider's performance of its duties and obligations under this Agreement will be that of an independent contractor, and nothing herein shall create or imply an agency relationship between Provider and Client, nor will this Agreement be deemed to constitute a joint venture or partnership between the parties.

#### 4. Term and Termination

Unless terminated as provided herein, this Agreement shall in effect for a period through June 30, 2026 ("Term"). Prior to the end of Term, the Parties may renew this Agreement for up to an additional one (1) year period upon mutual written agreement. Client may terminate this Agreement without cause upon thirty (30) days written notice. In the event of termination without cause, Client agrees to pay Provider for all the Work performed up to the date of termination. Either Party may terminate this Agreement for material breach upon twenty- four (24) hours' written notice. Termination for material breach will not preclude the terminating Party from exercising any other remedies for breach.



Phone: (925) 500-8383

# 5. Mutual Confidentiality and FERPA

A. The Parties hereto agree to treat confidentially the terms and conditions of this Agreement and all information provided by each Party to the other Party regarding its business and operations. The Party receiving confidential information agrees to use the information solely for the purpose of rendering or receiving services pursuant to this Agreement, and agrees to maintain the confidentiality of all such information by not disclosing such information except to such Party's employees, consultants, legal advisors, auditors or other service providers as necessary for rendering or receiving services pursuant to this Agreement, and by appropriately instructing employees and others who may be accorded access to such information by the receiving Party. The foregoing shall not be applicable to any information that is publicly available when provided or thereafter becomes publicly available, other than through a breach of this Agreement. Notwithstanding any other provisions set forth herein to the contrary, each Party shall have the right to disclose confidential information pursuant to one or more court or administrative orders or inquiries, or otherwise as required by law. In addition, each Party hereto shall have the right to disclose information where the Party seeking to disclose has received the prior written consent of the Party providing the information. The confidentiality obligations arising under this section shall continue throughout the duration of this Agreement.

B. For purposes of carrying out this Agreement, Provider will perform an institutional service or function and is hereby designated by Client as a school official having a legitimate educational interest in accessing, using, and tracking student education records, as permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, (FERPA) (34 CFR Part 99.3). Provider understands and agrees to comply with all applicable requirements. Provider understands and agrees that it remains under direct control of Client with respect to the use and maintenance of the education records. Provider understands that the use of educational records is limited in scope and purpose, and Provider will not have access to any educational records that are not necessary for the performance of its Work. Provider understands and agrees that it is prohibited from re-disclosing any personally identifiable information from the education records at any time or for any purpose whatsoever.

#### 6. Limitation of Liability

A. The Client shall indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the Provider, their officers, agents and employees from and against all claims, damages, losses and expenses, including reasonable costs and attorney's fees arising out of or resulting from District's agents or employees under this agreement. Provider shall indemnify hold harmless, and defend District, their officers, agents and employees from and against all claims, damages, losses and expenses, including reasonable cost and attorney's fees, arising out of or resulting from Provider's agents or employees under this agreement.

#### 7. Non-Solicitation of Employees and/or Subcontractors.

A. Except as may be otherwise agreed in writing by the Client and Provider, during the term of this Agreement and for twelve (12) months thereafter, Client shall not offer employment to or employ, either directly or indirectly, whether as an independent contractor, consultant, employee or otherwise, any individual who is or was during the validity of the Agreement and the preceding 12 months, an employee of Provider, or was involved in the performance of this Agreement. In the event of a breach of any provision in this clause, Provider shall have the right, without limiting any other remedies available to it under the law, to seek an injunction, in any court having jurisdiction, enjoining Client from continuing its breach.



Phone: (925) 500-8383

### 8. Terms of Buy out

Notwithstanding anything contained in Provision 8, in the event the Client and the Supplied Personnel agree to enter into a direct employment, the Client may not directly hire the Supplied Personnel without the consent of EdTheory. The Client agrees to pay a professional fee equivalent to 20 % of the Supplied Personnel's annual salary for permanent placement of the Supplied Personnel (SLP, OT, PT and all related discipline). This fee will be invoiced only upon an offer by the Client and an acceptance by the Supplied Personnel, after which EdTheory shall release any future financial obligations that the Client owes them regarding that specific Supplied Personnel.

#### 9. Arbitration

The Provider and Client agree that any dispute or controversy arising out of or relating to any interpretation, construction, performance or alleged breach of this Agreement shall be settled and determined solely and exclusively by arbitration to be held in the County of Santa Clara, State of California, and to be administered by the Judicial Arbitration and Mediation Service ("JAMS") in accordance with the JAMS Commercial Arbitration Rules then in effect. The arbitration shall be conducted by a single arbitrator who shall be appointed by agreement of the Parties or, if no agreement can be reached, by JAMS pursuant to its rules. The arbitrator may grant injunctions or other relief in such dispute or controversy. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final, conclusive, and binding on the Parties to the arbitration. Judgment may be entered on the arbitrator's decision in any court of competent jurisdiction. The Provider and Client shall each pay one-half of the costs and expenses of such arbitration, and the Provider and Client shall each pay its own attorneys' fees and expenses. However, the arbitrator shall award reasonable attorneys' fees and costs to the prevailing Party in the arbitration. Nothing in this section is intended to prevent either party from obtaining injunctive relief in court to prevent irreparable harm pending the conclusion of any such arbitration.

#### 10. Miscellaneous

- **10.1 Governing Laws:** It is the intention of the parties hereto that the internal laws of the State of California (irrespective of its choice of law principles) shall govern the validity of this Agreement, the construction of its terms, and the interpretation and enforcement of the rights and duties of the parties hereto.
- **10.2 Binding upon Successors and Assigns:** Subject to, and unless otherwise provided in, this Agreement, each and all of the covenants, terms, provisions, and agreements contained herein shall be binding upon, and inure to the benefit of, the permitted successors, executors, heirs, representatives, administrators and assigns of the parties hereto.
- **10.3 Severability:** If any provision of this Agreement, or the application thereof, shall for any reason and to any extent be invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of this Agreement and application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall be interpreted so as best to reasonably effect the intent of the parties hereto. The parties further agree to replace such void or unenforceable provision of this Agreement with a valid and enforceable provision which will achieve, to the extent possible, the economic, business and other purposes of the void or unenforceable provision.
- **10.4 Entire Agreement:** This Agreement, the exhibits hereto, the documents referenced herein, and the exhibits thereto, constitute the entire understanding and agreement of the parties hereto with respect to the subject matter hereof and thereof and supersede all prior and contemporaneous agreements or understandings, inducements or conditions, express or implied, written or oral, between the parties with respect hereto and thereto. The express terms



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hereof control and supersede any course of performance or usage of the trade inconsistent with any of the terms hereof.

- **10.5** Amendment and Waivers: Any term or provision of this Agreement may be amended, and the observance of any term of this Agreement may be waived (either generally or in a particular instance and either retroactively or prospectively) only by a writing signed by the party to be bound thereby. The waiver by a party of any breach hereof or default in the performance hereof shall not be deemed to constitute a waiver of any other breach or default or any succeeding breach or default.
- **10.6 No Waiver:** The failure of any party to enforce any of the provisions hereof shall not be construed to be a waiver of the right of such party thereafter to enforce such provisions.
- 10.7 Attorneys' Fees: Should an action be brought to enforce or interpret any part of this Agreement, the prevailing party shall be entitled to recover, as an element of the costs of suit and not as damages, reasonable attorneys' fees to be fixed by the court (including without limitation, costs, expenses and fees on any appeal). The prevailing party shall be the party entitled to recover its costs of suit, regardless of whether such suit proceeds to final judgment. A party not entitled to recover its costs shall not be entitled to recover attorneys' fees. No sum for attorneys' fees shall be counted in calculating the amount of a judgment for purposes of determining if a party is entitled to recover costs or attorneys' fees.
- **10.8 Notices:** Whenever any party hereto desires or is required to give any notice, demand, or request with respect to this Agreement, each such communication shall be in writing and shall be effective only if it is delivered by personal service or mailed, United States certified mail, postage prepaid, addressed as follows:

EdTheory, LLC. 6701, Koll Center Parkway

Suite # 250

Pleasanton, CA 94566 Fax: (800) 613-2977

Attn: Marvel Philip (Chief Executive Officer)

Rocketship Education 2001 Gateway Place

Suite 230E San Jose, CA 95110

Attn: Kennycia Hairston (Director, ISE for RPS)

With a copy of any legal notices to: Maria Heredia, Chief Legal Officer, at the above address and at mheredia@rsed.org

Such communications shall be effective when they are received by the addressee thereof; but if sent by certified mail in the manner set forth above, they shall be effective five (5) days after being deposited in the United States mail. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in lieu of or in addition to, each Party may deliver such communications via a nationally recognized carrier, facsimile, or electronic mail ("email"). Any Party may change its address for such communications by giving notice thereof to the other party in conformity with this Section.

**10.9 Further Assurances:** Each party agrees to cooperate fully with the other parties and to execute such further instruments, documents and agreements and to give such further written assurances, as may be reasonably requested by any other party to better evidence and reflect the transactions described herein and contemplated hereby and to carry into effect the intents and purposes of this Agreement.



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- **10.10 Construction of Agreement:** This Agreement has been negotiated by the respective parties hereto and their attorneys and the language hereof shall not be construed for or against any party. The titles and headings herein are for reference purposes only and shall not in any manner limit the construction of this Agreement, which shall be considered as a whole.
- **10.11** Client's Representations: Client represents and warrants that it is free to enter into this Agreement and to perform each of the terms and covenants of it. Client represents and warrants that it is not restricted or prohibited, contractually or otherwise, from entering into and performing this Agreement, and that its execution and performance of this Agreement is not a violation or breach of any other agreement between the Client and any other person or entity.
- **10.12** Advice of Counsel: EACH PARTY ACKNOWLEDGES THAT, IN EXECUTING THIS AGREEMENT, SUCH PARTY HAS HAD THE ADVICE OF INDEPENDENT LEGAL COUNSEL AND HAS READ AND UNDERSTOOD ALL OF THE TERMS AND PROVISIONS OF THIS AGREEMENT.
- **10.13 Force Majeure:** Neither party will be held responsible for any delay or failure in performance of any part of this Agreement to the extent such delay is caused by events or circumstances beyond the delayed party's reasonable control.
- **10.14 Counterparts:** This Agreement may be executed by facsimile and in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original and all of which shall constitute one and the same agreement.
- **10.15 Non-Discrimination:** Provider will not, in connection with any aspect of Provider's performance of this Agreement, discriminate against any person by reason of race, color, gender, marital status, religion, ethnic or national origin, ancestry, age, non-disqualifying disability, sexual orientation or identity, veteran- status, or other characteristic protected by Applicable Law.
- **10.16 Conflict of Interest:** Provider shall exercise reasonable care and diligence to prevent any actions or conditions that could result in a conflict with the best interests of Client. This obligation shall apply to Provider and Provider's employees, agents, and relatives, sub-tier contractors, and third parties associated with this Agreement and in the provision of Services. Provider's efforts shall include, but not be limited to establishing precautions to prevent Provider's employees, agents, or relatives from making, receiving, providing, or offering gifts, entertainment payments, loans, or other considerations which could be deemed to appear to influence individuals to act contrary to the best interests of Client.
- **10.17 Authorizing Entity:** The local school board, county board, state board of education, or any other authorizing entity of charter school, individually or collectively, are not parties to this Agreement and are not obligated, liable, or responsible for any action or inaction by Client or Provider. The Parties have sole responsibility for ensuring the terms of the Agreement are fulfilled.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement on the date first set forth above.



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PROVIDER: EDTHEORY, LLC	CLIENT: ROCKETSHIP EDUCATION
Signature:	Signature:
Name: Marvel Philip	Name:
Title: Chief Executive Officer	Title:
Date: 7/2/2025	Date:



Phone: (925) 500-8383

#### **EXHIBIT A: STATEMENT OF WORK**

#### 1.0 Statement of Work

Provider agrees to provide California Credentialed Special Education Teachers, State licensed Speech Language Pathologists, Occupational, Physical Therapists (hereinafter referred to as "SpEd" "SLPs", "OTs" & "PTs") to Client as requested by Client. Any Special Education Teachers, SLPs, OTs & PTs provided will hold and maintain appropriate registration, credentials and licensure to practice in the state. Evidence of registration, credentials and licensure will be provided to Client by provided upon commencement of the Work. Provider also agrees to provide supervision for its Clinical Fellows ("RPE-CFs").

Providers SpEd Teachers, SLPs, OTs, PTs & CFs will provide therapy services in compliance with applicable state and federal regulations and in accordance with Client's policies, procedures, rules and regulations. Client will inform provider and the SpEd Teachers, SLPs, OTs, PTs & CFs of Client's policies, procedures, rules and regulations prior to commencement of the Work.

Client shall notify Provider immediately and in writing of any Special Education Teachers, SLP's, OT's, PT's or CF's failure to comply with any state or federal regulations or of Client's appropriate policies, procedures, rules and regulations.

SpEd Teachers, SLPs, OTs, PTs and RPE-CFs shall have access to any records necessary to provide services required herein accordance with all applicable federal, state and local statutes, rules and regulations, as well as under HIPPA regulations and Client's policies, procedures, rules and regulations.

# 2.0 Hourly Billing Rates

Client will pay Provider for the Services rendered pursuant to this Agreement at the hourly rate as follows. Note that all Services must be pre-approved by Rocketship.

Speech Language Pathologist – Monolingual – (108.00) Bilingual (\$113.00)
Speech Language Pathology Assistant - Monolingual (\$87.00) Bilingual (\$89.00)
School Psychologist - Monolingual (\$130.00) Bilingual (\$132.00)
Special Education Teacher - \$108.00
Adapted Physical Education - \$108.00
Occupational Therapist - \$108.00
Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) - \$130.00
Certified School Nurse/ Registered Nurse - \$105.00
Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) - \$82.00
Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) - \$70.00
Instructional Assistant (IA) - \$58.00

3.0 Special Conditions: N/A



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PROVIDER: EDTHEORY, LLC	CLIENT: ROCKETSHIP EDUCATION
Signature:	Signature:
Signature.	
Name: Marvel Philip	Name:
Title: Chief Executive Officer	Title:
Date: 7/2/2025	Date:



Phone: (925) 500-8383

#### **CONSUMER DISCLOSURE**

From time to time, Rocketship Education (we, us or Company) may be required by law to provide to you certain written notices or disclosures. Described below are the terms and conditions for providing to you such notices and disclosures electronically through your DocuSign, Inc. (DocuSign) Express user account. Please read the information below carefully and thoroughly, and if you can access this information electronically to your satisfaction and agree to these terms and conditions, please confirm your agreement by clicking the  $\tilde{A}_1^{\dagger}I$  agree $\tilde{A}^{\dagger}$  button at the bottom of this document.

#### **Getting paper copies**

At any time, you may request from us a paper copy of any record provided or made available electronically to you by us. For such copies, as long as you are an authorized user of the DocuSign system you will have the ability to download and print any documents we send to you through your DocuSign user account for a limited period of time (usually 30 days) after such documents are first sent to you. After such time, if you wish for us to send you paper copies of any such documents from our office to you, you will be charged a \$0.00 per-page fee. You may request delivery of such paper copies from us by following the procedure described below.

#### Withdrawing your consent

If you decide to receive notices and disclosures from us electronically, you may at any time change your mind and tell us that thereafter you want to receive required notices and disclosures only in paper format. How you must inform us of your decision to receive future notices and disclosure in paper format and withdraw your consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically is described below.

# Consequences of changing your mind

If you elect to receive required notices and disclosures only in paper format, it will slow the speed at which we can complete certain steps in transactions with you and delivering services to you because we will need first to send the required notices or disclosures to you in paper format, and then wait until we receive back from you your acknowledgment of your receipt of such paper notices or disclosures. To indicate to us that you are changing your mind, you must withdraw your consent using the DocuSign ôWithdraw Consentö form on the signing page of your DocuSign account. This will indicate to us that you have withdrawn your consent to receive required notices and disclosures electronically from us and you will no longer be able to use your DocuSign Express user account to receive required notices and consents electronically from us or to sign electronically documents from us.

#### All notices and disclosures will be sent to you electronically

Unless you tell us otherwise in accordance with the procedures described herein, we will provide electronically to you through your DocuSign user account all required notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to you during the course of our relationship with you. To reduce the chance of you inadvertently not receiving any notice or disclosure, we prefer to provide all of the required notices and disclosures to you by the same method and to the same address that you have given us. Thus, you can receive all the disclosures and notices electronically or in paper format through the paper mail delivery system. If you do not agree with this process, please let us know as described below. Please also see the paragraph immediately above that



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describes the consequences of your electing not to receive delivery of the notices and disclosures electronically from us.

#### **How to contact Rocketship Education**

You may contact us to let us know of your changes as to how we may contact you electronically, to request paper copies of certain information from us, and to withdraw your prior consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically as follows:

To contact us by email send messages to: dhunt@rsed.org

#### To advise Rocketship Education of your new e-mail address

To let us know of a change in your e-mail address where we should send notices and disclosures electronically to you, you must send an email message to us at dhunt@rsed.org and in the body of such request you must state: your previous e-mail address, your new e-mail address. We do not require any other information from you to change your email address. In addition, you must notify DocuSign, Inc to arrange for your new email address to be reflected in your DocuSign account by following the process for changing e-mail in DocuSign.

# To request paper copies from Rocketship Education

To request delivery from us of paper copies of the notices and disclosures previously provided by us to you electronically, you must send us an e-mail to dhunt@rsed.org and in the body of such request you must state your e-mail address, full name, US Postal address, and telephone number. We will bill you for any fees at that time, if any.

#### To withdraw your consent with Rocketship Education

To inform us that you no longer want to receive future notices and disclosures in electronic format you may:

i. decline to sign a document from within your DocuSign account, and on the subsequent page, select the check-box indicating you wish to withdraw your consent, or you may; ii. send us an e-mail to dhunt@rsed.org and in the body of such request you must state your e-mail, full name, IS Postal Address, telephone number, and account number. We do not need any other information from you to withdraw consent.. The consequences of your withdrawing consent for online documents will be that transactions may take a longer time

#### Required hardware and software

to process..

Operating Systems:	Windows2000¬ or WindowsXP¬
Browsers (for SENDERS):	Internet Explorer 6.0¬ or above
Browsers (for SIGNERS):	Internet Explorer 6.0¬, Mozilla FireFox 1.0,
	NetScape 7.2 (or above)
Email:	Access to a valid email account
Screen Resolution:	800 x 600 minimum
Enabled Security Settings:	Ã <sup>2</sup> Allow per session cookies
	Ã <sup>2</sup> Users accessing the internet behind a Proxy
	Server must enable HTTP 1.1 settings via
	proxy connection



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\*\* These minimum requirements are subject to change. If these requirements change, we will provide you with an email message at the email address we have on file for you at that time providing you with the revised hardware and software requirements, at which time you will have the right to withdraw your consent.

#### Acknowledging your access and consent to receive materials electronically

To confirm to us that you can access this information electronically, which will be similar to electronic notices and disclosures that we will provide to you, please verify that you were able to read this electronic disclosure and that you also were able to print on paper or electronically save this page for your future reference and access or that you were able to e-mail this disclosure and consent to an address where you will be able to print on paper or save it for your future reference and access. Further, if you consent to receiving notices and disclosures exclusively in electronic format on the terms and conditions described above, please let us know by clicking the  $\tilde{A}_1^{\dagger}I$  agree $\tilde{A}^{\dagger}$  button below.

By checking the  $\tilde{A}_{1}^{\dagger}I$  Agree $\tilde{A}^{\dagger}$  box, I confirm that:

- I can access and read this Electronic CONSENT TO ELECTRONIC RECEIPT OF ELECTRONIC CONSUMER DISCLOSURES document; and
- I can print on paper the disclosure or save or send the disclosure to a place where I can print it, for future reference and access; and

Until or unless I notify Rocketship Education as described above, I consent to receive from exclusively through electronic means all notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to me by Rocketship Education during the course of my relationship with you



Executive Summary Rocketship Education Board of Directors September 10, 2025

Agenda Item: 4(B)	Х	OPEN/ACTION
		INFORMATION
Subject: Approve Professional Services Agreement with Welldom Inc.		CONSENT

# Recommendation(s):

Staff members recommend that the Rocketship Education ("RSED") Board of Directors ("RSED-Board") approve the Professional Services Agreement ("Agreement") with Welldom Inc ("Welldom").

The Agreement will enable RSED to continue its partnership with Welldom, a staffing agency that supplies supplemental California Credentialed Special Education Teachers, State-licensed Speech Language Pathologists, and Occupational and Physical Therapists for the Integrated Special Education ("ISE") Program across all thirteen Rocketship schools in California. Approval would allow the schools to maintain consistent operations and minimize disruptions due to staff vacancies in the upcoming year.

# **Background:**

Rocketship has been partnering with Welldom for several years to address ISE coverage gaps at all 13 Rocketship schools in California, mainly providing supplemental staff and related services in the ISE program.

This contract requires board approval due to its projected fiscal impact and the strategic importance of the services being provided. The Regional Leadership Team recommends approval, as it will enable us to fulfill staffing needs throughout the year.

#### **Summary of Previous Board Action by Board:**

No previous action.

#### Fiscal Impact:

This Agreement is projected to exceed \$970,000 for the 2025–26 school year. This amount reflects the expanded scope of ISE staffing services across all Rocketship schools in California and the anticipated increase in utilization as we extend support in the ISE program. A breakdown of fees by role can be found in the attached Agreement. Funding for this contract will be allocated from existing school site budgets designated for coverage support.

### Submitted by:

Emily Isenberg, Associate Director, CA Integrated Special Education

#### PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT

This Agreement is entered into between **Welldom Inc NPA** (hereinafter referred to as "CONTRACTOR") and Rocketship Education dba Rocketship Public Schools (hereinafter referred to as "DISTRICT"). DISTRICT is authorized by Government Code Section 53060 to contract for the furnishing of special services and advice in financial, economic, accounting, engineering, legal, and administrative matters with persons specially trained, experienced, and competent to perform such services. CONTRACTOR warrants it is specially trained, experienced, and competent to provide such services. The parties agree as follows:

#### \*\*1. Services:\*\*

CONTRACTOR shall provide the services ("Services" or "Work") as described in Exhibit "A," attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

#### \*\*2. Term:\*\*

The term of this agreement shall be from July 1, 2025, or the day immediately following approval by the Board of Education, to June 30, 2026.

#### \*\*3. Compensation:\*\*

DISTRICT agrees to pay CONTRACTOR for services satisfactorily rendered pursuant to this Agreement. The compensation under this Contract shall not exceed the billing rate as agreed in Exhibit A per hour. This sum shall be for full performance of this Agreement and includes all fees, costs, and expenses incurred by CONTRACTOR including, but not limited to, labor, materials, taxes, profit, overhead, travel, insurance, subcontractor costs, and other costs.

If CONTRACTOR will be compensated hourly for services provided under this Contract, CONTRACTOR shall describe in Exhibit "A," attached hereto, the specific scope of services to be delivered on an hourly basis to DISTRICT.

DISTRICT shall not be liable to CONTRACTOR for any costs or expenses paid or incurred by CONTRACTOR in performing services for DISTRICT, except as follows:

# \*\*Invoicing:\*\*

Invoices furnished by CONTRACTOR under this Agreement must be in a form acceptable to DISTRICT. All amounts paid by DISTRICT shall be subject to audit by DISTRICT. Invoices shall include, but not be limited to: Contractor name, Contractor address, invoice date, invoice number, purchase order number, name of school or department service was provided to, period of service, name of the person performing the service, date service was rendered, brief description of services provided, number of hours of service, hourly rate, and total payment requested.

Payment for Work shall be made for all undisputed amounts in monthly installment payments within thirty (30) business days after CONTRACTOR submits an invoice to DISTRICT for Work

actually completed and after DISTRICT's written approval of the Work, or the portion of the Work for which payment is to be made.

# \*\*Late Payment and Grace Period:\*\*

If any undisputed invoice is not paid within thirty (30) business days, a grace period of fifteen (15) additional business days shall apply. If payment is not received by the end of this grace period, DISTRICT agrees to pay a late charge equal to the lesser of one percent (1%) per month (twelve percent \[12%] per annum) on the unpaid balance, or the maximum rate permitted by law. Such late charges shall begin to accrue from the original due date until the date full payment is received.

The granting of any payment by DISTRICT, or the receipt thereof by CONTRACTOR, shall in no way lessen the liability of CONTRACTOR to correct unsatisfactory work, although the unsatisfactory character of that work may not have been apparent or detected at the time a payment was made. Work which does not conform to the requirements of this Agreement may be rejected by DISTRICT and in that case must be replaced by CONTRACTOR without delay.

# \*\*4. Equipment and Materials:\*\*

CONTRACTOR shall provide all equipment, materials, and supplies necessary for the performance of this Agreement except: [NONE], which shall not exceed a total cost of

#### \*\*5. CONTRACTOR Qualifications / Performance of Services:\*\*

\* \*\*CONTRACTOR Qualifications:\*\* CONTRACTOR warrants it is specially trained, experienced, competent, and fully licensed to provide the Services required by this Agreement in conformity with the laws and regulations of the State of California, the United States of America, and all local laws, ordinances, and/or regulations, as they may apply. \* \*\*Standard of Care:\*\* CONTRACTOR warrants that CONTRACTOR has the qualifications and ability to perform the Services in a professional manner, without the advice, control, or supervision of DISTRICT. CONTRACTOR's services will be performed, findings obtained, reports and recommendations prepared in accordance with generally and currently accepted principles and practices of its profession for services to California school districts.

#### \*\*6. Notices:\*\*

All notices and invoices provided for under this Agreement shall be in writing and either personally delivered during normal business hours or sent by U.S. Mail (certified, return receipt requested) with postage prepaid to the other party at the address set forth below:

# \*\*DISTRICT Representative:\*\*

**Emily Isenberg** 

Position: Associate Director, Integrated Special Education Address: 2001 Gateway Place

Ste 230E San Jose, CA 95110Email:eisenberg@rsed.org Phone Number: \*\*CONTRACTOR:\*\*

Welldom Inc.

Name: Vaishali Bauskar

Address: 39270 Paseo Padre Pkwy #207, Fremont, CA 94538

Email: info@welldomrehab.com

Phone: 510 358 6198

Notice shall be effective when received if personally served or, if mailed, three (3) calendar days after mailing. Either party must give written notice of a change of address.

#### \*\*7. Status of Contractor:\*\*

This is not an employment contract. CONTRACTOR, in the performance of this Agreement, shall be and act as an independent contractor. CONTRACTOR understands and agrees that it and all of its employees, agents, volunteers, consultants, and subcontractors shall not be considered officers, employees, agents, partners, or joint ventures of DISTRICT, and are not entitled to benefits of any kind or nature normally provided employees of DISTRICT and/or to which DISTRICT's employees are normally entitled, including, but not limited to, State Unemployment Compensation or Worker's Compensation. CONTRACTOR shall assume full responsibility for the payment of all Federal, State, and local taxes or contributions, including unemployment insurance, social security, and income taxes with respect to CONTRACTOR's employees. In the performance of the work herein contemplated, CONTRACTOR is an independent contractor or business entity, with the sole authority for controlling and directing the performance of the details of the work, DISTRICT being interested only in the results obtained.

#### \*\*8. Insurance:\*\*

a. CONTRACTOR shall procure the following insurance:

i. If CONTRACTOR employs any person to perform work in connection with this Agreement, CONTRACTOR shall procure and maintain at all times during the performance of such work, Workers' Compensation Insurance in conformance with the laws of the State of California and Federal laws when applicable. Employers' Liability Insurance shall not be less than One Million Dollars (\\$1,000,000) per accident or disease.

Check one of the boxes below:

- \* \[ X ] CONTRACTOR is aware of the provisions of Section 3700 of the Labor Code which require every employer to be insured against liability for workers' compensation or to undertake self-insurance in accordance with the provisions of that code, and will comply with such provisions before commencing the performance of the Work of this Contract.
- \* \[ ] CONTRACTOR does not employ anyone in the manner subject to the workers' compensation laws of California.
- ii. CONTRACTOR shall maintain Commercial General Liability insurance, including automobile coverage, with limits of at least Two Million Dollars (\\$2,000,000) per occurrence for corporal

punishment, sexual misconduct, harassment, bodily injury, and property damage. The coverage shall be primary as to DISTRICT and shall name DISTRICT as an additional insured.

iii. If CONTRACTOR is offering DISTRICT professional advice under this Contract, CONTRACTOR shall maintain Errors and Omissions insurance or Professional Liability insurance with coverage limits of One Million Dollars (\\$1,000,000) per claim and Two Million Dollars (\\$2,000,000) in aggregate.

#### \*\*9. Licenses and Permits:\*\*

CONTRACTOR, its employees, consultants, and agents shall obtain and keep in force all licenses, permits, and certificates necessary for the performance of this Agreement. DISTRICT has no obligation to pay for any hours of service during which any required credentials, licenses, or permits are expired, lapsed, or otherwise not in effect.

# \*\*10. Assignment:\*\*

The obligations of CONTRACTOR under this Agreement shall not be assigned by CONTRACTOR without the express prior written consent of DISTRICT.

#### \*\*11. Direct Hire Fee:\*\*

In the event that the DISTRICT hires, contracts, or otherwise engages any employee or subcontractor of the CONTRACTOR as a direct employee, consultant, or contractor of the DISTRICT (or through any affiliated entity) within six (6) months following the individual's separation from CONTRACTOR, DISTRICT agrees to pay CONTRACTOR a one-time conversion fee of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\\$15,000) per individual. This fee is intended to compensate CONTRACTOR for recruitment, training, administrative, and other associated costs. This provision shall survive the termination of this Agreement.

#### \*\*12. Non-Discrimination:\*\*

It is the policy of DISTRICT that in connection with all work performed under Contracts there be no discrimination because of race, color, ancestry, national origin, religious creed, physical disability, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, or age; therefore, CONTRACTOR agrees to comply with applicable Federal and California laws. CONTRACTOR agrees to require compliance by all its subcontractor(s).

#### \*\*13. Drug-Free / Smoke-Free Policy:\*\*

No drugs, alcohol, and/or smoking are allowed at any time in any buildings and/or grounds on DISTRICT property.

#### \*\*14. Indemnification:\*\*

CONTRACTOR shall indemnify and hold DISTRICT and its Board Members, administrators, employees, agents, and subcontractors harmless from and against any and all claims or losses arising out of or related to the CONTRACTOR's performance under this Agreement.

# \*\*15. Entire Agreement / Amendment:\*\*

This Agreement constitutes the entire Agreement between the parties and may be amended only in writing signed by both parties.

# \*\*16. Termination:\*\*

- a. DISTRICT may terminate this Agreement at any time for convenience upon thirty (30) days' written notice.
- b. DISTRICT may terminate this Agreement for cause, including material breach, insolvency, or actions exposing DISTRICT to liability. DISTRICT may recover excess costs incurred to secure services from another contractor.

#### \*\*17. Hold Harmless:\*\*

CONTRACTOR shall indemnify DISTRICT against any claims relating to the use of copyrighted, patented, or otherwise protected materials used in connection with the services.

# \*\*18. Confidentiality:\*\*

CONTRACTOR shall maintain the confidentiality of any information received or developed in performance of this Agreement.

# \*\*19. Governing Law:\*\*

This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of California with venue in Orange County.

#### \*\*20. Waiver:\*\*

No waiver of any term shall be deemed a waiver of any other term. All waivers must be in writing.

# \*\*21. Severability:\*\*

If any provision is held invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of this Agreement shall remain in effect.

# \*\*22. Authority:\*\*

Each party represents that it has authority to enter into this Agreement.

### \*\*23. Interpretation:\*\*

This Agreement shall be construed according to its fair meaning.

# \*\*24. Acknowledgment:\*\*

By signing below, CONTRACTOR acknowledges review and acceptance of this Agreement.

\*\*IN WITNESS WHEREOF,\*\* the parties have executed this Agreement as of the date last written below.

# \*\*SCHOOL DISTRICT:\*\*

**Printed Name:** 

Title: Date:

Signature:

\*\*CONTRACTOR:\*\*

Printed Name: Vaishali Bauskar Title: Founder, Welldom Inc

Date: 06/02/2025

Signature:



Executive Summary Rocketship Education Board of Directors September 10, 2025

Agenda Item: 5(A)	Х	OPEN/ACTION
		INFORMATION
Subject: Approve Rocketship Spark Academy and Rocketship Delta Prep Charter		CONSENT
Renewal Petitions		CONSEINT

# Recommendation(s):

Based on a comprehensive review of the academic performance, community impact, and compliance with regulatory standards, staff members recommend that the Rocketship Education ("RSED") Board of Directors ("RSED-Board") approve the renewal petitions for Rocketship Delta Prep ("RDL"), and Rocketship Spark Academy ("RSK"). These renewal petitions seek additional five-year charter terms for each school. Staff members additionally request that the Board authorize the California and National Leadership Teams to take action to submit the attached charter renewal petitions and to work through the process of reauthorization.

### **Background:**

Over the past several years, the Board has strategically invested in and supported comprehensive improvement strategies, and championed data-driven decision-making to ensure that each school within the Rocketship network meets or exceeds performance standards. These initiatives have been particularly impactful for RDL and RSK, both of which have demonstrated academic success and strong community partnerships.

RDL and RSK have each met the criteria outlined in Assembly Bill 1505 for middle-performing status under the California Department of Education's ("CDE") guidelines. As demonstrated in the attached charter renewal petitions, the continued success of each of these schools is reflected in key performance indicators, including consistent academic growth, reduction in achievement gaps, and strong support from their respective communities. These schools have consistently demonstrated their commitment to excellence in education, achieving significant milestones in student achievement, community engagement, and operational effectiveness. Both RDL and RSK are outperforming neighboring comparison schools within their operating district.

The approval of these two renewal petitions will allow RSED to continue the renewal process with the appropriate authorizer, ensuring RSED maintains these high quality schools and their impact in serving the educational needs of low-income communities in San Jose and Antioch.

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serving the educational	I needs of low-	income communit	ies in San Jose ar	nd Antioch.	

Summary of Previous Board Action by	Board
None	

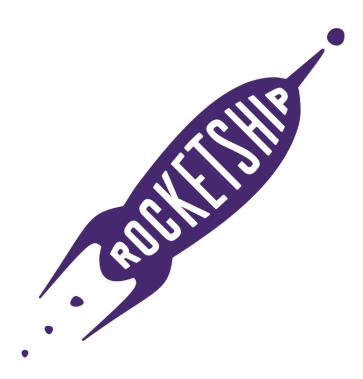
#### **Fiscal Impact:**

None

#### Submitted by:

Maricela Guerrero, California Executive Director

# Rocketship Delta Prep



Charter Renewal Petition For the term July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2031

Submitted to the Antioch Unified School District September 5, 2025

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# **CHARTER SCHOOL INTENT AND CHARTER REQUIREMENTS**

The Charter Schools Act of 1992, codified as Education Code Section 47600 *et seq.*, requires each charter school to have a charter that sets forth a reasonably comprehensive description of the required elements of charter petitions (Education Code Section 47605).

The California Legislature, in enacting the Charter Schools Act, sought to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, students, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following:

- (a) Improve student learning.
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are identified as academically low achieving.
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.
- (e) Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.
- (f) Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable student outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.
- (g) Provide vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools.

Rocketship Delta Prep is proud to have accomplished all of these intended results, as discussed herein.

# **AFFIRMATIONS AND DECLARATION**

Rocketship Delta Prep ("RDL" or the "Charter School"), operated by Rocketship Education d/b/a Rocketship Public Schools ("RSED" or "Rocketship"), authorized by the Antioch Unified School District ("AUSD" or the "District"), and located within the boundaries of AUSD, will follow any and all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations including but not limited to:

- 1. The Charter School will meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- 2. The Charter School declares that RSED shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(6)]
- 3. The Charter School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- 4. The Charter School will not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- 5. The Charter School shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case it will hold a public random drawing to determine admission. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(e)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or of that student's parent or legal guardian within the State. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(i)-(iv). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(A)-(C)].
- 6. The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- 7. The Charter School will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA"), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA").
- 8. The Charter School will meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]

- 9. The Charter School will ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold the Commission on Teacher Credentialing ("CTC") certificate, permit, or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment. The Charter School may use local assignment options authorized in statute and regulations for the purpose of legally assigning certificated teachers, in the same manner as a governing board of a school district. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(1)(1)]
- 10. The Charter School will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- 11. The Charter School will keep current necessary permits, licenses, and certifications related to fire, health, and safety within the building and on school property.
- 12. The Charter School will have at least 175 days of instruction and for each fiscal year, and will offer, at a minimum, the following number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D): to pupils in transitional kindergarten and kindergarten, 36,000 minutes; to pupils in grades 1 to 3, inclusive, 50,400 minutes; to pupils in grades 4 and above, 54,000 minutes.
- 13. If a pupil is expelled or leaves the Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including report cards or a transcript of grades, and health information. If the pupil is subsequently expelled or leaves the school district without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the school district shall provide this information to the Charter School within 30 days if the Charter School demonstrates that the pupil had been enrolled in the Charter School. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(3)]
- 14. The Charter School may encourage parental involvement, but shall notify the parents and guardians of applicant pupils and currently enrolled pupils that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(n)]
- 15. The Charter School shall adhere to each of the conditions in Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A)-(D), including: (A) not discouraging a student from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the Charter School for any reason; (B) not requesting a student's records or requiring a parent, guardian, or student to submit the student's records before enrollment; (C) not encouraging a student currently attending the Charter School to disenroll or transfer to another school for any reason; and (D) providing a copy of the California Department of Education ("CDE") notice regarding the requirements in Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A)-(D) to a parent/guardian or student if the student is 18 years of age or older: (i) when a parent/guardian or student inquires about enrollment, (ii) before conducting an enrollment lottery, or (iii) before disenrollment of a student. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A)-(D)]
- 16. The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(2)]
- 17. The Charter School shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)]

- 18. The Charter School shall comply with any applicable jurisdictional limitations to the locations of its facilities. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47605 and 47605.1]
- 19. The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47612(b) and 47610]
- 20. The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("ESEA"), as reauthorized and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA").
- 21. The Charter School shall comply with the California Public Records Act, Government Code Section 7920.000, et seq. ("CPRA").
- 22. The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g, 34 CFR Part 99 ("FERPA").
- 23. The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act, Government Code Section 54950, et seq. ("Brown Act").
- 24. The Charter School shall comply with Government Code Section 1090, *et seq.*, as set forth in Education Code Section 47604.1 ("Section 1090").
- 25. The Charter School shall comply with the Political Reform Act, Government Code Section 81000, et seq. ("PRA").
- 26. The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of Education Code and Title 5 Regulations which are not otherwise waived under Education Code Section 47610.

Maricela Guerrero,	<b>Executive Director, Rocketship Education - Califo</b>	rnia
Date		

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On December 7, 2016, a diverse coalition of families, faith leaders, and advocates secured a 3–2 vote from the Antioch Unified School District Board to approve Rocketship Delta Prep's charter. Support came from courageous leaders including Dr. Lamont Francies, Alonzo Terry, Fernando Navarro, Walter Ruehlig, Jeff Belle, and Dr. Lawrence Rasheed. With the AUSD Board's approval, the path to a new school in Antioch had begun.

Opening Rocketship Delta Prep required not only an approved charter petition—but also a building. Working closely with families, Antioch City Council, and the Antioch Police Crime and Prevention Commission, Rocketship leaders developed a plan to invest in a state-of-the-art school facility to promote neighborhood revitalization and address concerns about safety and traffic. City Council Members Monica Wilson, Tony Tiscareno, and Lamar Thorpe played key roles in approving the site. Their votes helped transform a long-overlooked area of Antioch into the future home of a groundbreaking public school.

With final approvals in place, Rocketship broke ground on the nation's first net-zero energy charter school at 1700 Cavallo Road. The building—once the East Bay Times site—was transformed into a 24,000-square-foot campus with 20 classrooms and over 30,000 square feet of play space. The design featured solar energy, native landscaping, and Rocketship's unique "no transitions" layout. At the groundbreaking ceremony, over 500 Antioch parents turned out to see their dream of a new school for their community come to life. The school wasn't just a building—it was a beacon of what community-powered education can achieve.

Rocketship Delta belongs to the community—and that's why Antioch families chose the name. The name reflects the strength of the Delta community and the shared belief that our children deserve excellent schools right here at home.

Rocketship Delta Prep now serves over 600 students in grades transitional kindergarten ("TK") to 5th. It is part of the Rocketship Public Schools network of high-performing public charter schools that was highlighted as a "gap busting" public school system in Stanford University's groundbreaking CREDO study of over 3 million public school students nationwide. The study found that Rocketship students gained the equivalent of 96 additional days of learning in reading and 138 additional days of learning in math in a single school year. This is the gap-busting model that Rocketship Delta is proud to offer students and families in Antioch.

With a specific eye to academics, and as confirmed by the California Department of Education in March 2025, RDL has achieved the status of a **middle performing** charter school under the standards implemented in 2019 through Assembly Bill ("AB") 1505, and is entitled to renewal of its charter under the default approval standard in Education Code Section 47607.2(b). RDL is pleased to present a comprehensive analysis of its academic and other achievement data in the sections that follow, documenting why the charter should be renewed, and we note the following highlights:

- Consistent and improving academic indicator results on the California School Dashboard ("Dashboard"), demonstrating a bounce-back after pandemic lows
- Results among student subgroups that reflect schoolwide averages, thus eliminating the achievement gap
- Significant decreases in chronic absenteeism rate
- Verified data showing a year's progress for each year in school
- Achieving the blue performance indicator on the 2024 Dashboard for English Learner Progress Indicator ("ELPI")

Beyond our academic successes, the growth in diversity of our student body, the continuity of high quality learning, and increased supports for students' social-emotional needs throughout the pandemic, we celebrate many additional successes over the past charter term. These accomplishments include the establishment of daily Social-Emotional Learning ("SEL") blocks, the creation of a tier-3 family support role (Care Corps Coordinator), and the addition of a full-time wellness (mental health) teacher to further support increased tiered approaches to academic interventions, social-emotional interventions, and behavioral interventions. Other notable changes to be found within this charter petition, aside from a reasonably comprehensive description of new legal requirements of charter schools enacted since the charter was last approved, include curriculum updates and overall program elevation as a whole, to be found in full detail in the sections to follow.

Rocketship Delta Prep has reflected the intent and ideals of the Charter Schools Act of 1992, "to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish," among other objectives, "provid[ing] parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system ... hold[ing] the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provid[ing] the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems," and "[p]rovid[ing] vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools." We thank the Antioch Unified School District for your time reviewing our charter petition. On behalf of families, students and community, we ask AUSD to approve the renewal petition for a **five-year** charter term.

A summary of changes to the charter petition is attached as Appendix 27.

# **INTRODUCTION**

#### CRITERIA FOR RENEWAL

## **Introduction**

Pursuant to the amendments made to Education Code Section 47607, and the creation of Education Code Section 47607.2, by Assembly Bill 1505 (2019), at the time of charter renewal, a chartering authority shall consider the performance of the charter school on the state and local indicators reported on the Dashboard, and, in some circumstances, the performance of the charter school on assessments deemed to be verified data.

In addition to the shift toward assessing Dashboard data, Assembly Bill 1505 also created a three-tiered system of evaluating charter schools' performance, plus a separate category for Dashboard Alternative School Status schools. Each of the three tiers has unique qualifying criteria.

The three performance categories are as follows:

- High Performing Presumptive renewal if the charter school meets the established renewal criteria Education Code Section 47607(c)(2).
- Low Performing Presumptive non-renewal if the charter school meets the non-renewal criteria, unless the chartering authority makes a finding to approve for a two-year term Education Code Section 47607.2(a).
- Middle Performing Renewal unless the charter school failed to meet or make sufficient progress toward meeting standards and closure is in the best interest of students, evaluated using the Dashboard and Education Code Section 47607.2(b).

Following a pause due to the suspension of state testing during the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDE has resumed publishing a list of high-, middle-, and low-performing charter schools. As determined by law and the CDE, RDL is designated as middle-performing, and is thus eligible for a five-year charter renewal term.

The 2024 Dashboard is the second year since 2019 to display the intended red, orange, yellow, green, and blue colors for schools' status and change scores in the state indicators. The 2022 Dashboard uses one of five Status levels (ranging from Very High, High, Medium, Low, and Very Low) for all state indicators based on the 2021-22 school year data.

The state indicators include the following:

- Chronic Absenteeism: kindergarten through grade eight
- Suspension Rate: kindergarten through grade twelve
- English Learner Progress: grades one through twelve
- Graduation Rate: high school only
- College/Career: high school only
- Academic: grades three through eight and grade eleven English Language Arts ("ELA")/Literacy and Mathematics

### **Rationale for Renewal of RDL Charter Petition**

For middle-performing charter schools, Education Code Section 47607.2 mandates that the chartering authority consider the performance, schoolwide and for all student subgroups, of RDL on the state and local indicators on the Dashboard. The chartering authority shall provide greater weight to

measurements of academic performance, which include the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress ("CAASPP") ELA and math assessments and the ELPI.

Further, in addition to the state and local indicators on the Dashboard, the chartering authority shall also consider evidence, if provided by the Charter School, from assessments deemed verified data by the State Board of Education, showing measurable increases in academic achievement (at least one year's progress for each year in school), or showing strong postsecondary outcomes (college enrollment, persistence, and completion rates equal to similar peers).

In support of approval of its charter renewal petition, below RDL submits data from the Dashboard and verified data sources. As the data presented below demonstrates, RDL has met the criteria for renewal under Education Code Section 47607.2(b), as recognized by the CDE.

#### STUDENT PERFORMANCE DATA

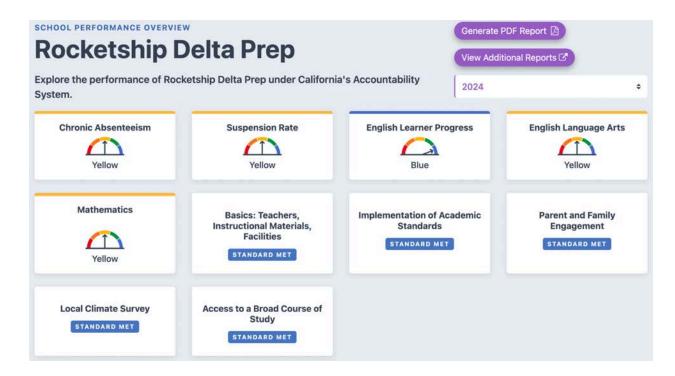
As noted above, Education Code Section 47607.2(b) provides that a chartering authority's decision to renew a school's charter shall be based upon the Charter School's performance on the state and local indicators adopted under Education Code Section 52064.5 (both on a schoolwide basis and by student subgroups). Pursuant to Education Code Section 52064.5(f), the California Department of Education has created the California School Dashboard, which tracks school performance data on such state and local indicators.

### DASHBOARD: STATE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

The most recent Dashboard Reports for RDL are attached to this petition as Appendix 1, and a snapshot of the overview for RDL's Dashboard Report is provided below.

We note that the AB 1505 renewal framework does not set any minimum threshold, or any other objective standard of measurement, for Dashboard data for the purposes of determining renewal of middle-performing charter schools. Rather, Education Code Section 47607.2(b) instructs chartering authority to *consider* the Dashboard data. Chartering authorities are further instructed to give greater weight to measures of academic performance under Education Code Section 47607.2(b)(2), but the statute remains silent on precisely what level of performance a charter school must show.

Therefore, the remainder of this section highlights Rocketship Delta Prep's Dashboard data from 2019 to 2024 for all students (schoolwide) and numerically significant student groups.



Per the Dashboard website, "Performance on state measures, using comparable statewide data, is represented by one of five colors. The performance level (color) is not included when there are fewer than 30 students in any year."



### STATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Education Code Section 47607.2(b) requires chartering authorities to consider the schoolwide performance on the state indicators, with greater weight given to the academic indicators. Rocketship Delta Prep's ELA and Math academic indicator performance levels were Orange in 2023 when Dashboard colors resumed post-pandemic, and improved to Yellow in 2024. Rocketship Delta Prep earned Yellow on the ELPI in 2023, the first year ELPI was reported with a performance level, and improved to Blue, the highest level, in 2024.

With respect to the non-academic indicators, the Charter School's Chronic Absenteeism performance level improved to Yellow in 2024. Rocketship Delta Prep's Suspension rate indicator was Blue, the highest level, in 2023 and Yellow in 2024.

Table 1 reports Rocketship Delta Prep's historical performance levels during its charter term. Since 2018-19 was the Charter School's first year of operation, the only available 2019 Dashboard outcomes

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://www.caschooldashboard.org/about/accountability.

were the Charter School's baseline current status. The state suspended indicator performance levels reporting in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2022 Dashboard published modified performance indicators. For 2019 and 2022, current statuses ("very high" to "very low") are reported in the table for years when performance levels were not available.

Table 1 - Rocketship Delta Prep's Historical State Indicator Performance Levels

Indicator	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Chronic Absenteeism	Very High	N/A	N/A	Very High	Red	Yellow
Suspension Rate	High	N/A	N/A	Very Low	Blue	Yellow
ELA	Very Low	N/A	N/A	Low	Orange	Yellow
Mathematics	Low	N/A	N/A	Low	Orange	Yellow
EL Progress	Very Low	N/A	N/A	Very Low	Yellow	Blue

## Comparisons to the State, the District and Comparison Schools

We have included the following Dashboard data to provide another analysis of Rocketship Delta Prep's student achievement. The Charter School is located in the Antioch Unified School District, and that is also where a significant number of its students reside.

In 2024, Rocketship Delta Prep was equal to or outperformed the state and AUSD on all three academic indicators and the Chronic Absenteeism indicator. Rocketship Delta Prep also outperformed the local district on the Suspension Rate indicator. Furthermore, Rocketship Delta Prep earned the highest performance level on 1 out of 5 indicators.

Table 2 - 2024 State Indicator Performance Levels: State and District

Indicator	Rocketship Delta Prep	State	AUSD
Chronic Absenteeism	Yellow	Yellow	Orange
Suspension Rate	Yellow	Green	Orange
ELA	Yellow	Orange	Orange
Mathematics	Yellow	Orange	Red
EL Progress	Blue	Orange	Orange

The student population of Rocketship Delta Prep may differ greatly from the state and AUSD due to student demographics and grades served. Table 3 below provides a more direct elementary school ("ES") comparison between Rocketship Delta Prep and local elementary schools in the surrounding

neighborhood. The table also outlines the demographics of the Antioch Unified School District. Table 4 includes the 2024 Dashboard results for four comparison schools (elementary schools in close proximity to Rocketship Delta Prep, serving a similar demographic of students): Kimball Elementary School, Marsh Elementary, Belshaw Elementary, and Fremont Elementary.

Table 3 - 2023-24 Demographics: Comparison Schools

Demographic	Rocketship Delta Prep	Kimball ES	Marsh ES	Belshaw ES	Fremont ES	AUSD (Non-Charters
% African American	37%	20%	24%	15%	15%	23%
% Hispanic	55%	61%	60%	60%	71%	51%
% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged ("SED")	73%	76%	78%	82%	75%	75%
% English Learners ("EL")	26%	34%	38%	26%	38%	20%
% Students with Disabilities ("SwD")	7%	9%	13%	13%	14%	17%

Sources: California Department of Education Data Reporting Office (DataQuest) and California School Dashboard. Only numerically significant student subgroups at RDL are included in this table.

As reported in Table 4, Rocketship Delta Prep was equal to or outperformed all comparison schools on the three academic indicators (ELA and Math Academic and ELPI indicators) in 2024. The Charter School also earned the same or higher performance levels as the comparison schools on the Chronic Absenteeism indicator and outperformed three of the four schools on the Suspension Rate indicator.

Table 4 - 2024 State Indicator Performance Levels: Comparison Schools

2024 Indicator	Rocketship Delta Prep	Kimball ES	Marsh ES	Belshaw ES	Fremont ES
Chronic Absenteeism	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Suspension Rate	Yellow	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange
ELA	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red
Math	Yellow	Orange	Red	Yellow	Red
ELPI	Blue	Orange	Orange	Green	Orange

### Chronic Absenteeism

The table below shows how most subgroups at Rocketship Delta Prep scored within one level of the schoolwide indicator in the years in which the indicator has been included on the Dashboard. Districts across the state and country have reported higher chronic absentee rates after the 2020 COVID-related school disruptions and Rocketship Delta Prep has experienced a similar trend.<sup>2</sup> While Rocketship Delta Prep's chronic absentee rates remain above pre-2020 levels, the Charter School significantly decreased its rate by over 7 percent to earn Yellow on the 2024 Dashboard. The Charter School is on-track to report another significant decrease in 2025.

Table 5 - Rocketship Delta Prep Chronic Absenteeism Indicator

Subgroup	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All	Very High	N/A	N/A	Very High	Red	Yellow
African American	Very High			Very High	Red	Yellow
EL	High			Very High	Red	Yellow
Hispanic	Very High			Very High	Red	Yellow
SED	Very High			Very High	Red	Yellow
SwD	Very High			Very High	Orange	Orange

### Suspension Rate

Rocketship Delta Prep did not suspend any students in 2022 or 2023 and, subsequently, earned the highest performance level school-wide and across all subgroups in 2023. The Charter School earned a school-wide Yellow performance level in 2024 due to a suspension rate increase of 1%. However, Rocketship Delta Prep still earned the highest two performance levels of Blue and Green for three of the five reported subgroups. While Rocketship Delta Prep's suspension rate increased in 2024, the Charter School is on-track to improve its Suspension Rate indicator performance on the 2025 Dashboard.

Table 6 - Rocketship Delta Prep Suspension Rate Indicator

Subgroup	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All	High	N/A	N/A	Very Low	Blue	Yellow
African American	Very High			Very Low	Blue	Orange
EL	Low			Very Low	Blue	Blue

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Nat Malkus, "Long COVID for Public Schools: Chronic Absenteeism Before and After the Pandemic", American Enterprise Institute, January 31, 2024,

 $<sup>\</sup>frac{https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/long-covid-for-public-schools-chronic-absenteeism-before-and-after-the-pandemic/$ 

Hispanic	Medium		Very Low	Blue	Green
SED	High		Very Low	Blue	Orange
SwD	Medium		Very Low	Blue	Blue

#### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

As described above, Education Code Section 47607.2(b)(2) requires that greater weight be given to the academic indicators on the Dashboard. Rocketship Delta Prep's ELA Academic Indicator performance level was Orange in 2023 and improved to Yellow in 2024. All reported subgroups scored the same level or within one level of the school-wide indicator in each year.

Rocketship Delta Prep's ELA Academic Indicators are based on the performance of its 3rd-5th graders on CAASPP. The 3rd-5th grade 2023 cohorts were in K-2nd grade at the start of the pandemic and the 3rd grade 2024 cohort started Kindergarten during the pandemic. Both 2023 and 2024 state testing cohorts experienced school disruptions during a critical period in their early literacy skill development. The 2024 Yellow ELA performance level is due to an increase in the Charter School's ELA Current Status and demonstrates Rocketship Delta Prep's academic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic disruptions. Furthermore, the Charter School achieved a higher Current Status (ELA Distance from Standard, or "DFS") than AUSD in 2023 and 2024 (see Table 9 for additional details). This cohort improvement demonstrates Rocketship Delta Prep's academic recovery success following the COVID-19 pandemic disruptions.

Table 7 - Rocketship Delta Prep ELA Academic Indicator

Subgroup	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All	Very Low	N/A	N/A	Low	Orange	Yellow
African American	Not Reported (Number of students<30)	Not Reported (Number of students <30)		Low	Red	Yellow
EL	Not Reported (Number of students<30)	Yellow		Low	Orange	Orange
Hispanic	Not Reported (Number of students<30)	Yellow		Low	Orange	Yellow
SED	Very Low	Yellow		Low	Orange	Yellow
SwD	Not Reported (Number of students<30)	Not Reported (Number of students <30)		Not Reported (Number of students<30)	Not Reported (Number of students<30)	Not Reported (Number of students < 30)

## **MATHEMATICS**

Rocketship Delta Prep's Math Academic Indicator performance level was Orange in 2023 and improved to Yellow in 2024. No reported subgroup scored more than one level below the school-wide indicator in any year.

As with ELA, the 2023 and 2024 3rd-5th grade cohorts were still recovering from the schooling disruptions of a formative period for Math skill development. Rocketship Delta Prep's 2024 Math Academic Indicator performance level was Yellow due to improvements from the prior year and further demonstrates the Charter School's progress toward academic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic disruptions. The Charter School also achieved a higher Current Status (Math DFS) than the local school district in both 2023 and 2024 (see Table 10 for additional details).

Table 8 - Rocketship Delta Prep Mathematics Academic Indicator

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All	Low	N/A	N/A	Low	Orange	Yellow
African American	Not Reported (Number of students<30)			Low	Orange	Orange
EL	Not Reported (Number of students<30)			Low	Orange	Orange
Hispanic	Not Reported (Number of students<30)			Low	Orange	Yellow
SED	Low			Low	Orange	Yellow
SwD	Not Reported (Number of students<30)			Not Reported (Number of students<30)	Not Reported (Number of students<30)	Not Reported (Number of students<30)

# Historical DFS Comparisons: Academic ELA and Mathematics Indicators

The information presented below shows the "current status" as another demonstration of the Charter School's achievement on the academic Dashboard indicators, which we present as another form of analysis for the District to consider under Education Code Section 47606.2(b)(2). In contrast to the official performance indicator levels, which are contingent upon a valid Change metric based on two years of state testing data, a school's Status can be calculated as the average distance from standard --the difference between a student's scale score and the minimum threshold score grade level proficiency. The average DFS provides a direct comparison of absolute academic achievement between Rocketship Delta Prep and the comparison schools and AUSD.

Table 9 - Rocketship Delta Prep Average ELA DFS (Current Status)

School/District	2023	2024	2024 Difference from Rocketship Delta Prep
Rocketship Delta Prep	-53.5	-43.9	-
AUSD	-66.1	-68.4	-24.5
State	-13.6	-13.2	+30.7

In the past two years, Rocketship Delta Prep's ELA DFS outperformed all comparison schools and the District. Rocketship Delta Prep's ELA DFS was over 15 points higher than any of the comparison schools in both 2023 and 2024. Furthermore, the Charter School's ELA DFS was a higher Current Status Designation (Low) than any of the comparison schools (Very Low for all comparison schools) in 2024.

Table 10 - Rocketship Delta Prep Average Mathematics DFS (Current Status)

School/District	2023	2024	2024 Difference from Rocketship Delta Prep
Rocketship Delta Prep	-69.0	-60.6	-
AUSD	-107.9	-108.0	-47.4
State	-49.1	-47.6	+13.0

Similar to ELA, Rocketship Delta Prep earned a higher DFS than the comparison schools and AUSD for the past two years. The Charter School's Math DFS was more than 10 points higher than any of the comparison schools in 2024.

### **ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRESS**

The ELPI measures the percentage of EL students making sufficient progress on the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California ("ELPAC"). The ELPI based on ELPAC first appeared on the Dashboard in 2019 and was reported as a school's baseline year data. Due to COVID-related school closures, data was not reported for two years, and the 2022 Dashboard reported a new baseline year. Performance level colors were not given due to the absence of a change metric from the immediate prior year, but the CDE decided to use the ELPI status level "as a proxy for color" for the 2019 charter school performance categories.<sup>3</sup> The ELPI performance level colors were reported for the first time in 2023. Rocketship Delta Prep earned Yellow the first year a performance level was reported and Blue in the most recent year.

Table 11 - Rocketship Delta Prep English Language Progress Indicator

Subgroup	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All	Very Low	N/A	N/A	Very Low	Yellow	Blue

### **LOCAL INDICATORS**

Education Code Section 47607.2(b)(1) also requires the chartering authority to consider performance on the Dashboard's local indicators. Performance on local indicators is rated through one of three designations: (1) Standard Met; (2) Standard Not Met; or (3) Standard Not Met for Two or More Years.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> California Department of Education, "Determining Charter School Performance Category",

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/aC/cm/documents/determinecharterperf.pdf">https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/aC/cm/documents/determinecharterperf.pdf</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See https://www.caschooldashboard.org/about/faq.

As shown in Table 12 below, Rocketship Delta Prep has met the standard in all categories of the five Local Indicators in all reported years.

Table 12 - Rocketship Delta Prep Local Indicators

Category	Local Indicator	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Academic Performance	Implement ation of Academic Standards	Standard Met			Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
	Basics: Teachers, Instruction al Materials, Facilities	Standard Met		N/A	Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
Conditions and Climates	Parent and Family Engageme nt	Standard Met	N/A		Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
	Local Climate Survey	Standard Met			Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
Academic Engagement	Access to a Broad Course of Study	Standard Met			Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met

## MEASURABLE INCREASES IN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT (Verified Data)

Education Code Section 47607.2(b)(3) requires that chartering authorities consider, if provided, "clear and convincing evidence" of academic progress of at least one year's growth for each year in school, as measured by verified data. In contrast to the Dashboard requirements of Education Code Section 47607.2(b)(1) and (2), this component of the renewal framework does include a time threshold - one year. The remainder of this section provides a multitude of data from various verified data assessment measures and for different student populations. The data clearly demonstrates that Rocketship Delta Prep's students - as a whole, as broken down by student subgroups, and as cohorts of students who have been at the Charter School throughout its tenure - have largely made at least one year's growth for each year of the Charter School's charter term.

### **ACADEMIC INDICATOR DFS**

If a student's individual DFS is constant or increases from the prior year, the student achieved at least one year of grade-level growth. Similarly, if the DFS of a school or subgroup is constant or improving, the school or subgroup has met a year of growth on average. Furthermore, a DFS increase of 15 points or

more is classified as "increased significantly" and a change within  $\pm$ -3 points is classified as "maintained" for the ELA and Mathematics Academic Indicator change metrics.

Rocketship Delta Prep's overall school and subgroup results declined in 2023 for ELA and Math, but the cohort composition should be taken into consideration. As stated in an earlier section, the 3rd-5th grade 2023 tested cohorts were greatly impacted by COVID-19 school disruptions. While the 3rd-5th grade 2024 tested cohorts were also negatively impacted, the Charter School demonstrated that it was making progress toward academic recovery by achieving one year of growth in both subjects in 2024 due to increases in the DFS. In addition to the school-wide growth in 2024, three of the four reported subgroups reported one year of growth in ELA and all subgroups maintained or grew one year in Math.

Table 13 - Rocketship Delta Prep Average DFS and Change (2022-2024)

Subgroup	2022	2023	2023 Change	2024	2024 Change					
	ELA									
All	-36.7	-53.5	-16.8	-43.9	+9.6					
African American	-44.8	-76.0	-31.2	-56.2	+19.8					
EL	-35.3	-57.8	-22.5	-62.7	-4.9					
Hispanic	-35.2	-51.7	-16.6	-48.3	+3.4					
SED	-38.7	-60.5	-21.7	-44.7	+15.8					
		Mathema	tics							
All	-58.9	-69.0	-10.1	-60.6	+8.4					
African American	-79.3	-84.7	-5.5	-82.7	+2.0					
EL	-59.9	-69.9	-10.0	-69.7	+0.2					
Hispanic	-52.6	-65.4	-12.9	-54.0	+11.4					
SED	-64.1	-71.1	-7.0	-67.4	+3.7					

Note: Change metrics are reported directly from state data files. The difference of the rounded DFS reported may slightly differ from the CDE's calculated change using the precise values.

#### **NWEA MAP**

As described above, Education Code Section 47607.2(a)(3) requires a chartering authority to consider, if provided by a charter school, clear and convincing evidence of one year's progress for each year in school, as demonstrated by "verified data." Education Code Section 47607.2(c) further defines "verified

data" as "data derived from nationally recognized, valid, peer-reviewed, and reliable sources that are externally produced." The SBE published an approved list of valid verified data sources which includes MAP Growth by NWEA, Grades K–12. The Charter School has consistently administered the Northwest Evaluation Association's ("NWEA") Measures of Academic Progress ("MAP"), a nationally-normed assessment recognized across the nation as a high-quality and valid assessment. More than 8,500 schools in the United States, including more than 450 districts and school partners in California, use NWEA MAP.6

The CDE's recommended growth metric for NWEA is the Conditional Growth Index ("CGI"), a standardized, normed growth measure. The CGI calculates the difference between a student's observed growth and the expected growth based on their grade-level peers (aka their growth norm) and then divides by the growth standard deviation to produce a standardized measure that can be used to compare growth outcomes across student groups and grades.<sup>7</sup> According to the NWEA guide to using CGI for AB 1505, a CGI range between -0.2 and +0.2 can be used as an approximation of one year's growth.<sup>8</sup>

Rocketship Delta Prep's students have achieved at least one year of growth as demonstrated by the Charter School's NWEA MAP average CGI every year except one in each subject. Table 15 below shows that Rocketship Delta Prep's average school-wide CGI was either within the one year's growth range or above it for five of the six years with assessment results. Blue cells indicate accelerated growth above 0.2, green cells indicate one-year growth and orange cells indicate growth that was less than one year. For three of the six years, Rocketship Delta Prep achieved accelerated growth in Mathematics, with CGI averages above 0.2. Furthermore, the Charter School's numerically significant subgroups also largely made at least one year's progress as measured by the NWEA MAP assessment.

Table 15- Average CGI at Rocketship Delta Prep (2018-19 – 2024-25) [2020 NWEA Norms]

Student Group	2018-19	2019-20*	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25			
Mathematics									
All students	1.43	0.47	-0.33	-0.07	-0.11	0.78			
African American	1.24	0.37	-0.42	-0.11	-0.26	0.83			
EL	1.32	0.63	-0.36	-0.23	-0.11	0.79			
Hispanic	1.50	0.48	-0.27	-0.08	-0.02	0.73			
FRL	1.43	0.36	-0.31	-0.12	-0.10	0.78			

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ch/verifdataacadprogress.asp

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> https://www.nwea.org/state-solutions/california/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://connection.nwea.org/s/article/Conditional-Growth-Index?language=en US

<sup>8</sup>https://calauthorizers.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/NWEA-Using-MAP-Growth-Data-for-AB1505-Guidance-Document-MAY23.pdf

SwD	1.02	0.16	0.01	-0.42	0.46	0.36					
	Reading										
All students	0.88	-0.02	-0.09	-0.08	-0.27	0.05					
African American	0.73	0.06	-0.12	-0.15	-0.22	0.10					
EL	0.61	-0.02	-0.27	-0.14	-0.31	-0.04					
Hispanic	0.88	-0.02	-0.08	-0.06	-0.30	-0.01					
FRL	0.80	-0.04	-0.11	-0.08	-0.30	0.01					
SwD	0.35	-0.11	-0.03	-0.77	-0.16	0.20					

<sup>\*</sup> Growth reported is Fall-to-Winter because spring assessment could not be administered due to COVID-19 school closures

Growth based on 2020 NWEA Norms

#### Conclusion

RDL is proud to have earned "middle-performing" status. In accordance with the applicable legal standard, the Charter School is entitled to default approval of this charter renewal petition, for a five-year renewal term.

## RDL AS PART OF THE ROCKETSHIP EDUCATION NETWORK

Rocketship's story began back in 1999, when Father Mateo Sheedy, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, created the Juan Diego Scholarship to Santa Clara University. After an extensive search for candidates, Father Mateo was surprised to discover that of the hundreds of children in his parish, none of them met the basic academic requirements to qualify them to attend their hometown college, or any other top-tier university.

Father Mateo immediately began researching ways to solve this problem. He soon became convinced that the public schools around his parish were failing to educate the students in his church. He decided that the children of his parish needed to have an alternative to their neighborhood district school.

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 low-income 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 empowered teachers and engaged parents can have on student success.

The original campus, Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary, opened soon after and our students quickly showed strong results in academic achievement. In fact, Rocketship Mateo Sheedy became the highest ranked low-income elementary school in Santa Clara County and the seventh ranked school in California. As more families joined the waiting list, we realized the need for even more high quality schools in the

San Jose community. The founders decided to expand its nonprofit benefit corporation, Rocketship Education, to serve other schools in the neediest neighborhoods.

Rocketship Education has taken the successful model pioneered at Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary School and translated it into critical systems necessary for successful replication. As described above, Rocketship Education provides each of its schools with systems and support for Curriculum, School Leadership, operations, Finance, Legal, Online Technology, Human Resources, and other services. By capturing best practices, Rocketship Education allows each of its schools to avoid many of the startup hurdles faced by most charters and quickly produce strong academic results and a solid school culture by focusing on the key levers that drive student achievement.

Rocketship operates thirteen schools in California. Ten of these schools are in San Jose, where we have grown to become a well-established presence over the past decade. We also have a campus in Redwood City, which opened in the 2015-16 school year. Rocketship also operates two schools in the East Bay.

RDL is part of a network of high-performing charter schools that is centrally governed and operated by Rocketship Education, a non-profit public benefit corporation with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. As further described in Element D below, Rocketship Education is governed by a Board of Directors ("Board") comprised of diverse and experienced community leaders with a broad range of expertise in relevant fields, including academics, education reform, community engagement, finance, management, real estate, law, and fundraising.

The Board is ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of each Rocketship school. Board members have a responsibility to solicit input from, and opinions of, both school staff and students' parents regarding issues of significance and to weigh the input and opinions carefully before taking action.

In addition to benefiting from a deeply experienced Board of Directors, RDL receives support from our centralized network staff. As we have expanded our network and impact over the past decade, we have focused on building organizational capacity to support a robust network of high-quality schools in historically disadvantaged communities. We have worked to develop and consistently apply strong functional expertise in each of the areas that comprise the complexity of school management (i.e. academic and social-emotional instruction, talent, community relations, finance, strategy, operations, legal, technology, human resources). Our centralized management structure is further described in Element D below.

## **ELEMENT A: THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

"The educational program of the charter school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the charter school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an "educated person" in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners."

"The annual goals for the charter school for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve those goals."

- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(A)(i)-(ii)

### MISSION, VISION, AND MODEL

At Rocketship Public Schools, we believe in the infinite possibility of human potential. We believe that every student deserves the right to dream, to discover, and to develop their unique potential. And it is our responsibility and our privilege to unleash the potential inside every Rocketeer we serve. Our non-profit network of public elementary charter schools propels student achievement, develops exceptional educators, and partners with parents who enable high-quality public schools to thrive in their community.

### **Our Vision**

Equal access to opportunity for all.

### **Our Mission**

To catalyze transformative change in low-income communities through a scalable and sustainable public school model that propels student achievement, develops exceptional educators, and partners with parents who enable high-quality public schools to thrive in their community.

#### **Our Pillars**

The Rocketship model is built on three foundational pillars of excellence:

- **1. Personalized Learning -** Tailoring instruction, content, learning experience, and pace to unleash the potential of every student.
- **2. Talent Development -** Investing in the growth and development of every team member to unleash their full potential in the classroom and beyond.
- **3. Parent Power** Unleashing the power of parents to champion their children's education, hold leaders accountable, and enable high-quality public schools to thrive.

## **Rocketship Model**

Unlike traditional elementary schools, students at Rocketship rotate between four content blocks every day: Humanities, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics ("STEM"), Learning Lab and Enrichment. This model allows us to improve student outcomes by developing teachers who specialize in either STEM or Humanities. Content specialization also means our teachers collaborate together to develop classroom management strategies, create lesson plans, and engage parents.

Our teachers lead the learning process for every single student we serve in both whole group grade level instruction and differentiated instruction that meets students at their individual level. Independent learning, small group tutoring, and adaptive online learning programs augment teacher-led instruction and provide valuable time for students to develop more ownership of their learning and achieve the mastery they need to advance. This carefully orchestrated combination of instructional methods is made possible through robust and regular data streams that map precisely where students need support to achieve mastery – from concept acquisition all the way through practice and repetition. This is how we ensure we are purposeful in our use of technology, targeted in our tutoring, and optimizing our teachers' talent and instructional time.

We educate the whole child at Rocketship. We pride ourselves on creating schools that promote our core values of persistence, empathy, responsibility, and respect. We also supplement our core instruction in Humanities and STEM with social emotional learning and positive behavior interventions and supports. All our schools offer a diverse array of enrichment classes, selected in partnership with our parents, such as art, nutrition, gardening, music, dance, and more. Delivering a well-rounded education builds the critical thinking, team work, character skills and values that our Rocketeers need to thrive in school and life.

Rocketship schools are community schools. Across all our schools, families are deeply engaged in their student's academic life and our school community. Our parents name our schools, help design the enrichment offering, and select the Charter School's unique fifth core value. Then, every fall, our teachers and leaders visit the home of every student we serve to learn more about their family, life, and experiences outside of school. By changing the dynamic from parent in a teacher's classroom, to teacher

in a parent's house we are able to develop much deeper ties with our parents that carries through the school year and beyond. Additionally, Rocketship Delta Prep is a proud participant in the statewide California Community Schools Partnership Program, having been awarded a multi-year grant which supports the amazing work of our Care Corps Coordinator (providing services and referrals for at risk families) and our Wellness Counselors (providing mental health supports and social-emotional interventions for our rocketeers with Tier 3 social and behavioral needs).

We staff every Rocketship campus with a principal, assistant principals, a business operations manager, and an office manager. Together, they lead a team of teachers, tutors, enrichment coordinators, and support staff who collectively deliver gap-closing, personalized instruction to students from pre-K to grade 5. Principals and assistant principals provide instructional leadership and professional development ("PD") by regularly observing classrooms, providing continuous feedback, co-planning units of study and lesson plans, and leading data analysis cycles. Office managers lead our family engagement and student information systems. And our Business Operations Manager ("BOM") helps ensure the Charter School has a consistent culture across all spaces, manages school logistics and compliance, keeps our students safe, and ultimately enables instructional staff to focus on teaching and learning.

We believe that all children have potential and that great public schools unleash that potential. But the quality of public education in our country today still depends on where you live and how much money your parents earn. We are building a movement to create educational equity in disadvantaged communities across our country. As demonstrated in the Stanford Center for Research on Education Outcomes ("CREDO") study of over 3 million public school students, Rocketship Public Schools was highlighted as a "gap busting" public charter school network that is providing empirical proof that high-quality public education is possible anywhere. The full Stanford CREDO National Charter School Study is attached as Appendix 2. In short, we still have a long way to go to realize our vision of equal access to opportunity for all, but the progress we are making for the students and families we serve is transformational.

# SCHOOL POPULATION - WHOM THE SCHOOL IS ATTEMPTING TO SERVE

As described above, Rocketship's program is designed to serve students who are or may be at risk of achieving below grade level. The average Rocketship student is between one and two years behind grade level upon entry. RDL will continue outreach efforts to students from predominantly socio-economically disadvantaged neighborhoods where access to high-quality, high-performing schools is limited. As Table 16 below shows, the vast majority of RDL students that we serve are socioeconomically disadvantaged. The majority of our students at RDL are either Black or Hispanic/Latino. We also serve a significant percentage of English learners and students who are eligible for special education and related services.

Table 16 below shows the demographic breakdowns at RDL at the time of submission of this petition for charter renewal.

Table 16 - Demographic Percentages at RDL

School Year	SED	EL	Hispanic	Black	Asian	White	Special Education
2018-19	76.8	18.2	46.7	38.4	0.5	4.3	7.1
2019-20	73.4	29.8	53.5	34.7	0.4	2.1	12.9
2020-21	78.5	29.4	55.2	37.0	1.3	1.6	11.7
2021-22	73.3	31.2	58.6	33.9	2.4	2.4	9.1

2022-23	72.8	29.7	60.0	33.2	1.7	2.1	8.6
2023-24	72.5	25.7	55.5	36.6	2.0	2.3	7.1
2024-25	58.5	24.4	56.1	34.8	2.4	1.7	9.

### **ENROLLMENT**

RDL enrolls approximately 540 students. Table 17 below shows the enrollment numbers at RDL over the past seven school years.

We expect this to remain steady over the next five years, as further shown in our Budget Narrative, attached as Appendix 3 and incorporated into this petition. To absorb expected attrition, the Charter School will continuously enroll vacated spaces to maintain its enrollment numbers. Attrition is primarily driven by families leaving the area and is similar to other Rocketship and high-performing charter schools in the area. Currently, Rocketship uses PowerSchool for student attendance accounting and reporting.

Table 17 - Enrollment Numbers

School Year	TK	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
2018-19	27	108	103	83	49	52	0	422
2019-20	31	113	111	105	53	32	29	473
2020-21	25	113	127	115	95	52	27	554
2021-22	24	112	111	112	101	82	44	584
2022-23	26	105	102	93	95	86	66	573
2023-24	41	34	104	96	97	91	81	604
2024-25	68	80	89	73	71	78	81	540

RDL currently serves students in grades TK-5.9

### **OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN EDUCATED PERSON IN THE 21ST CENTURY

We believe that an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century possesses a depth and breadth of academic and critical life skills that will enable them to develop into a self-motivated, competent, lifelong learner.

The academic skills that we strive for our students to develop are rooted in critical thinking, problem-solving, and meta-cognition. To meaningfully contribute to and participate in this increasingly global society, we believe that students must not only possess an extensive knowledge base, but also skills on how to analyze and access more information. Students must be prepared to apply things they have learned to solve novel problems, think critically and creatively, and communicate precisely and effectively across many different mediums. Students must be prepared to work with and adapt to rapidly-changing technological resources. Students should also have the ability and disposition to explore the thinking and learning process and to explain their rationales to others.

The critical life skills that we strive for our students to develop are rooted in a sense of self, relationship and social skills, and commitment to learning. We believe that students must be able to work cooperatively and collaboratively with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and cultures. They will need

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> RDL affirms that it shall comply with the adult to student ratios and teacher qualifications for TK, as set forth in Education Code Section 48000(g).

strong and resilient social and emotional skills to be prepared to formulate healthy relationships at school, at home, and in the workplace. Through it all, students must remain focused and motivated as they learn and grow both inside and outside the classroom. Students should be motivated to pursue goals and take responsibility for academic, social, and emotional self-development.

Rocketship's program focuses on academic and critical life skills designed to help students flourish in multiple aspects of their lives during their time at Rocketship and beyond.

### **HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS**

Our instructional model is based on our beliefs that learning best occurs in the following ways:

- Through a thoroughly-planned, standards-aligned academic curriculum that centers on higher-order critical thinking and complex problem solving and that authentically integrates a variety of content throughout the school day.
- Through instruction in critical life skills that include teaching core values, strong behavioral skills, and habits of excellence.
- Through personalized instruction that includes targeted interventions and blended classroom-based and adaptive online learning.
- Through differentiation and integrated and focused supports for special student populations.
- Through data-driven instruction, planning, and analysis.
- Through careful selection of educators, and consistent and rigorous intellectual professional development and growth opportunities to keep teachers and staff members invested and effective.

The sections below in Element A further describe how we execute each of our beliefs.

#### **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

### STANDARDS-ALIGNED CURRICULUM

The Rocketship curriculum follows California's adoption of the Common Core State Standards ("CCSS") for English/Language Arts and Mathematics; English Language Development ("ELD") Standards; the Next Generation Science Standards ("NGSS"); the History-Social Science Framework; and the remaining State Content Standards for other content areas including Social Studies and Visual and Performing Arts (collectively referred to herein as "State Standards").<sup>10</sup>

We understand and appreciate the rigor of the CCSS. Additionally, the CCSS-aligned Smarter Balanced assessment system tests a wide range of complex cognitive skills that require students to both engage in and articulate higher-order thinking across content areas. Our classroom instructional practices similarly teach students to not only build skills, but then to apply their understandings in a diverse variety of tasks and settings. These practices also help further the academic skills that, as described above, we believe all educated persons in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must possess.

Our teachers develop and align their classroom practices to the rigor of the CCSS and CAASPP. Rocketship's centralized network Program Team, in partnership with the California Regional Achievement Team, is tasked with designing an intellectual preparation process to best set teachers and students up for short and long-term success. The Program Team partners with regional leaders (school principals and assistant principals, and teachers), to develop plans and materials that span from long-term curriculum maps to daily lessons. Teachers also meet regularly throughout the school year with their school-based coaches and members of the Program Team to explore content covered in various units,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(d).

thinking about questions like, "What are the key understandings and skills needed for the relevant standards?" and "What should students be able to do/produce if they have mastered the standard?"

The Program Team works year-round to dissect, analyze, and further investigate the standards for all content areas that we teach. The Program Team, along with the Analytics Team and California Regional Team, also design and analyze standards-based assessments throughout the year to help further differentiate instructional materials and supports, and to track student progress. Through it all, we constantly share our learnings with teachers and leaders to develop processes for receiving feedback from the "ground level." We make adjustments as necessary to ensure that our teachers continue to feel motivated, supported, and prepared and our students continue to make significant growth.

The below sections provide further details on our curriculum and instruction. 11

### **ELA/LITERACY**

## **CCSS-ALIGNED INSTRUCTION**

Each of the elements of our reading and writing instruction are focused on the CA CCSS for ELA and Literacy. For each of the strands called for in the CCSS (reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language, each further described below), our instruction includes the College and Career Readiness anchor standards and their accompanying grade-specific standards to ensure that our students are on track to meet end-of-year expectations.

Reading Strand. In accordance with the CCSS for ELA/Literacy, our reading instruction for both literature and informational text focuses on the anchor and grade-specific standards in the following areas: (1) key ideas and details (i.e. determining central ideas and themes, making logical inferences from text, analyzing how ideas and characters develop); (2) craft and structure (i.e. analyzing meaning, structure, and point of view of a text); (3) integration of knowledge and ideas (i.e. evaluating content, comparing information from multiple sources); and (4) range of reading and level of text complexity (i.e. reading and comprehending complex literary and informational texts). We also teach the reading standards for foundational skills, which include print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency. Our instructional strategies for teaching reading are further described in the following section.

Writing Strand. Our writing instruction focuses on the anchor and grade-specific standards in the areas of (1) text types and purposes (i.e. learning to write narratives, informative/explanatory texts, arguments, and a variety of other subgenres); (2) production and distribution of writing (i.e. producing and sharing clear, coherent and organized writing through a well-planned writing process); (3) research to build and present knowledge (i.e. assessing the credibility of sources, analyzing research, and integrating findings to support writing); and (4) range of writing (i.e. writing over short and long time frames for a variety of purposes and audiences).

**Speaking and Listening Strand.** Our speaking and listening instruction, which we integrate not only into our ELA/Literacy lessons but also throughout the entire school day, focuses on the anchor and grade-specific standards in the areas of (1) comprehension and collaboration (i.e. preparing for and

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> These sections describe our instruction as it is currently being implemented in accordance with the State Standards. We constantly monitor any changes in the State Standards and assessment systems and may at times adjust elements of our instruction, curriculum, and/or teaching materials to ensure that teachers and students are best equipped for mastery. Consistent with the standards in Education Code Section 47607, we will notify the District at any time should any adjustment become of the magnitude that may constitute a material revision to our charter.

participating in a wide range of conversations with diverse partners, integrating and evaluating integration presented in a variety of formats, and evaluating other speakers' reasoning and rhetoric); and (2) presentation of knowledge and ideas (i.e. presenting findings with supporting evidence, making strategic use of media and data displays to express ideas, adapting speech to a variety of tasks).

Language Strand. Our language instruction focuses on the anchor and grade-specific standards in the areas of (1) conventions of standard English (i.e. grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation); (2) knowledge of language (i.e. understanding how language functions in different contexts); and (3) vocabulary acquisition and usage (i.e. using context clues to determine the meaning of unknown words, understanding figurative language and word relationships, acquiring and using a range of academic language).

Additionally, in alignment with the CCSS, we are committed to: (1) regular practice with complex texts and their academic language; (2) reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from texts, both literary and informational (i.e. asking students to answer not solely from their prior knowledge but rather from a close, careful reading of the text); and (3) building knowledge through content-rich information (i.e. students are immersed in information about the world around them, especially through content-rich nonfiction). Overall, through both our whole group and small group instruction, students receive consistent exposure to both narrative *and* nonfiction text, with opportunities to synthesize their thinking verbally and in writing.

# **COMPONENTS OF OUR LITERACY INSTRUCTION**

Our reading and writing instruction includes four different components to teach the standards and strands described above: (1) explicit teaching of the building blocks of literacy; (2) explicit teaching of reading comprehension skills; (3) application of the building blocks and reading comprehension skills; and (4) explicit teaching of writing skills and process.

- (1) Explicit teaching of the building blocks of literacy. Our instructors teach phonics (sound-spelling relationships), phonemic awareness (distinguishing individual sounds within words), and language arts (word and structural analysis); and fluency.
- <u>Phonics:</u> Students will learn to relate sounds to spellings to decode words. Our instruction will include concepts like long and short vowel sounds, consonant and vowel combinations, consonant clusters, diphthongs, digraphs, and variant vowels.
- <u>Phonemic awareness:</u> Students will learn how to distinguish individual sounds (phonemes) within words. Our instruction will include activities like categorization (recognizing the "odd" sound in a word), isolation (identifying a single sound in a word), rhyming, segmenting (separating spoken words into individual sounds), and oral blending (combining individual sounds in a word).
- <u>Language Arts:</u> Our instruction will zoom in on the concept of word and structural analysis, engaging in in-depth study of topics like morphemes (i.e. prefixes, suffices, root words), compound words, homophones, and syllabication.
- <u>Fluency:</u> Our instruction will focus on helping students acquire automaticity (rapid and automatic word recognition) and prosody (reading with phrasing and recognition of punctuation). Our teachers will build students' fluency through modeling good oral reading, teaching students phrasing, and offering many opportunities for students to practice with guidance and support (i.e. repeated reading). Additionally, teachers will expose students to high-frequency words and sight words to allow students to focus less energy on decoding and more on comprehension during their reading lessons.
- (2) Explicit teaching of reading comprehension skills. Reading comprehension instruction occurs at all grade levels. Teachers will identify a CCSS-aligned standard and objective for the lesson. Teachers will

model the skill as well as the metacognition (thinking about the comprehension that students will be asked to do in their own reading). Teachers will read with the students, making pre-designated stops to highlight the skill and ask students to also interact with the text themselves, either in small groups or individually, and practice the skill.

Reading comprehension instruction may also take the form of a read aloud, which is emphasized more heavily in the younger grades, where teachers will use an anchor text to model a particular reading skill/strategy. The teacher will define the skill, explain why good readers use the skill, and model how to apply the skill. The teacher may also provide either a preview of the text or a summary from the previous day's reading, including review of specific vocabulary words. The teacher will then read the text, modeling fluency, and take pre-planned pauses to do a "think aloud" to describe the comprehension strategies she is using, any comprehension problems that she is encountering as well as ways to address them, and continue to build enthusiasm and engagement about the text. Teachers will also assess comprehension of the text by posing literal, inferential, and critical thinking discussion questions.

(3) The application of building blocks and reading comprehension skills. This element of our reading instruction occurs primarily through small group reading instruction which is the cornerstone of the literacy and comprehension skills that we teach. Our guided reading primarily occurs in small, homogeneous groups, and instruction is focused on what each individual student needs at the moment to advance in reading ability.

We use assessments as the starting point for our guided reading instruction. Our assessments, particularly the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills ("**DIBELS**") assessment system, are designed to provide teachers with critical and targeted information on how students process information and read texts. Teachers will use this data to gauge students' approximate "reading levels," assess reading growth over time, and plan guided reading instruction. Teachers' plans will include selecting a text that will give multiple opportunities for students to practice a skill or strategy, designing a pre-reading activity to focus students, observing and coaching students during reading, and leading a comprehension conversation to practice and assess students' comprehension.

Our students may also practice reading comprehension through independent reading. Our teachers are trained to organize leveled libraries, which will include multiple text formats and reading levels, various genres, a range of content areas, and appeal to students' interests. Our teachers will also set independent reading expectations with their students and develop ways to hold them intellectually accountable.

(4) The explicit teaching and application of writing skills and the writing process. Our writing instruction includes both teacher-driven and student-driven components.

As further described below in our Special Populations section, we also incorporate the **ELD** standards into our ELA/Literacy block through both integrated and designated ELD instruction.

### INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING AND PREPARATION

As described above, our teachers and school leaders are provided with a plethora of resources to effectively and efficiently plan and prepare their ELA/Literacy instruction. These include:

- End-of-unit, CCSS-aligned assessments to test mastery and prepare students for the SBAC requirements
- Ongoing unit assessments to be administered every three to four weeks, depending on the grade level and unit
- Scope and sequence curriculum maps, which lay out the standards-aligned objectives for each unit throughout the school year

- Unit plans
- Objective plans
- Sample daily lesson plans
- Fiction and nonfiction texts that correlate with the lesson plans, objectives, and units

Samples of Rocketship's preparation materials, including scope and sequence maps, are attached as Appendix 4.

### **MATHEMATICS**

## CCSS-ALIGNED INSTRUCTION

Our mathematics instruction is centered on the California CCSS for Mathematics ("CA CCSSM"). Lessons incorporate the CA CCSSM's eight Mathematical Practice Standards, which are designed to develop students' broader mathematical understanding across all grade levels, as well as the CA CCSSM's Content Standards, which are a progression of grade-level specific mathematical topics.

**Practice Standards.** We believe that all students should develop the varieties of expertise that are reflected in the practice standards, as these standards are designed for all levels of mathematical maturity and will enable students to become strong in mathematics even beyond their elementary school experience at Rocketship. The eight practice standards, as well as a brief summary of what proficiency looks like for each of them under the CA CCSSM, are described below.

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them: Proficient students will be able to explain to themselves the meaning of a problem, plan a solution pathway, consider analogous problems, monitor and evaluate progress toward a solution, and check their answers using a different method.
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively: Proficient students will be able to make sense of quantities and their relationships, create a coherent representation of the problem at hand, consider the units involved, and know how to use different properties of operations and objects.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others: Proficient students will make conjectures and build ways to explore them, recognize and use counterexamples, make plausible arguments about data, distinguish logical vs. flawed reasoning, justify and communicate their conclusions
- <u>Model with mathematics:</u> Proficient students will apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life (even if this is as simple as writing an addition or subtraction equation to describe a situation). Proficient students will also be able to identify important quantities in practical situations and map relationships using tools such as diagrams, two-way tables, graphs, flowcharts, and formulas.
- <u>Use appropriate tools strategically</u>: Proficient students will be able to consider the available grade-appropriate tools when solving a problem, make mathematical models, and identify external mathematical resources.
- <u>Attend to precision</u>: Proficient students will use clear definitions, articulate the meaning of chosen symbols, carefully specify appropriate units of measure, calculate accurately and efficiently, and provide explanations of their reasoning.
- <u>Look for and make use of structure</u>: Proficient students will discern patterns, deconstruct equations, and shift perspectives.
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning: Proficient students will look for repeated calculations and shortcuts, notice regularity, and maintain oversight of calculations they are working to solve.

Content Standards. While the practice standards describe the ways in which mathematics learners should be engaging with subject matter, the content standards include the actual grade-specific subject matter. They are designed to work in conjunction with the practice standards. The CA CCSSM Content Standards identify several "critical areas" of focus for each grade level, on which we center our mathematics instruction.

- <u>Kindergarten:</u> (1) representing, relating, and operating on whole numbers, initially with sets of objects; and (2) describing shapes and space.
- Grade 1: (1) developing understanding of addition, subtraction, and strategies for addition and subtraction within 20; (2) developing understanding of whole number relationships and place value; (3) developing understanding of linear measurement and measuring lengths as iterating length units; and (4) reasoning about attributes of, and composing and decomposing geometric shapes.
- Grade 2: (1) extending understanding of base-ten notation; (2) building fluency with addition and subtraction; (3) using units of measure; and (4) describing and analyzing shapes
- <u>Grade 3:</u> (1) developing an understanding of multiplication and division and strategies for multiplication and division within 100; (2) developing understanding of fractions; (3) developing understanding of the structure of rectangular arrays and area; and (4) describing and analyzing two-dimensional shapes.
- Grade 4: (1) developing understanding and fluency with multi-digit multiplication, and developing understanding of dividing to find quotients involving multi-digit dividends; (2) developing an understanding of fraction equivalence, addition and subtraction of fractions with like denominators, and multiplication of fractions by whole numbers; and (3) understanding that geometric figures can be analyzed and classified based on their properties, such as having parallel sides, perpendicular sides, particular angle measures, and symmetry.
- <u>Grade 5:</u> (1) developing fluency with addition and subtraction of fractions, and developing understanding of multiplication of fractions and division of fractions; (2) extending division to two-digit divisors, integrating decimal fractions into the place value system and developing understanding of operations with decimals to hundredths, and developing fluency with whole number and decimal operations; and (3) developing understanding of volume.

## **COMPONENTS OF OUR MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTION**

To best meet the demands of the CCSS, our math instruction will include all of the following elements at all grade levels:

- Instruction and learning activities focused on math concepts and application of understandings
- Explicit instruction on math vocabulary and language
- Spiral review on concepts already covered, with a specific focus on application of understandings across a diverse range of concepts
- Protected intervention and corrective instruction time during the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math ("STEM") block
- Well-designed routines closely matched to grade-level content and the development of number sense and math strategies (calendar math, oral fluency, e.g.)

In order to accomplish all of these each day, it is imperative that our STEM blocks are designed to make the most of every minute, and ensure that the teacher is able to be as impactful as possible with their time and attention.

**Core Grade-Level Instruction.** To address the mathematical standards at each grade level, we utilize Eureka Math as our core curriculum. The Eureka block is the portion of the math instructional block

where new skills are taught. While the breakdown of each component varies slightly by grade level and lesson, a typical Eureka block consists of the following components:

- Fluency: Activities are strategically designed to both provide necessary practice on critical fluencies for the grade level and to prime students for the day's objective.
- Application Problem: This component focuses on developing students' ability to comprehend story problems through the read-draw-write framework.
- Concept Development & Problem Set: The new objective for the day is introduced, building towards independent practice.
- Student Debrief: Students engage in discussion of the day's objective to solidify their understanding.

The math lesson begins with fluency activities. These activities are meant to provide necessary practice with fluency skills, including counting, fact fluency, and automaticity with current-module skills. A typical Eureka lesson contains more fluency activities than can reasonably be completed in the allotted time in the block. Teachers strategically select activities that align to their students' areas of need while incorporating a variety of different activities over the course of a week or topic.

A typical math lesson then includes an application problem before transitioning to the concept development portion of the lesson. The application problem serves a number of different purposes in the lesson.

- It provides consistent exposure to and practice with understanding word problems and gives an opportunity to teach and practice the Read-Draw-Write comprehension strategy.
- It serves as either a review of previously taught content or as an entry point to the day's lesson.
- It is important to note that to achieve the purpose of the application problem, it does not need to be fully completed and debriefed every day. For example, if students need additional support in drawing a model to support their comprehension of a story problem, the teacher could choose to focus just on that aspect of the problem-solving process and continue supporting the student in subsequent lessons.

Concept development is the component of the math lesson where new content is taught. Rather than following a more traditional I do - we do - you do structure, concept development is meant to be a shared experience where students are actively engaged in the understanding of a new concept through discourse and guided problem-solving.

While concept development is meant to be a teacher-led, guided experience, the problem set provides an opportunity for students to engage in practice independent of the teacher. This does not mean that students cannot receive help on the problem set – group work can be utilized during this time, and the teacher should be coaching individual students and addressing whole-class misconceptions as needed. However, providing students with the opportunity to engage in productive struggle during this portion of the block is critical to their learning process.

The student debrief follows the independent problem set and provides an opportunity for students to discuss and synthesize their learning before concluding the day's lesson. A strong student debrief should focus on a common misconception from the lesson (guided by the debrief questions provided in the lesson plan), allow opportunities for all students to engage with each other in discourse, and end with a transferable stamp of the key takeaway. The student debrief is followed by the exit ticket.

Spiral review. Spiral review is critical to ensure our learners are repeatedly engaging with content and applying their burgeoning understandings to a wide assortment of contexts and challenges. This block

also keeps skills fresh in the minds of students and allows teachers opportunities to shore up small misconceptions, review key vocabulary, and investigate application of previously learned content in new situations. There are two main forms of spiral review: math meeting (Grades TK & K) and math board (Grades 1-5).

- Math meeting: Math Meeting is a daily routine in the TK & K classroom, where students practice routinized skills (e.g. counting), explore the calendar for math patterns, and spiral review previously taught content. At the beginning of the year, math meeting is a group exercise, while students become more independent as they become more familiar with the routine. Kindergarten students start the year with math meeting, and transition to math board by the end of the year in preparation for Grade 1.
- Math board: Math Board is a review worksheet with 4-6 problems aligned to previous objectives and skills. Students spend the first half of their spiral review time completing these math board problems independently. Teachers then use the remaining spiral review time to review 1-2 targeted problems as a class, focusing on key misconceptions from their formative assessment data or important background knowledge required for upcoming content. For maximum effectiveness, math board can be differentiated to reach students at different levels.

**Intervention and Corrective Instruction.** While strong tier 1 instruction on grade-level content is foundational to a student's success in a Rocketship math classroom, we know that some students will need additional instructional support to show mastery. This support needs to address both unfinished foundational learning and misconceptions about current grade-level content. As a result, our vision for remediation is two-pronged and seeks to balance **proactive** intervention (addressing foundational learning) and **responsive** reteaching (addressing current grade-level content).

Responsive instruction, just like any portion of the math block, is at its best when it is data-informed. Effective responsive instruction relies on a variety of assessment data:

- Exit tickets, topic quizzes, and module assessments to provide data on mastery of grade-level content
- Diagnostic assessments and universal screeners to place students along a continuum of foundational knowledge that allow access to grade-level content.

Our approach to addressing unfinished foundational learning relies heavily on the approach laid out in Accelerate, Don't Remediate, a TNTP report from 2021, which is attached as Appendix 5. We believe that by addressing unfinished learning right as it becomes necessary to access grade-level content, we can both close gaps and help students find success with the rigorous work expected of them at their grade level. We utilize the Bridges intervention curriculum to support students across all tiers of support.

Bridges offers targeted supplemental instruction that aligns with core mathematical curricula, providing essential support to students whose instructional needs are not met through the Eureka curriculum alone. Bridges' detailed lesson plans align with the concrete-pictorial-abstract continuum utilized in Eureka and focus on building conceptual understanding.

Even the most skilled teachers will not reach 100% mastery with every objective they teach. Responsive reteaching seeks to address precise misconceptions so that students can increase their proficiency with concepts in their journey towards grade-level mastery. Effective responsive reteaching is data-informed and follows analysis of an assessment, such as a topic quiz or module assessment, to both identify students who require additional support and specific misconceptions that need to be addressed. It is most often taught in a small-group setting but can be taught to a whole-group, as indicated by data.

Responsive reteaching is not simply reteaching a lesson in the same way it was initially presented – to effectively reteach or remediate a misconception, content must be taught in a different way. The most common lesson model for responsive reteaching is a teacher model followed by a gradual release towards independent practice. All responsive reteach lessons should end with some sort of formative assessment to help teachers determine if student mastery increased as a result of their instruction.

## INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING AND PREPARATION

The need for solid planning and intellectual preparation is especially important to ensure that teachers leverage the interconnectedness of the CA CCSSM Practice and Content Standards. As described in Section A above, our teachers and School Leaders are provided with many resources to help them effectively plan and execute their mathematics instruction. These include:

- Scope and Sequence Map: This is a curriculum map that identifies the key practice and content standards, skills, and concepts to be taught throughout the year as well as the assessments to be used to track and evaluate progress.
- Intellectual Preparation Resources: All school leaders and teachers are provided with guidance on strong intellectual preparation, including lesson planning checklists, exemplar intellectual prep, and module launch meeting agendas.
- Curriculum-Specific Resources: All teachers have access to Eureka Math's vast suite of resources to support understanding of content at a lesson and module level.

Samples of our preparation materials are attached as Appendix 4.

### SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION

# **INTEGRATED CONTENT INSTRUCTION**

At Rocketship, we have three main learning spaces: the Humanities classroom, the STEM classroom, and the Learning Lab. As further described above, the Humanities classroom is where we teach ELA/Literacy and social studies. The STEM classroom is where we teach mathematics and science. The Learning Lab, further described below, is where students receive targeted interventions, a variety of enrichments, and engage with hands on centers and online learning programs.

"Content instruction" describes the subject matter that students are learning about. Our primary goals for content instruction are to provide students with exposure to a wide breadth of science and social studies topics, build skills and competencies around learning investigations, foster curiosity in various types of content, and provide opportunities for students to continually practice and utilize knowledge.

Because the CCSS calls for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects to be integrated into K-5 reading literacy instruction, our instructional framework is rooted in integration, with science and social studies content appearing in not only reading but also in writing, mathematics, arts, and language instruction

Our content instruction contains four main components.

**Skills and competencies.** We teach science and social studies skills that can be applied to various subject matter at any time (e.g., recording observations, reading maps, using timelines). We generally try to frontload skills and competencies related to our content instruction at the beginning of the school year so that students have the opportunity to apply them in an increasingly sophisticated manner.

*General content exposure.* As described above, we aim to expose our students to a wide variety of science and social studies content to bolster curiosity and broaden their horizons in an authentic way. This is often done through reading nonfiction text, which (as described in Section A above) is a key emphasis of the CCSS.

**Explicit vocabulary instruction.** Consistent with the goals of the English Language Development standards to authentically expose students to academic vocabulary, we teach students vocabulary during our instructional blocks. For example, teachers will select domain-specific Tier 2 and Tier 3 words that are reviewed at the beginning of every reading comprehension lesson.

**Projects and investigations.** We provide students with opportunities to conduct research, do projects, and make observations while learning new content and applying learned skills. This can occur during either the Literacy or Mathematics block, as well as through hands-on projects such as Lego Robotics in the Learning Lab.

Our content instruction model requires a high degree of communication and collaboration among classroom teachers and instructional staff, for which our rotational model and professional development structure (further described below) are well suited. We strive to ensure that classrooms are aligned on the various skills and content being taught in science, social studies, and beyond. We also routinely analyze performance data across all content areas to plan and evaluate our instruction and ensure that instruction progresses fluidly through grade levels.

# SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION

Our Social Studies instruction is designed to provide students with an understanding of historical, cultural, and societal concepts that align with the National Council for Social Studies ("NCSS") standards. The units emphasize the development of civic competence through the study of social studies strands such as history, geography, and economics.

Additionally, our Social Studies materials are designed to build upon students' knowledge progressively over time. Here is a snapshot of the key topics that are covered across the grades and how they evolve over time:

- In **Kindergarten**, students are introduced basic concepts of family and community life, setting the foundation for understanding more complex societal structures.
- In **First Grade**, students expand their idea of community by examining everyday life in different historical and cultural contexts.
- In **Second Grade**, students explore communities of early America in order to better understand the importance of civic engagement and personal responsibility.
- In **Third Grade**, students focus on significant historical changes and continuities in America by exploring Colonial times.
- In **Fourth Grade**, students broaden their understanding of history, geography, and economics by exploring topics such as the Founding Documents and Westward Expansion.
- In **Fifth Grade**, students deepen their historical knowledge by focusing on a pivotal event, Juneteenth, that highlights the complexities of freedom, citizenship, and civil rights.

Overall, our Social Studies instruction is aligned with the NCSS standards, ensuring that students develop a robust understanding of history, culture, civics, and geography. By building on their knowledge over time, students are able to better understand their community, country, and world – which is essential in preparing them to be informed and engaged citizens.

## **SCIENCE INSTRUCTION**

**NGSS-Aligned Instruction.** At Rocketship, we are continuing to monitor and participate in the CDE's NGSS Implementation Plan, which addresses how the CDE, schools, and community stakeholders can collaboratively work to actualize the NGSS in California classrooms.

We have participated in meetings, trainings, and workshops and developed teaching and coaching tools for NGSS-aligned instruction. We use resources that are available on the CA NGSS Digital Center, research best practices, and use high-quality sample CA NGSS-aligned assessment resources.

**Components of Rocketship Science Instruction.** Science instruction is an integral component of our model both in and out of the STEM block. We build an NGSS-aligned science unit into the STEM scope and sequence, along with including weekly science instruction in students' enrichment rotation. We also administer NGSS-aligned benchmark assessments twice a year for grades 3-5.

Our science instruction is dually focused on building content knowledge and schema, as well as using strategies to support language acquisition. We provide opportunities for hands-on experiments, supported by the standards-aligned STEMscopes curriculum. Our units encompass the three Disciplinary Core Ideas of the NGSS:

- 1. <u>Physical Sciences.</u> Our instruction includes grade-appropriate lessons in the NGSS focus areas of motion and stability, waves and their application in technologies, and matter and its interactions.
- 2. <u>Life Sciences.</u> Our instruction includes grade-appropriate lessons in the NGSS focus areas of molecules and organisms, heredity (inheritance of traits), ecosystems, and biological evolution.
- 3. <u>Earth Sciences.</u> Our instruction includes grade-appropriate lessons in the NGSS focus areas of earth's systems, earth's place in the universe, and the effects of global activity on the earth.

As described above, science instruction is also integrated into our Humanities and STEM blocks to ensure that students are having an authentic and meaningful experience with the content they are learning.

Specifically, the science unit taught by STEM teachers covers grade level content in a similar structure to enrichment, however two key differences are allow instruction in the STEM science unit to go into greater depth, due to:

- **Increased in minutes in each block:** while science in enrichment will typically have a maximum of 45 minutes, the STEM block will have a minimum of 60 minutes.
- **Increased frequency of lessons:** since the science unit and lessons will be taught *in place of daily math lessons*, there will be new learning and exploration daily as opposed to 1-2x a week in enrichment.

## ARTS AND ENRICHMENT

Our instructional program incorporates a number of enrichment opportunities for our Rocketeers.

We have a strong focus on wellness, and as such we will aim to align our Enrichment Program to incorporate physical activity. We will administer the Physical Fitness Test ("PFT") to our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Each Rocketship school has at least two enrichment programs. We hire enrichment instructors who have demonstrated expertise and interest in a specific enrichment content area. Currently, RDL offers enrichment courses including athletics, STEAM, and hands-on science. Students rotate through these courses throughout the school year to ensure that students can delve into the units in a robust and meaningful way and get to know the instructors better. RDL's bell schedule is attached as Appendix 6.

Where relevant, our instructors strive to align their curriculum with the California Visual Performing Arts framework. This framework provides guiding principles, planning and implementation strategies, curriculum development, assessment resources, and professional development for instruction in dance, music, theater, and the visual arts. As with all members of our instructional staff, our enrichment instructors receive regular coaching, training, and professional development. We continually strive to ensure that all enrichment content is rigorous, standards-aligned, and data-driven.

## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

We believe that students must master both academic and critical life skills to truly be successful participants in and contributors to society. To this end, our instructional program includes a social-emotional learning curriculum as well as other initiatives to help students develop into confident, competent, self-motivated, and productive lifelong learners. We look to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning ("CASEL") to define and describe our intentions when developing programs and measuring students' social-emotional development, the CASEL Framework identifies 5 competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Our daily schedule reflects our value of Social Emotional Learning as every student begins their day with a Community Meeting that blends relationship-building elements with an SEL lesson that includes prosocial skills instruction and highlights our core values: respect, responsibility, persistence, empathy, and courage. Our Tier 1 SEL Curriculum is designed with consideration for the CASEL framework, our Rocketship core values, and culturally responsive pedagogy.

## CORE VALUES

At every Rocketship campus, we teach four core values— respect, responsibility, persistence, and empathy. Additionally, each school chooses a fifth core value of its own. RDL's fifth core value is "courage."

Core values form the basis of our behavioral instruction and management systems. At the beginning of the school year, teachers explicitly teach core values lessons in which they demonstrate what different core values look like in action. Every school also has its own system to promote/incentivize the core values, such as providing students with Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports ("PBIS") store stickers for their trackers that are aligned to academics and behaviors, which can be redeemed at the school store.

### LAUNCH

Each Rocketship campus begins the school day with Launch, which is a period of time for the whole school to come together around some school wide foci. This usually includes one of the core values (i.e., a "core value of the month"). During Launch, the school may also promote a particular successful student habit, such as preparedness, going above and beyond, or persisting through a challenge. Schools may also teach a new feature of an incentive or behavior management system. Launch is also a time to promote school wide academic progress. School leaders may teach everyone a word or idiom of the day or

celebrate progress toward achievement goals. Finally, schools may use Launch time to foster school culture and pride and student engagement. The whole school, including the staff, may learn a song or a dance together or celebrate a particular student or classroom's recent accomplishment.

### POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

**PBIS** is our framework for creating learning environments that are consistent, predictable, positive, and safe. We believe that students need to be taught how to behave, and struggling students must be taught replacement behaviors.

Each school has a PBIS Team comprised of a wide cross-section of staff members, including teachers, school leaders, and operational and support staff members.

## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL CURRICULUM

Our SEL approach also draws upon resources from multiple research-based curriculum including RULER, Zones of Regulation, and the Kimochis curriculum. Along with our SEL lessons, we have developed a community meeting framework for teachers to ensure there are relationship building opportunities for students to connect, disengage stress, make commitments, and unite as a community.

Kimochis (Grades TK-2). The Kimochis Social-Emotional Learning curriculum is a yearlong, structured program that uses engaging characters, emotional vocabulary, and communication tools to help students build self-awareness, empathy, and positive relationship skills. Organized into thematic units—such as Respect and Inclusion, Mindfulness, Kindness and Friendship, and Responsibility—the curriculum introduces weekly "I can..." statements, character-driven lessons, and feelings-based activities that align with PBIS goals. Through modeling, guided practice, and reflection, students learn to identify and express emotions, use respectful communication strategies, resolve conflicts, and make mindful choices that support a caring, inclusive classroom community.

The Shortest Distance (Grades 3-5). The Shortest Distance Curriculum ("SDC") is our own SEL curriculum which seeks to inspire crucial conversations, skills development, and storytelling in classrooms. The curriculum title is inspired by the words of Anthody de Mello, "...the shortest distance between a human being and truth is a story." By centering stories, the curriculum builds from the research-base of developmental bibliotherapy and culturally responsive pedagogy, creating an opportunity for students to see themselves and diverse community members represented in stories as they consider themselves and their world. The Shortest Distance Curriculum provides teachers with daily lessons which are presented on slides and embedded into a daily community meeting structure which also includes relationship building activities. While some curricula provide suggested activities or skills-based lessons, SDC relies on storytelling and provides guidance for teachers to lead meaningful yet brief (10-15 minutes) lessons. The slides allow teachers to provide visuals and share texts with students, additionally this format promotes a high level of fidelity to the curriculum plan (as teachers are cued and prompted to follow the lesson sequence daily through the use of the slide decks. Over the course of the week students closely listen to a text, which is read aloud. The story pairs with a weekly "commitment" or objective statement and these weekly lessons are anchored in multi-week units themed around Rocketship core values and practices such as inclusion, respect, kindness, responsibility, persistence, and mindfulness.

## PERSONALIZED INSTRUCTION

"Personalized instruction" describes our overall approach to serving our Rocketeers, where we strive to give every student the right level of academic support at the right time through the right instructional method. We use a blended learning approach to further our goal of personalized instruction, in which we strategically leverage whole-group classroom instruction and activities, small-group instruction and activities, targeted customized interventions, and our suite of online learning programs. Across all content areas, teachers differentiate instruction based on a variety of assessment data. (For more information on how we use data to drive instruction, please see below.) Students may work individually or in small groups with the classroom teacher, Individualized Learning Specialist ("ILS"), or other service providers to address any unique needs, gaps, or learning styles.

### LEARNING LAB

As our overall approach to providing each student with the most customized and appropriate instruction for their unique needs, personalized learning inherently occurs throughout the entire school day. To further maximize this targeted approach, we have also set aside a specific block during each school day – the Learning Lab – to support students' individual learning needs and supplement the high-quality instruction occurring in our classrooms.

The Learning Lab is designed to be an extension of the classroom that provides valuable small-group and collaborative learning and instructional opportunities. We use this space for students to engage in age appropriate hands-on activities such as Developmental Play (TK/Kindergarten) and Lego Robotics (1st-5th grade) that target the 21st century skills of collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. During this block, some students may also work with an interventionist, called an Individualized Learning Specialist, to refine a particular skill, concept, or strategy. Students may also engage in independent leveled reading. Enrichment may also be taught in the Learning Lab block. Finally, this space may be used for students to supplement their learning through Online Learning Programs ("OLP"), further described below.

The Learning Lab is staffed by ILSs or classroom teachers and enrichment specialists, and it is closely supervised by our School Leaders (the Principal and Assistant Principals). The School Leaders oversee the managerial aspects (i.e. hiring ILSs and enrichment teachers, monitoring student behavior, selecting appropriate OLPs, designing and laying out the learning space). They also play a vital role in ensuring the substantive quality of the education that occurs in the Learning Lab. Our School Leaders also serve as coaches to the ILSs. They train our ILSs to use pre-selected, evidence-based intervention curricula to respond to individual student needs and engage in regular progress-monitoring of each ILS to identify areas for additional training or other supports. Along with our classroom teachers, our School Leaders also work with the ILSs to collect and analyze data from in-person and online interventions to help design personalized support for our Rocketeers. ILSs also receive the same support and professional development as classroom teachers on campus.

In addition to playing a vital role in the Learning Lab, our ILSs have invaluable short and long term benefits for our students and their families. Our ILSs often come from the communities that we serve and thus bring exceedingly important perspective into the Charter School. We strive to have a staff body comprised of diverse backgrounds and experiences, and our ILSs are an integral part of our make-up. Our ILS model is also intended as a potential pipeline for bringing high-quality certified instructors into our classrooms. We provide support to ILSs who are interested in obtaining a teaching credential by helping them navigate credentialing requirements, teacher preparation programs, and degree programs. By investing in ILS development and supporting ILS training, we are hoping to provide our schools with a steady supply of dedicated teachers who are well-prepared, diverse, and deeply connected to the communities we serve.

For more details on the responsibilities and qualifications for various staff roles at Rocketship, please see Element E below.

### **ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAMS**

As mentioned above, part of our blended learning approach to personalized instruction includes the purposeful use of adaptive technology through OLPs. OLPs deliver many benefits, including:

- Personalized instruction delivered on a constant, reliable basis. While we believe that effective instructors are at the heart of effective instruction, the reality is that no single teacher can reach all learners at every minute. OLPs broaden the swath of students that we can effectively reach to give students additional opportunities to practice content they have learned in the classroom. This is especially critical to us given that the student population that we serve often arrives at Rocketship achieving significantly below grade level.
- Basic skill remediation. Students must develop foundational knowledge in various content areas if
  they are going to successfully progress as learners. As with any classroom, our teachers' time is
  limited. Allowing some of the remedial work to occur through reliable online programs (our
  selection process is further described below) enables students to build the foundations they need
  while freeing up teachers to focus their time on higher-level instruction.
- Student accountability, motivation, and engagement. Through tracking features of our various OLPs, students can assume responsibility for their own progress toward individualized learning goals.
- Data analysis. Our OLPs are a valuable data resource. The programs consistently generate a variety of data for our teachers and school leaders to analyze while planning and personalizing instruction.
- Real-time teaching. Many of our OLPs are designed to adjust content in real-time based on students' individual progress to keep students working on the most appropriate material and advancing along their individualized learning pathways.

Each OLP that we introduce to our suite undergoes a rigorous selection and piloting process to ensure that it meets our well-defined criteria. We generally look for programs that maximize adaptability, assignability, and analytics.

Adaptability. A program is adaptive if it automatically senses a student's gap in understanding or mastery of a skill and systematically changes the pace or lessons. Often, programs will assess student understanding through instructional lessons or intermittent mini-tests, adjusting as necessary to focus on that individual student. While our OLPs are always subject to change to reflect the latest advances in adaptive technology, our current programs that assess regularly in this fashion include Amplify Boost, Amira, Lexia English, Reflex and IXL. Through these intelligent adaptive systems, students focus on their own personalized levels, working on the skills that they need to practice most.

Assignability. Additionally, we leverage programs that allow for in-program assignability. Rather than giving online programs 100% control over the online content that students engage in, we balance both online assessment systems as well as teacher input. Some of our current programs, including Zearn, allow teachers to assign lessons and reorder objectives. All programs allow customization down to the individual student, allowing teachers to modify content below and above grade level as appropriate for each student. Through this balance of integrated adaptive assessments and teacher input based on other assessments, we can ensure that the programs truly match student needs, both inside and outside of the programs.

Analytics. The last, arguably most important, feature that we utilize in our online learning programs is the teacher analytics. These dashboards give teachers real-time data on how students are performing. They break down assessments, individual lessons and overall usage, allowing teachers to adjust both online and in-class programming. Teachers may utilize assignability features to assign specific lessons or domains of instruction or even adjust the order of objectives that classes encounter. Through these insights, teachers can ensure our programs are highly focused and continually benefiting student outcomes.

A chart displaying the various features of our current OLPs is attached as Appendix 7. As described above, students may engage with OLPs during any of the instructional blocks, including Humanities, STEM, and the Learning Lab.

## **CALENDAR AND INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES**

### EXTENDED LEARNING TIME

RDL will have at least 175 days of instruction, barring emergency school closure(s), and for each fiscal year offer, at a minimum, the following number of minutes of instruction:

- to pupils in TK and kindergarten, 36,000 minutes.
- to pupils in grades 1-3, inclusive, 50,400 minutes.
- to pupils in grades 4-5, inclusive, 54,000 minutes.

We expect a significant number of our students to arrive at Rocketship below grade level, and so we aim to provide students with maximal instructional time to make the progress that they need to catch up. We will typically offer the same or greater number of instructional days as the District. We also operate on an extended school day. School runs from approximately 7:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. (varies slightly depending on grade level).

The number of annual instructional minutes that we offer for all grades will meet or exceed the state requirements (described above and found in Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)).<sup>12</sup> Table 18 below delineates subject areas and approximate time per grade level, but we reserve the right to adjust students' instructional minutes in each subject and learning space based on students' personalized learning needs.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> We define instructional minute as minutes spent under the immediate supervision and control of a certificated employee (Education Code Section 47612.5(e).

Table 18 - Rocketship Daily Minutes

	Humanities*	STEM	Launch/ Social-Emotio nal Learning	Total Daily Instructional Minutes	Lunch/ Recess	Learning Lab	Enrichment	Total Daily Minutes
T K	130	65	55	250	60	25	40	375
K	170	115	45	330	60	25	30	445
1	170	115	45	330	60	25	30	445
2	170	115	45	330	60	45	30	465
3	180	110	45	335	60	40	30	465
4	180	110	45	335	60	40	30	465
5	180	110	45	335	60	40	30	465

<sup>\*</sup>Humanities includes 20 minutes of DELD instruction in grades K-5

A sample full day RDL bell schedule is attached as Appendix 6.

### ROTATIONAL MODEL

Our unique rotational model allows students to receive instruction in core academic subjects from specialized teachers. Students will be divided into cohorts in which they rotate to various classes throughout the day. For example, a kindergarten cohort may begin their day in the Humanities block and receive instruction from a credentialed teacher who focuses on Humanities instruction. As part of this block, students also receive twenty minutes of designated English Language Development ("DELD") to ensure targeted language acquisition support. Students may also receive social studies content instruction during this time, as further described above. The second cohort of students will be in their STEM block with a second credentialed teacher who focuses on mathematics and science instruction. This cohort will spend 115 minutes in this class. The final cohort will be in the Learning Lab, overseen by a School Leader and run by an ILS, Humanities, or STEM teacher. After 115 minutes, all three cohorts will rotate. This completes one-third of the students' day. Students will rotate twice more to ensure they participated in all three blocks.<sup>13</sup>

All of our teachers hold a multiple subject credential or permit (or other document required by the CTC for their certificated assignment) and will teach multiple subjects. However, as described above, each teacher "specializes" in particular instructional areas. Specialization allows our teachers to hone their skills and develop a profound expertise in a focused instructional area, which we believe is especially important in light of the shift to the increasingly rigorous CCSS. Furthermore, specialization encourages indeed, necessitates - collaboration across grade levels. Not only does such collaboration require our teachers to be constantly thinking about the inherent multidimensional nature of the content that they

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> This breakdown is meant as an illustration. Depending on our enrollment, staffing, and bell schedule, the numbers may be slightly different at the Charter School.

teach, but it also ensures that each student will have multiple educators' eyes monitoring and investing in their progress.

### **DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION**

Our instructional program is profoundly data-driven. We provide constant opportunities for comprehensive and systematic assessment, analysis, goal-setting, progress monitoring, and data tracking.

## **ASSESSMENT**

We use an assortment of assessments to measure students' achievement levels. These include the NWEA MAP assessment, which allows us to measure our students' proficiency against national norms for CCSS performance, and the DIBELS assessment developed by the University of Oregon, which provides teachers with a granular breakdown of students' reading ability in terms of "fundamental skills" and general comprehension skills. We also administer assessments under the CAASPP as well as the state-mandated English language assessments.

We also conduct additional bi-monthly standards-aligned assessments of each student in reading, writing, and math. These assessments drive decisions about whether students need additional classroom support or tutoring. They also allow us to progress-monitor our students throughout the year in a way that annual assessments do not.

### **ANALYSIS**

Assessment data provides many opportunities to analyze and reflect on both student and teacher progress and gaps. We are deeply committed to data analysis throughout the school year.

Following administration of our major interim assessments, Rocketship holds Data Days. These are full days of professional development for teachers, assistant principals, and the principal to take a deep dive into the analysis of the data.

A key component of these data days is the identification of overall positive trends as well as any challenges and/or achievement gaps among students. This exercise then leads the teacher to begin to identify specific "focus" students within the groups where we are not yet seeing the growth we know is possible. After identifying three to five students, the teacher begins to dig deeper and identify specific instructional areas that have been challenging for these students. The teacher then sets academic goals for these students to be accomplished within the next four weeks and eight weeks. The teacher then begins to develop an instructional plan for these specific students, which is intended to ensure that the student will realize the goals that have been set for them in the next four to eight weeks. The plan is not meant to be limited to these specific students. We expect teachers to use it to guide instruction for all students facing similar challenges. Thus, by focusing in-depth on focus students, the modified instruction should be able to positively impact the student achievement of all students within this group. Sample materials from a Data Day are attached as Appendix 8.

## **GOAL SETTING AND PROGRESS**

After teachers analyze the data from diagnostic interim assessments during Data Days, students, teachers, and parents work together in a variety of ways to set and/or revisit goals to help ensure that all students are on track to make the requisite growth during the school year.

Conferences. Students review and discuss individual progress after each interim assessment period. Teachers prepare and review data summaries with students to identify places in which performance is on track to achieve established goals and areas in which improvements are needed. Teachers also communicate with parents (via parent/teacher conference, phone calls home, e-mails, notes in backpacks,

home visits, and other mechanisms as needed) about student goals. Additionally, teachers facilitate in-person family conferences three times a year to discuss student progress and share resources that families can use at home with their students.

**Classroom Tracking.** Each classroom or grade-level publicly tracks a number of class-based and individual goals, including progress toward ELA/Literacy and mathematics benchmarks, as well as other measures such as sight word recognition, and letter/sound mastery. Each teacher defines their specific data-tracker approach, but all Rocketship classrooms display individual student goals and progress to student goals. For example, some classrooms use frogs that jump from lily-pad to lily-pad; others use "rocket ships" to align with school mascots. (See Appendix 9 for photos of classroom goal trackers.)

Online Learning Programs. Each student has individualized Online Learning Program goals for the week, which focus on individual progress during computer-based learning time. Students track progress on an internally created data platform called JetPacked. In addition to helping students build a habit of showing quality work, goal tracking helps teachers and the Individualized Learning Specialists hold students accountable for their independent work. JetPacked helps to build communication between classroom teachers, ILSs, students and parents. Parents receive biweekly updates on Mondays and Thursdays with their child's goals for the week and progress towards those goals. A parent guide with instructions for OLP notification signup in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese is Appendix 10; See also Appendix 11 for a sample parent update message.)

**School wide Recognition.** Outside of the classrooms, our entire school celebrates progress toward goals as well. Every week during the Rocketship Launch time (further described in Section F above), we celebrate achievements and give out awards based on growth and mastery. For example, we may award Reading Capes to the classes with the highest percent of students who met their reading minutes on one of our Literacy OLPs (e.g. Amplify Boost), or we may award "Math Medals" to the class who demonstrated the greatest proficiency on a recent formative assessment.

Furthermore, we highlight the connection between individualized goal setting and success in college by focusing on college readiness from the first day our students enter our schools. Our hallways are lined with college banners, and each student belongs to a homeroom named for a college mascot (e.g., "Bears" for UC Berkeley). Community members speak to students about college and broader experiences related to college attendance. Students and parents participate jointly in college visits to experience the excitement and diversity of a college campus. As a result, all students believe and expect that they will go to college. See Appendix 12, picture of college banners in a Rocketship hallway.

**Report Cards.** Students' progress is shared with parents through CCSS-aligned report cards that are shared with parents online as well as printed out for parent conferences which occur at least three times annually. (See Appendix 13 for a sample report card.)

### DATA TRACKING TOOLS

We use various tools to track and manage data, several of which are described below.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> As with all aspects of our instructional program, we constantly monitor development in data analysis tools. With ever-increasing sophistication of education technology, we strive to keep abreast of advances that may lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness. We may at times alter our data analysis tools and will notify our District if we plan any changes that may be sufficiently significant to require the need for a material revision to our charter.

*EdCite.* The EdCite platform provides educators with easy access to assessment items, and supports the scoring and data capture of assessments. Through EdCite, educators can administer standards-aligned assessment questions to measure the progress of their students and modify their approach as needed.

Data Warehouse/Dashboards. Rocketship's data warehouse is used to collect and organize student achievement, enrollment, and attendance data. The data warehouse incorporates data from a broad set of data systems across the organization and various external platforms which the Rocketship Analytics team uses to build reports, visualizations, and dashboards for educators and school leaders. Most reports are built in Tableau, a visual analytics platform, to allow educators to access and understand the needs of their students in real time. Through the use of data dashboards, a teacher can quickly gain an understanding of which students have mastered a particular standard and the tool provides educators with both high-level and detailed comparisons of student achievement. Comparisons can be made by school, by grade, and by standard.

Approximately every four to six weeks, our teachers reassess to show student progress, as further described in Section XI.B above. To facilitate the identification of students in need of more focused support, teachers can use the data dashboards to create data displays for each class that show which students fall into each achievement category.

#### SERVING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF STUDENTS

## AT-PROMISE STUDENTS

## MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS: OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

Multi-Tiered System of Supports ("MTSS") is a data-based instruction and intervention model designed to efficiently identify at-promise and academically low-achieving students, match them with appropriate, evidence-based interventions, and guide teams in engaging in a clear problem-solving process to ensure that every student receives the support they need in order to achieve grade level expectations. According to the National Center for Response to Intervention, a comprehensive MTSS/RtI model contains four essential components:

- 1. Universal Screening: a systematic process for identifying a subset of students from the entire student population who are struggling academically and/or behaviorally, and are at-risk of negative short- or long-term outcomes
- 2. Multi-Level Prevention System: the service delivery model of providing a graduate sequence of intensifying interventions in order to match services to student need
- 3. Ongoing Progress Monitoring: the continual monitoring (using research-based assessment methods) of the ongoing progress of students participating in intervention, in order to assess the effectiveness of interventions for specific students and overall
- 4. Data-Based Decision Making: the utilization of student progress monitoring data to make decisions whether to intensify, modify, keep in place, or remove particular interventions or supports.

In order to support the MTSS process, we have ensured that we are implementing evidence-based interventions and supports at each level of support. In addition, we systematically monitor the implementation of interventions in order to ensure that they are implemented as intended to enable appropriate and legally defensible decision-making. Finally, we employ a structured problem-solving process that guides the school team's behavior in: identifying the problem, analyzing the problem, developing a plan of action, implementing the plan, and evaluating the outcome of the plan.

When implemented in accordance with these guiding principles, MTSS has many potential benefits for students from diverse economic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. This model promises to provide

equitable access to standards-based curricula for all students and reduce over-identification of students with learning difficulties, which is a longstanding problem that is especially predominant among low-income and culturally diverse populations. In the article *Cultural Considerations with Response to Intervention Models*, Klinger and Edwards state that RtI "...has dramatic implications for culturally and linguistically diverse students who historically have been disproportionately overrepresented in special education programs...RtI models hold promises for preventing academic failure by providing support for culturally and linguistically diverse students before they underachieve." (pg.108).

# MTSS AND THE SPECIAL EDUCATION IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

The IDEA governs the identification, evaluation, and implementation of special education services. Interventions within the general education program shall be implemented before referral for a special education evaluation. (Education Code Section 56303). Rocketship also recognizes the requirement to proceed without delay in the initiation of an evaluation when the Charter School has reason to suspect that a child has a disability. For that reason, even when a formal evaluation of a student is in process, academic and/or behavioral interventions are planned and implemented in order to support the student while the evaluation is completed.

Rocketship also responds formally to all parent and staff requests for special education evaluation in accordance with state and Special Education Local Plan Area ("SELPA") guidelines and regulations. If a verbal request for special education evaluation is made by a parent or staff member, the receiving staff member assists the parent in putting their request in writing. Written requests are day and time stamped by the receiving staff member and immediately delivered to the special education team, including a special education teacher, a school leader and a school psychologist. The Charter School team then schedules a formal Student Success Team ("SST") meeting, which includes the parent, to respond to the formal request for evaluation. During that meeting, if it is determined that there is reason to suspect the child may have a disability, an assessment plan is drafted and provided to the parent. Parents will receive a written Assessment Plan within 15 days. Parents will be given at least 15 days to provide consent. If the parent provides consent to proceed with the evaluation, the special education team completes the evaluation and schedules an Individualized Education Program ("IEP") meeting to discuss the results, including a recommendation for eligibility for special education services, within 60 days of the receipt of written consent to Assessment Plans and Prior Written Notice documents are always provided to parents in their primary language, and are accompanied by a current copy of the SELPA's Procedural Rights and Safeguards.

## MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT AT ROCKETSHIP

Rocketship has adopted an MTSS framework to serve our at-promise students. Our model encompasses each of the essential MTSS components detailed above.

Universal Screening. Rocketship utilizes a "multiple gating" process in our approach to universal screening. Multiple gating refers to the process of using the results from a variety of universal screening tools in order to ensure all students who are struggling academically or behaviorally are identified in a timely manner. For academics, our first screen is our STEP assessment. Students who fall below a certain cut point on each of these assessments are further screened using a Curriculum-Based Measurement ("CBM") in order to further pinpoint the specific area of academic deficit. Once that area of deficit is identified, further diagnostics are administered in order to identify specific intervention starting points for each student. For social-emotional and behavior, we use an evidence-based universal screener, the Student Risk Screening Scale. It measures both internalizing and externalizing areas of a student's social-emotional and behavioral competencies.

*Multiple Tiers of Support.* Rocketship uses a three-tiered model to organize our instructional and social-emotional supports for all students.

- <u>Tier 1- General Classroom Instruction</u>: All Rocketship students participate in and benefit from the instruction and support that takes place at the Tier 1 level. Examples of academic supports that take place at the Tier 1 level include homogenous guided reading groups in the ELA classroom, CCSS-aligned units in the math classroom, and adaptive online learning programs in the learning lab. Examples of behavioral and social-emotional supports that occur at the Tier 1 level include school wide positively stated behavior expectations, access to a school wide incentive system, and social-emotional curricula that are implemented as a component of our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports model.
- <u>Tier 2- Supplemental, Small Group Supports:</u> Even in the best of instructional models, some students will require additional supports in order to reach grade level proficiency. At Rocketship, we have a number of evidence-based interventions that are delivered in a small group setting to students at the Tier 2 level, including but not limited to small group phonics and fluency intervention in the learning lab and small group behavior interventions (such as small group counseling and Check-in/Check-out).
- <u>Tier 3- Intensive, Individualized Supports:</u> Students who don't respond favorably to supports at the Tier 1 and Tier 2 levels may be referred for a more intensive level of intervention. Intervention at the Tier 3 level is more targeted and more individualized. At Rocketship, we may use an alternative curriculum which is more specifically focused on an area of skill deficit (for example, Seeing Stars, and Lindamood Bell curriculum that addresses phonemic awareness), and our interventions will also be more specifically targeted to the individual student (for example, developing and implementing an individualized behavior intervention plan). At the Tier 3 level, we may also make a referral further assessment and evaluation to determine if the student is presenting with a disability that requires special education services and supports.

**Evidence-Based Interventions.** Rocketship implements a comprehensive set of evidence-based interventions designed to support students across all tiers of academic and behavioral needs. These interventions are grounded in research and tailored to address both learning and social-emotional development.

- Academic Interventions: Structured, sequential instruction focused on foundational math and literacy skills, including phonics and phonemic awareness; targeted fluency development routines; as well as evidence-based strategies to enhance reading comprehension and numerical reasoning.
- Behavioral and Social-Emotional Interventions: Support systems may include structured daily check-ins, individualized counseling, data-informed behavior assessments, and the development and implementation of positive behavior support plans.

**Ongoing Progress Monitoring.** Rocketship utilizes a variety of tools to conduct ongoing progress monitoring of students participating in interventions. Students participating in Tier 2 and Tier 3 academic intervention participate in weekly progress monitoring activities using curriculum-based measurements. The progress of students participating in Check-in/Check-out ("CICO") is tracked daily by CICO coordinators. For our students who have a behavior intervention plan, we regularly progress monitor the frequency and duration of key student behaviors.

**Data-Based Decision Making.** Rocketship's four to six week data cycles support the data-based decision making component of our MTSS model. On data days, school staff analyze the progress monitoring data of students who have participated in intervention in order to determine whether to continue, modify, or discontinue the intervention for each individual student. We have developed a number of protocols and

structures to support school staff in engaging in this problem-solving process, examples of which can be found in Rocketship's "Pre-Referral Handbook" (See Appendix 14).

**Treatment Integrity.** Rocketship Assistant Principals and Network Support staff conduct regular 'implementation fidelity' reviews of all staff conducting intervention using our evidence-based interventions. These reviews are not utilized for evaluation purposes; rather, they are designed to provide valuable feedback to intervention providers in order to ensure that intervention programs are being implemented according to their design.

**Problem-solving**. Rocketship uses a variety of structures to engage in the problem-solving component of the MTSS process. Our pre-referral process consists of Student Huddle meetings, wherein grade level teams and school leaders meet to discuss and plan supports for individual students, followed by formal SST meetings where more intensive and targeted supports can be planned. Rocketship's current "Pre-Referral Handbook" can be found in Appendix 14.

Transparency is an important component to the MTSS framework. We regularly communicate with parents throughout the entire process, beginning with a written notification that their child has been selected to participate in MTSS interventions.

## ACADEMICALLY HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

High-achieving students are those who score at least one grade level above on standardized tests or internal metrics for ELA/Literacy and/or Mathematics. These students benefit from the same practices that are helpful to our struggling students. Because our internal systems measure student gains every four to six weeks, we will be able to monitor our high-achievers to make sure that their gains continue and do not regress to class averages.

In addition to applying elements of our MTSS program to high-achieving students (e.g., guided reading groups, use of adaptive OLPs, regular progress-monitoring, and data-based decision making), we serve this population in a variety of ways, described below.

**Early Detection.** Rocketship will use internal assessment in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics to help us identify high-performing students within the first four to six weeks of school and monthly thereafter. Frequent and ongoing assessment will ensure that we are meeting the needs of all students as they arise and tracking progress to ensure our strategies are supporting improved achievement.

**Differentiation.** Differentiation describes an instructional method where instruction styles, content, and materials are targeted at the specific needs and characteristics of individual or small groups of students. Teachers will use assessment and progress-monitoring data to plan enrichment activities with their high-performing student. These will occur both in whole-class and small-group lessons.

**Family Communication.** We will inform families as soon as we have assessed students' performance. Teachers may provide high-performing students with additional books and enrichment work to perform at home to increase their understanding of a particular subject area.

**Teacher Collaboration**. At least weekly, subject area teachers will gather to compare their student data, discuss students, and discuss instructional strategies, interventions and enrichment. This will be realized through a schedule that will allow the staff to have an early dismissal day one day a week and common planning time, further described above.

**Focused Instruction.** Rocketship's standard instructional approach is for teachers to plan their lessons with at least three groups of students broken out who are striving for different sub-goals in their development towards meeting the same overall grade-level standards. One such subgroup is students who are performing above grade level. All students, including high-performing students, will receive targeted small group Guided Reading instruction in Humanities. High-performing students may also participate in student-led literature circles and book clubs. In addition, our academic model allows for students to access material at their instructional level throughout the academic day. For example, students have access to a wide array of reading material, spanning many genres and reading levels, in our classroom libraries. Our STEM teachers also differentiate math centers, homework, and daily review exercises by difficulty level.

**Daily Enrichment.** The Learning Lab is an additional space where high-performing students can receive adaptive software and hands-on activities, such as Lego Robotics, that challenge them. We anticipate providing other activities to our high-achieving students during Learning Lab which let them examine the current grade-level concepts in more depth.

**Ongoing Assessment.** Data is gathered both through frequent real-time assessments performed in the subject areas and daily feedback given teachers from the online programs in the Learning Lab. Teachers will have the tools they need to track all of their students and make sure that students who began the year ahead are continuing to progress.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

RDL will comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the IDEA, Section 504, the ADA, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights ("OCR"). Furthermore, RDL will comply with applicable District guidelines, and all California laws pertaining to special education students.

### **OVERVIEW**

Rocketship's commitment to ensuring equal access to opportunity for all, including students with diversity of learning, social emotional and behavioral needs. The mission of the Integrated Special Education ("ISE") department within Rocketship is to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education within the least restrictive environment. We partner as school and regional teams to ensure access, participation and success to the core curriculum, general education spaces and peers. For the ISE specific aims, this is accomplished through: individualized educational programming for all students with disabilities. We will accomplish this through several means: high quality direct services provided to students, strategic professional development of our ISE and general education staff members, and a consultation and coaching model that empowers classroom teachers, school leaders, and families to appropriately support each student's individualized education plan.

In order to fulfill this mission, Rocketship seeks to apply current research with evidence based best practices to create Individualized Education Programs that support students with disabilities. We believe that all students are best served within an inclusive model, and our service delivery model is grounded in students first, family centered, and team-based decision making. We approach educational programming for our students from a positive, strength-based perspective. Our ISE staff members serve as teachers, coaches and consultants who empower key stakeholders to support the academic and social development of our students both within the classroom and in their communities. We believe that our families are our students' greatest advocates, and we strive to support them to advocate to the fullest for their child.

RDL intends to continue to operate as a Local Educational Agency ("LEA") for purposes of special education, as a LEA member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a). All of Rocketship's existing California charter schools are members of the El Dorado

County Charter SELPA. A change in LEA status or SELPA membership shall not require a material revision of this charter.

As an LEA, RDL will be solely responsible and liable, in the same manner as a school district, for providing special education and related services. As an LEA for special education pursuant to 47641(a), Rocketship will assume full responsibility for providing special education and related services to eligible charter school students, in accordance with state and federal law. Rocketship agrees to follow policies and procedures of the SELPA in which it is a member and shall utilize SELPA information guidelines necessary to identify and serve students who qualify for special education. Rocketship agrees to collaborate with the SELPA to respond to inquiries and requests and provide access to information and records, as needed, and shall be responsible for maintaining confidentiality of students' records.

RDL strives to achieve a student population representative of the community which we are serving. Whether a child is eligible for special education services under IDEA, or is provided a plan under Section 504, they are considered with all others for enrollment at RDL. Disability or non-disability status is not a factor for enrollment or acceptance. Admission is based solely on capacity at the Charter School.

## **INTEGRATED SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**ISE Model.** At Rocketship Public Schools we serve all students. The core of our Integrated Special Education program is providing a continuum of supports and services for Rocketeers that is grounded in equitable access to rigorous instruction leading to gap-closing results.

We partner as regional leaders, school teams, and with our families to craft IEPs that are founded in meaningful inclusion and have individualized goals based on each student's academic, social emotional, and behavioral development needs. The core of our ISE Program is high-quality, rigorous, and inclusive instruction for the growth and absolute achievement of our Rocketeers. Special and general education teachers work in collaborative arrangements designed to bring appropriate instructional supports to each child in the general school environment. Support is built on culturally relevant differentiation and instruction through universal access to content-driven curriculum.

Rocketship students are placed in general education classrooms and then provided flexible instructional opportunities that include large group, small group, and one-to-one instruction for those students with more significant needs. At Rocketship, we employ a variety of curricular and pedagogical options to maximize student learning in an array of teaching arrangements in environments that can be accessed by all learners, not just those with specific disabilities. In the Rocketship model, all teachers are responsible for all learners. Ongoing support develops the capacity of all teachers to teach to a diverse range of students' learning needs. A system of general and special education teachers proactively supporting students are better able to put into place effective interventions prior to student failure. In the following sections, please find a description of the continuum of our special education services.

**Differentiation within the General Education Program.** At Rocketship, students with disabilities are educated in the general education environment, alongside their neurotypical peers, to the greatest extent possible and appropriate for each individual student. In this model, it is essential that the general education program is scaffolded and differentiated to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Special education and general education staff closely collaborate in order to identify and design needed scaffolds and supports. Supports in the Tier 1 program vary by student and according to need, but may include:

- Accommodations based on a Universal Design for Learning framework
- Heterogenous small group reading instruction
- Modified homework and independent classwork
- Visual supports, such as visual schedules or visual behavior supports

- Assistive technology supports
- Testing accommodations
- Co-Teaching
- Sensory supports

We believe these supports benefit all learners, and the close collaboration between general and special education professionals to serve any student who has diverse learning needs will help us meet our goal of helping every student reach 1.5 years of growth in each grade.

Specialized Academic Instruction. Specialized academic instruction ("SAI") is provided to students for whom it is required in order to access and benefit from the educational program. SAI services are tailored to the individual needs of the student, and may be provided within the general education setting or in a pull-out setting, in a small group or individually. All SAI services are fully described in the IEP and are provided by or under the supervision of credentialed special education staff. At Rocketship, we use a suite of research and evidence-based curricula to support the implementation of SAI services, although each child's program is individualized based on their identified needs. At Rocketship, Education Specialists also work with qualified paraprofessionals to provide special education services. The paraprofessional works under the direction of the Education Specialist to provide additional instructional support and services to identified students.

**Related Services.** Rocketship provides related services, including but not limited to speech and language services, occupational therapy services, physical therapy services, deaf and hard of hearing, vision, orientation and mobility, and adaptive physical education as needed to meet eligible students' IEP needs. The services are provided by certified or licensed professional staff. Service delivery ranges in time and intensity based on the needs of the students as identified in the IEP. All services are drafted and proposed in the IEP, agreed to, and finalized fully executed by the ISE staff with the assistance of the general education staff and administration with only qualified, trained and knowledgeable personnel all based on the needs of the student population.

Rocketship has directly hired most of its related service providers, including speech language pathologists, school psychologists, occupational therapists, and adaptive physical education providers. Other low incidence related services, including vision services and deaf/hard of hearing services are provided by contracted, certified Non-Public Agency ("NPA") providers. In accordance with SELPA guidelines, Rocketship develops a Master Contract and Individual Service Agreements for all services provided by NPAs.

**Referral to Non-public School.** In some exceptional cases, when a student may require a placement in a more restrictive setting, the IEP team will consider a referral to a non-public school. If a parent agrees to and or request placement for a student at a non-public school, private school or residential facility, Rocketship will immediately inform the SELPA.

**Educationally Related Mental Health Services.** As an LEA for the purposes of special education, Rocketship is responsible for the provision of Educationally Related Mental Health Services ("ERMHS") for any student who requires this related service in order to access and benefit from their educational program. Rocketship conducts Social-Emotional and Behavior assessments and develops recommendations for ERMHS provision in accordance with state regulations and SELPA guidelines. ERMHS services are provided by a combination of Rocketship Mental Health Providers and contracted NPAs, depending on the recommendations of the IEP team and needs of the individual student. See Appendix 15 for additional information regarding ERMHS procedures.

**Transportation.** Rocketship will provide transportation to any student if required by a written statement in the student's IEP, and only with the written consensus of the IEP team as needed, for any eligible child to and from school and all school related activities. As an IEP team during an IEP meeting, transportation will be discussed in accordance with state law regarding eligibility.

Supports for Students with Moderate to Severe Learning Needs: Rocketship's flexible and supportive approach to special education reduces the need for separate Special Day Class ("SDC") placements for many students, and we have historically found that the vast majority of students who enter Rocketship from an SDC placement are able to be successful in an inclusive model with the appropriate supports and collaboration between special and general educators. Because of our open lottery process, we have students with a variety of learning and behavioral needs in our schools, and have developed supports and structures to support all learners within our model. Students with moderate to severe learning needs are case managed by a teacher with a moderate to severe Education Specialist credential, on a caseload with a much lower student-to-staff ratio than students with mild learning needs. Our moderate to severe teaching staff have access to professional development opportunities uniquely designed for their specific student needs. Inclusion in the general education program is still a critical component of the educational program for students with moderate to severe learning needs, but we recognize that these students often have additional, unique needs that must be addressed. Towards that end, we have adopted a suite of curricular resources specifically designed to support students with more significant needs, and our moderate-to-severe teaching staff weave support and instruction in adaptive and communication skills throughout the day for these learners.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

Rocketship understands its responsibility to ensure that all children with a documented or suspected disability that may require special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated, regardless of the severity of the disability. Although Rocketship will not administer any assessment or evaluation for the purposes of admission, in accordance with the Child Find mandate, we make a continuous and proactive effort to identify students with special needs and those in need of a pre-referral intervention plan.

In order to proactively identify students who have already been found eligible to receive accommodations and/or services via an IEP or Section 504 plan, Rocketship includes a "Child Find Supplement," which asks families to indicate if the enrolling student has a current IEP or 504 plan, has recently been evaluated for any purpose, or if the family has additional concerns. (For a sample Child Find Supplement, please see Appendix 15.) This information is entered into our student information system, and our special education staff work with office managers and families to secure copies of IEPs, 504 plans, and/or evaluation reports in order to ensure that a student's identified supports and services are in place at the start of the school year. In accordance with California state special education regulations, an interim IEP meeting is held within the first 30 days of school for any student enrolling with a current IEP; however, services are provided as outlined in the current IEP and in accordance with SELPA guidelines immediately upon the start of the school year for all identified students.

Rocketship also implements a systematic approach to identifying and evaluating any student who the Charter School has reason to believe may have a disability. Rocketship's pre-referral process includes the following student and staff supports:

- A Universal Screener Administered to all students at least three times a year to get an understanding of student knowledge.
- A "student huddle" process, wherein grade level teams and school leaders collaborate to plan classroom-level supports for students with identified academic and/or behavioral needs.

- A formal Student Study Team, which includes family members, classroom teachers, school leaders, the school psychologist, and other staff as necessary, which plans targeted, individualized students who present with more significant academic and/or behavioral needs. (For a copy of our Pre-Referral Handbook, please see Appendix 14.)
- Tier 2 and 3 social emotional, behavior, and academic interventions, further described above, delivered to students identified as needing them through the universal screening process
  - Diagnostic Assessment For more specific information on a student's skill development needs
  - Progress Monitoring Weekly data collection aligned to the interventions provided to students in Tiers II, III, and special education. This supports the Charter School teams to review data and make data-based decisions regarding instructional supports and programmatic needs.

Generally, students who do not respond to targeted pre-referral interventions after two cycles that have been delivered with fidelity may be referred for formal evaluation to determine whether they meet criteria for special education services or accommodations under a Section 504 plan. Intervention cycles can range from 6-10 weeks and may align with Data Days set by the Academic Calendar. If the student has not demonstrated adequate responsiveness to interventions during these cycles, the SST or intervention team may consider whether a referral for special education evaluation is appropriate. The IDEA governs the identification, evaluation and implementation of special education services. Interventions within the general education program shall be implemented before referral for a special education evaluation. (Education Code Section 56303). Rocketship also recognizes the requirement to proceed without delay in the initiation of an evaluation when the Charter School has reason to suspect that a child has a disability. For that reason, even when a formal evaluation of a student is in process, academic and/or social emotional and/or behavioral interventions are planned and implemented in order to support the student while the evaluation is completed.

Rocketship also responds formally to all parent requests for special education evaluation in accordance with state and SELPA guidelines and regulations. All requests, verbal and written, are day and time stamped by the receiving staff member and immediately delivered to the special education team. The Charter School team then schedules a formal SST meeting to respond to the parent request for evaluation. During that meeting, if it is determined that there is reason to suspect the child may have a disability, an assessment plan is drafted and provided to the parent. Parents will receive a prior written notice within 15 days of their request. If the parent provides consent to proceed with the evaluation, the special education team completes the evaluation and schedules and IEP meeting to discuss the results, including a recommendation for eligibility for special education services, within 60 days of the receipt of written consent to Assessment Plans. Prior Written Notice and all documents are provided to parents in their primary language, and are accompanied by a current copy of the SELPA's Procedural Rights and Safeguards.

All Rocketship staff, including office managers and business operations managers, are trained in the Child Find mandate and pre-referral process prior to the start of each school year.

## ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW

An assessment for special education services is a comprehensive, in-depth evaluation of a student's school, health, and family history, and present academic and social-emotional functioning. An assessment is the same as evaluation in IDEA (CFR Section 1414, Title 20). At Rocketship, students are assessed by a multidisciplinary team in all areas of suspected disability. The assessment team includes a lead assessor (generally the School Psychologist or the Speech Language Pathologist), the family, the Education Specialist, classroom teachers, and any other individual knowledgeable of the student. Additional specialists, such as occupational or physical therapists, adapted PE teachers, social workers, mental health

providers, etc. may be involved depending on the student's needs. Rocketship will inform parents that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

IDEA mandates that "No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for an individual with exceptional needs." Consequently, the assessment team utilizes many data sources (record reviews, interviews, observations, formal and informal testing, etc.) to make a recommendation regarding eligibility for special education services. All assessments used by Rocketship are validated for the specific purpose for which they are used, and assessors take particular caution when selecting assessments that reliably evaluate the performance of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Students are also assessed in their primary language, and Rocketship employs bilingual school psychologists and speech language pathologists to accommodate this requirement. Hearing and vision data is also included as a component of all formal special education evaluations. In the case that a parent provides outside evaluation information, the IEP team also considers this information as a component of the formal evaluation.

Classroom teachers participate in the assessment process by consulting with the assessors regarding the student's academic, behavioral and social functioning. They may also provide data demonstrating the student's performance as compared to his or her peers. Education Specialists complete the academic portion of the evaluation, which includes formal as well as informal assessment.

If a student is found eligible to receive special education services under one or more of the 13 qualifying conditions, the team meets to create an IEP for the student. The team then meets no less than annually to review the IEP, and every three years to hold a triennial IEP meeting. The team may also meet in other circumstances, including:

- After the student has received a formal assessment or reassessment;
- Within 30 days of a parent's request;
- When an Individual Transition Plan is required at the appropriate age;
- If a manifestation hearing is required.

Rocketship assessment reports include the following: the student's present level of educational performance; the relevant behavior noted during the observation of the student in an appropriate setting; the relationship of that behavior to the student's academic and social functioning; the educationally relevant medical findings, if any; a determination concerning the effect of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage; a statement as to if and how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum; the student's historical and current functioning in the general education curriculum regardless of the setting; deficits in the student's cognitive functioning, communicative functioning, social and emotional functioning and physical functioning that might serve as a barrier to their successful involvement in the general education curriculum; and what has been the impact of the student's attendance on his/her achievement. Assessment reports will be provided to parents in their primary language whenever indicated.

In the case where a parent disagrees with Rocketship's assessment in a particular area, they are informed of their right to request an Independent Educational Evaluation, which is provided at public expense.

Every three years, a student with an IEP is re-evaluated. The triennial assessment serves two purposes: to review progress made since the last formal evaluation, and to determine if the student continues to be eligible to receive special education services.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> California state law prohibits the use of IQ tests with African American children. Assessment teams use alternative methods of assessing cognitive functioning for these students.

Prior to the triennial IEP, the IEP team reviews existing evaluation data, including evaluations and information provided by the parents of the student, current classroom-based assessments and observations, and teacher and related service providers' observations. On the basis of that review and input from the student's parents, the IEP team identifies what additional information is needed to establish the present levels of performance and determine the educational needs of the student. An assessment plan reflecting proposed assessment in these identified areas is presented to the parent, and assessments are conducted within the same timeframe as initial evaluations (60 days).

Rocketship assumes full responsibility for IEP review. Unless otherwise specified on the student's IEP, parents will be informed four times a year of the student's progress toward meeting annual goals. If reassessment is requested any time during the year, the Charter School will have thirty days, not including school vacations greater than five days, to hold the IEP meeting.

#### IEP DEVELOPMENT

At the conclusion of a formal evaluation for special education services, the IEP Team—comprised of, at a minimum, the Education Specialist, general education teacher, administrator or administrative designee, assessors, related service providers, and the parent, will then meet to reach an eligibility determination in consideration of all of the data, observations, and assessment results.

Rocketship follows all applicable federal and state laws governing the IEP process and procedural safeguards. Parents, general education, special education services staff, other professionals and other service providers or professionals as appropriate will be involved throughout the IEP process. As members of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA, all of the current Rocketship schools use the SEIS electronic IEP form for documenting this process. The IEP will include a child's present level of academic performance, annual progress goals and the way that they will be measured, dates, frequency and duration of services to be provided, and the degree of inclusion for this student in the general education classroom. Our current forms are all on SEIS.

Rocketship designs IEPs such that it can be reasonably expected that the child will receive meaningful educational benefit from the program that is developed. IEP teams focus on developing the accommodations and services that are necessary for the student to access and benefit from the general education program, and we take very seriously our mandate to educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. Towards this effort, whenever possible, special education services are provided by specialists within the general education classroom (see Appendix 16 for a sample professional development session for school leaders outlining our approach to co-teaching). We do, however, understand that an environment can only be considered "least restrictive" when the student is receiving meaningful educational benefit from the program, and as such, a critical component of the IEP process is designing the systems that will allow the team to continually monitor student progress and adjust the plan in the case that a student is not making adequate progress. While we have adopted an inclusive approach to our special education service delivery and place a high priority on students with disabilities spending as much time as is appropriate in the general education environment, alongside their neurotypical peers, based on student needs and IEP, we do provide pull-out specially designed services when the IEP team determines that this placement is most appropriate for the individual student.

In the case that a student is exhibiting behaviors that significantly impede the learning of themselves or others, the IEP team develops a behavior intervention plan ("BIP") as a formal component of the IEP. When necessary, the IEP team will conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment ("FBA") to determine the function of the child's behavior, as well as environmental conditions that may be contributing to the behavior. The FBA consists of observations, interviews, record reviews, and formal testing as necessary. The results of the FBA are then used to develop the BIP, which outlines a functionally equivalent

replacement behavior, specific behavior goals, services and supports (including necessary environmental changes) needed to make progress towards the goal, and a clear response plan should the behavior occur again in the future.

When a student with an IEP transfers out of Rocketship, our practice is to notify the superintendent of the student's district of residence in writing of the IEP.

## INTERIM AND INITIAL PLACEMENTS OF NEW CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS

Rocketship shall comply with Education Code Section 56325 with regard to students transferring into the Charter School within the academic school year. Rocketship shall provide transferring students with free and appropriate public education, including services comparable to those listed in the existing IEP. If transferring from another school within the same SELPA, Rocketship shall continue to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP, unless parents/guardians and school agree otherwise. If transferring from another school within a different SELPA, Rocketship, pursuant to Education Code Section 56325(a)(1), shall continue to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP for a period of up to 30 days, by which time Rocketship shall adopt the previous IEP or, in consultation with parents/guardians, develop and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

In accordance with Education Code Section 56325(a)(2), in the case of an individual with exceptional needs who has an IEP and transfers into the Charter School from a district operated program under the same special education local plan area of the Charter School within the same academic year, the Charter School shall continue, without delay, to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP, unless the parent and the Charter School agree to develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

If transferring from a school outside of California, Rocketship shall provide the student with services comparable to those described in their existing IEP, until Rocketship conducts an assessment pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Section 1414 of Title 20 of the United States Code, if determined to be necessary by Rocketship, and develops a new IEP, if appropriate, in accordance with federal and state law.

## **SECTION 504 PLANS**

In addition to IDEA, Rocketship follows Section 504 the ADA, which prohibit discrimination based on a disability. The Charter School 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 be subjected to discrimination under any program of the Charter School. A student 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, is eligible for protections under Section 504.

A 504 team will be assembled by the Assistant Principal and shall include the parent/guardian and other qualified persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement option, and accommodations. The 504 team will review the student's existing records, including academic, social, and behavioral records, and is responsible for making a determination as to whether a recommendation for 504 services and/or supports is appropriate. If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under IDEA, those evaluations can be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team who will evaluate the nature of the student's disability and the impact upon the student's education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities.

The 504 team may also consider the following information in its evaluation:

- 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.
- Tests are selected and administered to 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.

The final determination of whether the student is eligible for accommodations under Section 504 must be made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language along with the procedural safeguards available to them. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEA, a referral for assessment under the IDEA will be made by the 504 team.

If the student is found by the 504 team to have a disability under Section 504, the 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the student receives a free appropriate public education ("FAPE"). In developing the 504 Plan, the 504 team considers all relevant information utilized during the evaluation of the student, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by the school's professional staff.

The 504 Plan describes the Section 504 disability and any program accommodations, modifications or services that may be necessary.

All 504 team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the student's education, including substitutes and tutors, will be provided with a copy of each student's 504 Plan. The site administrator will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that the teacher reviews the 504 Plan with a long-term substitute. A copy of the 504 Plan will be maintained in the student's file. Each student's 504 Plan will be reviewed as needed and on a regular basis to determine the appropriateness of the plan, needed modifications to the plan, and continued eligibility. Any student with a 504 Plan has a Confidential File Folder maintained by the 504 Case Manager. This folder is a supplement to the student's cumulative folder.

## **CONSIDERATIONS FOR EL STUDENTS**

Because the majority of current Rocketship students are ELs, Rocketship carefully considers the cultural and instructional needs of students with English as a second language. Verbal and written translation of all materials, notices, documents, reports and communications is offered to parents when indicated or provided at parents request. Assessments are to be conducted in a student's primary language, or with translation as appropriate, whenever a student's English language development level may require such assessment in order to better understand a student's learning needs. Rocketship follows all applicable laws in providing general education instruction and special education services to eligible EL students, as well as ensuring parent procedural safeguards. Teachers providing core content instruction, as well as special education services, have appropriate training and certification. Training is provided to specialists to ensure that IEP goals are written to support the unique learning needs of EL students with disabilities.

The results of the Home Language Survey and state-mandated language assessment (i.e., ELPAC), further described below, are considered when developing a student's IEP. Testing accommodations described on the child's IEP, are considered for administering required language assessments.

## **STAFFING**

All special education services at the Charter School shall be delivered by individuals or agencies qualified to provide special education services as required by the Education Code and the IDEA. Our ISE team is typically comprised of a Program Director, Program Specialist, School Psychologist, Education Specialists (mild to moderate support needs and extensive support needs), Paraprofessionals, Speech Therapists, Speech and Language Pathologist Assistants, Occupational Therapist, and other specialists as might be required by a student's IEP.

All roles are crucial to provide the appropriate amount of services personalized for the student. All service providers will have the appropriate credentialing and/or licensing to meet all of the ESSA requirements.

The ISE Paraprofessional is responsible for providing individual and small group instruction for students with special needs, students with typical learning needs, students with behavioral needs, and students with emotional needs in the general education environment including, but not limited to: the Learning Lab, recess, the lunch area, and in the classroom setting. This role is responsible for implementation and recording of data for personalized instructional programs and positive behavior support plans. The Paraprofessional works under the supervision of ISE teachers and the School Psychologist who will provide weekly oversight, training and direction.

The Education Specialist is responsible for managing the IEP caseload for Rocketship students who need ISE/special education services as outlined in their IEPs. This role will improve students' success in the basic academics (reading, language and/or math, etc.) through implementing Rocketship-approved curriculum; documenting teaching and student progress/activities/outcomes; modeling the necessary skills to perform assignments; providing a safe and optimal learning environment; and providing feedback to students, classroom teachers, parents and administration regarding student- progress, expectations, goals, etc.

Special education staff participate both in the professional development opportunities available to all Rocketship teachers, as well as professional development uniquely tailored to the needs of special educators. PD topics include (but are not limited to):

- Universal Design for Learning
- Co-teaching models and best practices
- Assistive technology, including augmentative communication devices
- Behavior assessment, analysis, and planning
- Crisis Prevention Intervention
- Writing and implementing high quality IEPs
- Facilitating high quality IEP meetings
- Data-based decision making

Special education staff also receive ongoing direct coaching from both an on-site administrator (principal or assistant principal), as well as an assigned Program Specialist who provides special-education specific consultation and support.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

**Participation and Training.** Rocketship parents are encouraged to participate in the school community through volunteer hours and monthly community meetings. Parents of students with IEPs are full members of the parent/school community. Parents are invited to participate in Community Advisory Committee meetings through the SELPA, either in person at the school site or via online connection, to

learn more about topics related to special education needs. All meetings requiring translation are translated. These meetings provide additional training to parents in collaboration with our Charter SELPA. Lastly, we combine additional parent trainings on numerous subjects for all parents—those with IEPs and those without—with our monthly school community meetings.

**Progress Updates.** Education Specialists, in collaboration with General Education Teachers, begin their school year with a home visit to all students on their caseload. Education Specialists are available and in contact with parents by email, phone and home/school communication notebooks on a regular basis throughout the year.

In addition, all students' progress is updated in writing on a trimester basis and at least as frequently as report cards are provided for the Charter School's non-special education students. In addition to a progress report on the IEP goals, the Education Specialist will participate in these quarterly parent teacher conferences. This allows for total involvement of the entire IEP team throughout the year rather than just on an annual basis.

Rocketship is committed to having all documents provided in the primary language of the parents/guardians in a timely manner. All meeting notices, IEPs, assessment reports, progress updates, are translated if requested by the parents. This includes verbal and written translations.

**Dispute Resolution.** Our SELPA offers mediation as an Alternative Dispute Resolution method. In the event that the issue cannot be resolved through the standard IEP process, we attempt all means of mediation as a way to meaningful settlement of issues. Parents have a right to file a complaint with Rocketship or the California Department of Education.

Rocketship believes that all parents have a right to be informed of their procedural rights in their preferred language. Parents are provided procedural safeguards prior to any special education assessment process or IEP meeting. The case manager asks if the parent would like a thorough review of these safeguards prior to every IEP meeting and, while some parents do decline, many parents appreciate the additional explanation.

Rocketship implements systems-wide special education protocols and conducts regular monitoring in an effort to maintain compliance with state and federal mandated laws to protect the rights of students and parents. In the event of a legal dispute, Rocketship legal counsel will work very closely with staff, our SELPA and the family (as well as other relevant stakeholders) to come to a resolution.

## **ENGLISH LEARNERS**

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At Rocketship, we serve a significant number of English Learners.<sup>16</sup> As such, our instructional model is targeted toward ensuring that all of our students become Lifelong Language Learners who have reached full proficiency in the English language. Rocketship will follow all applicable laws and regulations in serving its ELs, including long-term English Learners or English Learners at risk of becoming long-term English Learners, as they pertain to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Legal guidelines clarify that an English learner is a student in kindergarten through grade 12 for whom there is a report of a language other than English on the Home Language Survey and who, upon initial assessment in California using an appropriate state assessment (currently the ELPAC) is determined to lack the clearly defined English language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing necessary to succeed in the school's regular instructional programs.

testing and reporting requirements. Rocketship will implement policies to ensure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELs and the rights of students and parents. Rocketship will provide access to grade-level core curriculum for all ELs.

### IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

We will administer the Home Language Survey ("HLS") upon a student's initial enrollment into a California public school. If a student's HLS shows a response other than English to the first three questions, the student must be tested for English comprehension, speaking, reading and writing within 30 days and for primary language assessment within 90 days, as required by law. School personnel shall arrange for these assessments and will place the HLS in the student's cumulative file.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

State and federal laws require that schools administer a state test of English language proficiency. Pursuant to California law, we will administer the English Language Proficiency Assessments of California once each year to ELs until they are Reclassified Fluent English Proficient ("**RFEP**"), unless a student is classified as Initial Fluent English Proficient ("**IFEP**") upon the initial ELPAC administration. <sup>17</sup> For more details on these classifications, please see below. ELPAC scores will be placed in the student's cumulative file.

All students who indicate that their home language is other than English will be tested with the ELPAC. The ELPAC has four proficiency levels (Level 4: well developed; Level 3: moderately developed; Level 2: somewhat developed; and Level 1: minimally developed) and is aligned with the 2012 California ELD Standards.

The ELPAC consists of two separate assessments:

# • Initial Assessment ("IA")

The ELPAC IA is used to identify students as either an English Learner, or as fluent in English. The IA is administered only once during a student's time in the California public school system based upon the results of the home language survey. The locally scored IA will be the official score. The IA is given to students in grades K–12 whose primary language is not English to determine their English proficiency status.

### • Summative Assessment ("SA")

ELs will take the SA every year until they are reclassified as fluent English proficient. The ELPAC SA is only given to students who have previously been identified as an EL based upon the IA results, in order to measure how well they are progressing with English development in each of the four domains. The results are used as one of four criteria to determine if the student is ready to be reclassified as fluent English proficient, to help inform proper educational placement, and to report progress for accountability.

Both the ELPAC SA and IA are assessments administered in seven grade spans—K, 1, 2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–10, and 11–12. In kindergarten and grade 1, all domains are administered individually. In grades 2–12, the test is administered in groups, exclusive of speaking, which is administered individually. The ELPAC IA and SA will be administered via a computer-based platform, while the ELPAC Writing Domain for Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will continue to be administered as a paper-pencil test.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The 30-day requirement applies to students who are entering a public school in California for the first time or who have not yet been ELPAC-tested. All other students who have indicated a home language other than English will continue with annual ELPAC testing based upon the date last tested at the prior school of enrollment.

Testing times will vary depending upon the grade level, domain, and individual student. Both the ELPAC IA and SA are given in two separate testing windows through the school year.

The IA testing window will be year-round (July 1–June 30). Any student whose primary language is other than English as determined by the home language survey and who has not previously been identified as an English Learner by a California public school or for whom there is no record of results from an administration of an English language proficiency test, shall be assessed for English language proficiency within 30 calendar days after the date of first enrollment in a California public school, or within 60 calendar days before the date of first enrollment, but not before July 1 of that school year.

The SA testing window will be a four-month window after January 1 (February 1–May 31). The English language proficiency of all currently enrolled English Learners shall be assessed by administering the test during the annual assessment window.

The ELPAC will be used to fulfill state and federal requirements for annual English proficiency testing. The purpose of the ELPAC is to (1) identify new students who are ELs, in kindergarten through grade twelve; (2) determine their level of English proficiency; (3) monitor their progress in learning English on an annual basis; and (4) determine when students have met one of the criteria to be reclassified to RFEP status. Rocketship will notify all parents of the ELPAC testing requirements and of ELPAC results within 30 days of receiving results from the publisher.

## CLASSIFICATION OF INITIAL FLUENT ENGLISH PROFICIENT

A student's initial ELPAC score determines whether the student is classified as an English learner or whether the student is eligible to be classified as IFEP. The student is classified as IFEP if they meet the ELPAC initial assessment proficiency criterion set by the state.

### RECLASSIFICATION AS RECLASSIFIED FLUENT ENGLISH PROFICIENT

In general, English learners are no longer classified as "EL" once they have attained the language skills necessary to compete with mainstream English speakers in age and grade appropriate settings in all areas of language development without the use of modified English materials.

Under current state law, students who are identified as English learners must participate in the annual administration of the ELPAC until they are identified as RFEP.

Our reclassification policies and procedures are developed in accordance with the reclassification criteria outlined in the Education Code, including: (1) assessment of English language proficiency, using an objective assessment instrument, including, but not limited to, the state test of English language development; (2) teacher evaluation, including, but not limited to, a review of the student's curriculum mastery; (3) parent opinion and consultation; and (4) comparison of student performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance in basic skills based on the performance of English proficient students of the same age.

The process for reclassification occurs annually once the ELPAC summative scores are available. Rocketship's Analytics team will generate a spreadsheet of EL students who are eligible for reclassification. This spreadsheet will include all necessary assessment data on students who met or are close to meeting the reclassification criteria.

School leaders, teachers, and any relevant support staff will collaborate to evaluate each student's overall growth and curriculum mastery. The goal of this meeting is to determine whether the EL student is able to participate in grade-level curriculum with the same level of proficiency as their native-language peers.

Teachers will bring several relevant work samples (e.g., student project, writing sample) and student test scores as evidence of progress. After the conference, findings are documented in the master spreadsheet.

Teachers will also hold in-person conferences with parents to review students' language progress. If the Charter School team recommends reclassification, the teacher will discuss this with parents and explain the evidence used in making the determination. The teacher will then obtain official signed parental consent, which will be saved in the student's cumulative file.

### Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

The Charter School evaluates the effectiveness of its education program for ELs by:

- Adhering to Charter School-adopted academic benchmarks by language proficiency level and years in program to determine annual progress.
- Monitoring teacher qualifications and the use of appropriate instructional strategies based on program design.
- Monitoring student identification and placement.
- Monitoring parental program choice options.
- Monitoring availability of adequate resources.

Students who are moved from EL status to RFEP are documented in online databases including PowerSchool and CALPADs. RDL will monitor reclassified students' performance for four years after reclassification in accordance with California regulations and Title III of the ESSA.

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION**

The State Board of Education has adopted the California ELD standards as part of a national movement to ensure that students gain the necessary literacy and mathematical knowledge and skills required in 21st century higher education and workplace communities. The ELD standards describe the key knowledge, skills, and abilities in core areas of English language development that students learning English as a new language need in order to access, engage with, and achieve in grade-level academic content areas, with particular alignment to the key knowledge, skills, and abilities for college and career-readiness as described in the CCSS for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics. The ELD standards are designed to provide challenging content in English language development for ELs to gain proficiency in a range of rigorous academic English language skills.

Our instructional materials for ELD instruction will be prepared by Rocketship's Multilingual Learner Team.

**ELD Standards.** We design our English language instruction to encompass all three parts of the ELD standards.

- Part I: We focus on meaningful interaction with the English language, both orally and in written texts, via three modes of communication- collaborative, interpretive, and productive. We will teach students how to use comprehension strategies and analytical skills to understand the meaning of various texts. We will also teach students how to analyze and evaluate the way writers and speakers utilize language to effectively convey meaning.
- Part II: We focus on learning how English works to make meaning via three broad language processes structuring cohesive texts, expanding and enriching ideas, and connecting/condensing ideas. We will teach students how to organize text as they read so they can better grasp the structure. We will also teach students how to adjust their own language choices as they speak and write. We expect students to apply their growing knowledge of language resources to create and comprehend precise and detailed texts that accurately convey meaning.

• Part III: We provide foundational skills for ELs. We will differentiate instruction based on a variety of factors including age, similarities between the student's primary language and English, and oral language proficiency in English. We will teach students the meaning of words that the students are learning to decode to emphasize the importance of meaning-making.

*Integrated and Designated Instruction.* We will utilize both integrated and designated instruction to teach the ELD standards.

Integrated instruction occurs throughout the school day in every subject area. Teachers use the ELD standards in tandem with the CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content areas to ensure that students are strengthening their ability to use the academic English that they are learning. Examples of integrated instruction include teachers routinely examining texts and instructional tasks to identify language that may be challenging for ELs; determining opportunities to highlight and discuss particular language resources (i.e. precise vocabulary, different ways of combining ideas in sentences, different ways to start a paragraph to emphasize a key ideas; observing students to determine how they are using targeted language; adjusting whole group instruction or work with small groups/individuals to provide adequate and appropriate support; and frequently engaging their ELs in discussions to develop content knowledge.)

Designated instruction is protected time during the regular school day where teachers use the ELD standards to develop critical language skills that ELs need for content learning in English. This instruction is not required or intended to be separate or isolated from the content areas, but it is a time when teachers actively engage ELs in developing the discourse practices, grammatical structures, and vocabulary necessary for successful participation in academic tasks.

During designated instruction, students are grouped so that teachers can strategically target students' language learning needs and accelerate English language and literacy development. Depending on the Charter School's population breakdown, teachers may work with students individually throughout the school day or they may break students into the expanding, emerging and bridging stages of language development, further described below:

- <u>Emerging:</u> Students are learning to use English for immediate needs and beginning to understand and use academic vocabulary and other features of academic language
- Expanding: Students are increasing English knowledge, skills, and abilities in more contexts. Students are learning to apply a greater variety of academic vocabulary, grammatical structures, and discourse practices in more sophisticated ways, appropriate to age and grade level
- <u>Bridging:</u> Students are continuing to learn and apply a range of advanced English knowledge, skills and abilities in a wide range of contexts including comprehension and production of highly complex texts. The "bridge" is the transition to full engagement in grade level academic tasks and activities without specialized instructional support.

Importantly, students will never be removed from other core content instruction to receive designated ELD instruction and also students are grouped heterogeneously throughout the rest of the school day

During designated ELD, there is a strong emphasis on oral language development as well as reading and writing tasks designed to develop awareness of how English works. For example, teachers may work with ELs at the expanding or bridging level to more closely examine the language used in a text that they have already read; teach the meanings of some of the general academic vocabulary and use the vocabulary in different ways in speaking and writing over the course of the next few weeks; and discuss the structure and type of text or engage in a debate about the text's content to reinforce language. Teachers may also write prompt sentences from a text and have students combine them into more complex sentences.

**Scaffolding.** Teachers will be trained to scaffold ELD instruction to meet the needs of individual ELs depending on their proficiency levels (emerging, expanding, or bridging). Scaffolding can be substantial, moderate, or light. ELs at the emerging level will generally require more substantial support to develop the capacity for academic tasks than students at the expanding or bridging levels. For example, ELs at the emerging level may need substantial support to explain their thinking about a literary or informational text that they read closely, such as sentence frames or graphic organizers. However, ELs at every level engage in some academic tasks that require light to no scaffolding and some that require substantial. In any case, scaffolding is intended to be temporary, and independence can be promoted and increased through gradual release of responsibility.

*Instructional Strategies.* Rocketship teachers are trained in Project Guided Language Acquisition Design ("GLAD"). GLAD focuses on vocabulary development, graphic organizers, oral language, interactive displays, and several other strategies that have been proven to be highly effective with EL students

Rocketship teachers will also employ Comprehensible Input strategies in their classrooms to help ELs understand academic language and information just above their current levels of proficiency. These strategies may include:

- Explicit Vocabulary Instruction
- Images/Visuals
- Icons/Symbols
- Total Physical Response/Gestures
- Labels
- Realia
- Language Frames
- Videos
- Graphic Organizers
- Input Chart

All Rocketship teachers will be Crosscultural Language and Academic Development ("CLAD") certified or in the process of obtaining CLAD or Bilingual, Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development ("BCLAD") certification, or other CTC-approved EL authorization.

## PARENT COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION

As described above, parents play a significant role in the reclassification process. Beyond that, however, we strive to find ways to engage and involve parents of our EL students. We are committed to communicating with parents in their primary language; as such, we will provide translations of all major documents, notices, public meetings, and workshops in Spanish and any other languages as needed.

RDL will establish an English Learner Advisory Committee ("ELAC") if the Charter School enrolls 21 or more EL students, as further described in Element D below. Parents are encouraged to participate in the ELAC as well as the School Site Council ("SSC"), further described in Element D below. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer in their children's classrooms and attend community meetings, parent coffees, and school events. Community meetings will often advise parents on programs and services for EL students. We will inform parents on programmatic and assessment issues that affect EL students as well as relevant programs, funds, and instructional strategies.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

We believe that our teachers are most effective when they feel invested in their school and that their school is invested in them. To this end, we have rigorous policies and procedures for teacher and leader recruitment, selection, retention, and professional development, further described below.

### CREDENTIALING

Rocketship continuously strives to be a great place to work. We are committed to creating pathways to support our staff on their journey to becoming a certified teacher in California. We have a dedicated Talent Development & Credentialing team who educates and guides staff throughout the entire process.

Rocketship partners with Rivet School and Reach University, nonprofit college programs that help working adults earn an accelerated, affordable bachelor's degree and teaching credentials for California. Teachers who enroll in an Intern Credential Program are eligible to receive tuition assistance and additional support such as tutoring, paid time off for studying, etc.

Rocketship partners with the Silicon Valley New Teacher Project and covers full tuition cost for induction to support teachers in the final step of obtaining their clear credential. Our teachers receive intensive, one-on-one mentoring to strengthen their classroom practices, ensuring student academic success.

During summer training, school leaders and teachers review credentialing pathways and expectations through training. Teachers are also given ongoing updates and resources to help them stay on track with their credentialing expectations. All of this is designed to be clear and helpful as staff get their credentials.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Summer. Each summer, Rocketship hosts an intensive three-week training for all teachers that emphasizes foundational knowledge in our culture and our instructional model for new staff and ongoing professional learning for experienced educators. This summer training allows staff to build a collaborative culture of trust while creating a strong school culture shaped around personalized learning and the Rocketship identity. We provide training in classroom management and effective unit, lesson, and yearlong planning. We also introduce foundational components of the Rocketship program, including the process for the use of data, instructional techniques, and the scope and sequence of curricula. Educators also learn strategies to effectively engage parents in this culture, including how to empower parents as key supporters of their children's education after students graduate from Rocketship and move onto middle and high school. This helps ensure that our students succeed to and through college. School leaders, including both Principals and Assistant Principals, participate in two weeks of their own summer training to become well-versed in similar topics, ensuring that they are well-prepared to be effective instructional leaders while establishing a school culture that enables student success. For teachers who join mid-year, Principals and Assistant Principals utilize a personalized onboarding plan, where newly hired teachers spend time observing various components of the school day, meeting with various school leaders, and reviewing summer learning artifacts, prior to taking on a full-day classroom teaching role.

**School Year.** In addition to summer training, Rocketship schools dedicate approximately 175 hours throughout the school year for staff professional development. We dismiss students approximately two hours early one day a week to allow for an afternoon of purposeful and customized professional development and culture building for staff. The Principals and Assistant Principals at each school facilitate and organize sessions, targeting the areas of development they see as most beneficial to the staff. Further details of staff professional development include:

• Data Days: Throughout the school year, Rocketship holds days of Professional Development and data analysis for teachers. These days serve as a time to both develop skill in data analysis and related topics, as well as action-plan in response to interim assessment data.

- Weekly Staff Development: One day a week, Rocketship holds staff development after school, focused on priority development areas for staff members. Topics have included analyzing and planning using formative assessment data, creating rigorous independent work, exploring whole brain teaching, launching literature circles, and facilitating small group instruction for struggling readers in the upper grades.
- Daily Common Planning Time: Every day, teachers have a common planning period with their grade-level team to collaborate and plan together. One to two times a week, this common planning time may be facilitated by an Assistant Principal, focused on a common need for development across the grade level.
- Personalized Coaching: In addition to group professional development, all teachers have regular one-on-ones with their coach, where they receive personalized coaching and development tailored to their needs. Refer to the "Coaching" section below for more details on Rocketship's approach to teacher coaching.

We believe that often the most effective professional development session is peer-led. However, to develop the necessary subject expertise for our teachers as well as provide ongoing support for Assistant Principals, Rocketship partners with several outside professional development organizations and higher education institutions to conduct in-depth professional development in various content areas. Rocketship is constantly reflecting on student achievement data and teacher instructional needs in order to further develop the professional development program and coordination of resources in order to ensure that all student, teacher, and school needs are addressed in order to realize significant gains in student achievement.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTENT

Professional Development during the summer and throughout the school year is expansive and aligned to key competencies in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* (see "Teacher Performance Management and Evaluation" section). Key areas of development include:

- Instructional Preparation & Planning
  - Teachers learn to navigate curricular resources, internalize and intellectually prepare for lessons, and modify lessons based on individual student needs and context.
- Knowledge of Content & Pedagogy
  - Teachers build a deep knowledge of the disciplines they teach, with reading as a foundation for all teachers. Teachers also learn critical pedagogical approaches to make content comprehensible for all learners.
- Supporting All Learners
  - Teachers learn specific strategies for integrating supports for students with special needs and multilingual learners. Teachers also learn how to read and implement IEP requirements into their instruction.
- Fostering Respectful, Affirming & Purposeful Learning Environments
  - Teachers build a vision for a powerful, positive learning environment and practice strategies and techniques to build a strong student culture within their classrooms and throughout the school.
- Culturally Relevant Pedagogy & Cultural Competence
  - Teachers learn culturally responsive ways of interacting in the classroom and develop their own cultural competency in order to create a learning environment that honors diversity and reflects elements of students' identities.

- Engaging Students in Discourse & Learning
  - Teachers learn strategies to engage all students in learning, facilitate effective discussions, and elevate critical thinking.
- Using Assessments & Data to Inform Instruction
  - Teachers learn how to navigate and administer the assessment suite, progress monitor students effectively, interpret data, and use data analysis protocols to modify instruction to support all students.
- Engaging Families & Communities
  - Teachers build a vision for powerful family partnerships and practice strategies and techniques to build strong relationships with families and community members.
- Professionalism & Contributing to School Culture
  - Teachers build a vision for a collaborative school community, understand core professional responsibilities and protocols, and work to build a collective school-wide culture of excellence.

Rocketship believes deeply in an approach to adult learning centered on application and practice. Our professional development sessions spend at least 50% of the session time supporting teachers in practicing and applying new skills to their context, in order to ensure their connection to the classroom.

Additionally, we know that adult learners thrive when given the same personalized learning experience as our students, and are committed to offering professional learning that both challenges and supports people where they are. Every educator has their own unique experiences, skills and needs, and we seek to develop frameworks that enable participant personalization, ownership and choice. Many of our professional development topics are multi-part series of sessions where teachers can continue to deepen their learning and craft, even after multiple years in the classroom.

## **COACHING**

A foundational piece of our ongoing staff development is customized, targeted one-on-one coaching that Assistant Principals and Principals provide for teachers and staff members.

The overarching principles of our coaching program are a tight feedback loop, regular opportunities for practice, the identification of root cases of problems and their accompanying solutions, weekly foci for teachers, and measurable goals for coaches to assess progress and collect data.

We implement a variety of coaching strategies and practices. Coaches observe and provide written feedback, deliver in-the-moment feedback (e.g., using pre-aligned non-verbal signals, whisper coaching to a teacher during instruction), model instruction, and engage in co-observations with the teacher (e.g., watching a video of the teacher or observing a different teacher). All teachers receive at least four hours of support per week outside the classroom, get observed at least twice a week, receive at least two hours of professional development per week, and have a weekly one-on-one meeting with their coaches.

## **NEW TEACHER RESIDENCY - PILOT**

We have recently been awarded the Teacher Residency Capacity Grant Program by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing to launch our first Teacher Residency Program in School Year 2025-26. This program will provide high-quality immersive and comprehensive training experiences for our aspiring teachers, by combining coursework with hands-on classroom experience under the guidance of mentor teachers. Research shows that residency programs have a positive impact on student outcomes. Teachers who have successfully completed residency programs are often better equipped to meet the diverse needs of their students, can differentiate instruction effectively, and create engaging and inclusive learning environments.

The Teacher Residency Program is just one example of how Rocketship is continuously striving to enhance its professional development opportunities; strengthening our talent development initiatives; ensuring Rocketship remains an attractive place to work and grow; and positioning ourselves to continually develop and retain talent.

## TEACHER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

Rocketship implements an annual performance evaluation system for teachers. We believe that performance evaluations are a vital part of helping us to achieve our mission because evaluations allow us to recognize and reward improvement and excellence and ensure that teachers receive consistent and direct feedback that helps them improve and grow.

Teacher evaluations include multiple measures, including student growth and achievement and educator performance. The components align with teachers' role and responsibilities and Rocketship's theory of action on how we can achieve our mission. Each component was developed with the goal of promoting transparency, consistency, and communication.

Our performance evaluation system consists of three formal evaluation activities during the school year complemented by Rocketship's ongoing coaching cycles as described in the Professional Development and coaching sections above. In the fall of each school year, teachers complete a self-reflection where they self-assess themselves on Rocketship's performance rubrics to reflect on performance trends to date, areas of growth, and opportunities for improvement. Teachers also meet with their manager for the self-reflection process to align on performance expectations, debrief on the self-assessment, and discuss next steps for growth. Teachers participate in two formal evaluations during the year where they receive an overall performance score and meet with their manager to discuss next steps for development. Mid-year evaluations take place in the winter and end-of-year evaluations in the spring before the end of the school year.

**Student Impact.** Teachers are evaluated based on both student absolute achievement and growth metrics. Absolute achievement metrics evaluate the percentage of students at national norms on objective assessments such as the NWEA MAP. Growth metrics evaluate the percentage of students making growth and the average years that students grow on objective assessments, such as the MAP.

**Family Engagement.** Teachers are also evaluated on their ongoing engagement with families as well as percentage of home visits completed and the percentage of parents completing partnership hours. (For more information on parent participation at Rocketship, please see Element D below).

*Core Characteristics.* Teachers are evaluated on their ability to demonstrate the five Rocketship Core Characteristics of pursuit of excellence, innovation, authenticity, community, and tenacity.

**Teaching Performance.** The Rocketship teacher performance rubric outlines the expectations for teacher performance and is used by managers to provide feedback in evaluations. The core of Rocketship's teacher performance rubric is the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The *Framework for Teaching* is a research-based performance rubric validated to show positive correlations between the *Framework for Teaching* ratings and student outcomes. The Rocketship performance rubric examines teaching performance in four domains: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities. (For a copy of the rubric, please see Appendix 17).

# TEACHER RETENTION AND COMPENSATION

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Measures of Effective Teaching Project, "Danielson's Framework for Teaching for Classroom Observations," 2010.

Rocketship is committed to addressing and continually improving teacher retention in all of our schools. We have implemented a variety of programs, initiatives, and support systems to make teaching a more viable and desirable career that the most talented individuals in our communities pursue. We provide support and counseling for principals, especially those new to the role, on teacher retention. Our Program and Regional Teams focus on teacher curricular tools and resources to provide teachers with high quality resources and support. We have also introduced professional development funding that becomes available to teachers as they hit milestones of multiple years at Rocketship.

We also have developed initiatives to provide teachers with time to meet personal needs, including competitive paid time off packages and a credentialing paid time off policy for educators who need time away from school to complete credentialing requirements (e.g., test preparation, test completion, etc.). We have increased opportunities for teachers to provide upward feedback on managers via surveys (i.e., manager effectiveness, staff satisfaction). We have a Teacher Advisory Group that is focused on keeping great teachers at Rocketship and providing a teacher voice on important topics that touch all aspects of our network.

Rocketship offers competitive pay structures and incentives to attract and retain excellent teachers. Rocketship uses a performance-based pay system, which allows solid and strong teachers demonstrating strong results to quickly move up our compensation bands early in their career. The performance-based pay structure is a key lever for retaining our highest-performing teachers. Rocketship also deploys incentives and competitive benefits to create opportunities for additional growth within their profession, including a teacher professional development fund.

## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS

**Rising Leaders Program.** Rocketship's Rising Leaders program prepares teachers for the next steps in their leadership pathways through professional development in personal leadership skills, effective management frameworks, and essential mindsets. The program is ideal for educators who are interested in developing as a Grade Level Lead and/or school leader within the next several years, and who are considering other centralized network roles.

Rising Leaders engage in monthly workshops, leadership dinners, and take on a leadership project to build their skills. The program also provides opportunities for teachers to practice and build their leadership skills in their work as classroom teachers and to build strong and collaborative relationships among teacher leaders across Rocketship campuses.

We look for candidates who have a willingness to learn and reflect in group settings; a track record of high student achievement; at least two years of teaching experience; demonstrated leadership in a formal or informal role; and exhibition of the Rocketship core characteristics by focusing on commitment to and ownership of their own development and investment in the community.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Rocketship also has a comprehensive development system for its School Leaders: Principals, Assistant Principals, Business Operations Managers, and Office Managers. (Qualifications and responsibilities for these roles are further described below in Element E). These school leaders receive ongoing professional development centered on key levers aligned to their role, including data-driven instructional leadership; systems planning; coaching and observation; family and community engagement; school culture; staff culture; and (for principals) school leader team management. School leaders who manage special education teachers also receive a special strand of professional development.

To support our school leaders in team management, Rocketship provides key management development training and experiences. During our summer training, we start our training with self and team awareness

development as a foundation of leadership. We also review evaluations and compensation training to ensure our leaders understand the process of setting clear expectations and compensation. Additionally, we ensure that new managers understand the foundations of employment law and performance management. During the school year, Rocketship has manager feedback and staff satisfaction surveys to give leaders clear feedback on their management and school experience. In addition to the surveys, our Human Resource team meets with school leadership teams throughout the school year for People Partnerships meetings to debrief any management challenges, review any upcoming management strategies, or and develop leadership skills.

Our Principals all spend dedicated time each month receiving professional development from Rocketship California's regional Achievement Team. Our Assistant Principals also receive professional development directly from the Achievement Team and get regular training and support from Principals. Members of the regional Achievement Team also attend meetings between school leaders and teachers to provide feedback on meeting facilitation and coaching, as well as conduct regular school and classroom walk-throughs with the Charter School leaders. Business Operations Managers and Office Managers also receive regular development from Regional Directors of Operations and Directors of Family Engagement.

### ANNUAL GOALS AND ACTIONS IN THE STATE PRIORITIES

The Charter School has created a Local Control and Accountability Plan ("LCAP"), which contains a reasonably comprehensive description of RDL's annual goals, actions, and outcomes, in and aligned with the Eight State Priorities, schoolwide and for all numerically significant student subgroups, in accordance with Education Code Sections 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii) and 47605(c)(5)(B), which will be updated annually in accordance with applicable law and the State Board of Education's LCAP template. The LCAP is annually presented to families and the public at the Board of Directors LCAP Public Hearing and subsequently approved at the following meeting. The Charter School shall also present a report on the annual update to the LCAP for parents on or before February 28 of each year as part of a nonconsent item at a regularly scheduled Board meeting.

The LCAP is designed to align with the Eight State Priorities, as described in Section 52060(d) and listed below. Each LCAP goal and associated actions directly address a subset of the state priorities. For a reasonably comprehensive description of which LCAP goals address which state priorities, please see the LCAP attached as Appendix 18.

- State Priority 1 Basic Services
- State Priority 2 Implementation of Common Core State Standards
- State Priority 3 Parental Involvement
- State Priority 4 Student Achievement
- State Priority 5 Student Engagement
- State Priority 6 School Climate
- State Priority 7 Course Access
- State Priority 8 Other Student Outcomes

The LCAP is attached to this petition as Appendix 18 and is fully incorporated by reference in fulfillment of Education Code Sections 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii) and 47605(c)(5)(B). Notwithstanding the foregoing, the LCAP is updated annually as required by state law, and any changes thereto shall be made without need for material revision of the charter.

## **ELEMENT B: MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES AND METHODS OF ASSESSMENT**

Governing Law: The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. "Pupil outcomes," for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the charter school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the charter school's educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all pupil subgroups served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subdivision (a) of Section 52052. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served by the charter school. —Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(B).

## Goals, Actions, and Outcomes in Alignment with State Priorities

Pursuant to Education Code Sections 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii) and 47605(c)(5)(B), the RDL LCAP provides a reasonably comprehensive description of the Charter School's annual goals, actions, and measurable outcomes, both schoolwide and for numerically significant subgroups of pupils, in and aligned with the Eight State Priorities as described in Education Code Section 52060(d), as well as the mission, curriculum, and assessments of the Charter School. The Charter School maintains the same goals, actions, and outcomes for all students, both schoolwide and for all numerically significant student subgroups, except where explicitly noted within the LCAP. The Charter School maintains that all students, including all subgroups, can achieve the goals it sets. The LCAP, attached as Appendix 18, explains how the Charter School addresses the Eight State Priorities.

#### **Student Outcomes/Exit Outcomes**

Rocketship Delta Prep's goals, actions, and outcomes, schoolwide and for all numerically significant subgroups, are comprehensively described in the Charter School's LCAP. To facilitate review, the following LCAP excerpts are the student outcomes in the order in which they appear in RDL's LCAP:

Metric	Year 1 Outcome	Target for Year 3 Outcome
CAASPP met or exceeded schoolwide (ELA)	35.3%	40%
CAASPP met or exceeded schoolwide (Math)	26.2%	31%
CAST met or exceeded schoolwide (Science)	20.5%	26%
Average growth years for reading (NWEA MAP), grades K-2	1.14 years	1.2 years
Average growth years for math (NWEA MAP), grades K-2	1.25 years	1.2 years
Percentage of EL students who increase at least one ELPI level or maintained the ELP criterion (Level 4)	60.4%	65%
EL reclassification rate	6.8%	9%
Percentage of students with access to their own copies of standards aligned instructional materials for use at school and at home	100%	100%

NumberPercentage of total and EL teachers credentialed & properly assigned	100%	100%
Percentage of adopted standards including ELD standards implemented	100%	100%
Percentage of facilities meeting the "good repair" standard	100%	100%
Percentage of students who feel safe on campus	77%	75%
Percentage of families who feel campus is safe	69%	85%
Percentage of students who feel connected to at least one staff member	80%	75%
Suspension rate (schoolwide)	0.2%	0%
Expulsion rate (schoolwide)	0%	0%
Percentage of students with access to a broad course of study	100%	100%
Average daily attendance	90.8%	94%
Chronic absenteeism rate (schoolwide)	32.6%	20%
Percentage of parents are involved	66%	71%
Percentage Home visits completed	93%	95%
Percentage of parents who are satisfied with their school	67%	80%
Percentage of parents connected	71%	90%
Portion of parents with input into decision making	90%	90%

## **ELEMENT C: METHODS OF ASSESSMENT**

Governing Law: The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card. —Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(C).

#### **ELEMENT C: ASSESSMENT MEASURES**

RDL affirms that, to the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.

Rocketship's assessment plan includes multiple measures designed to monitor student progress over time. It includes baseline, formative, interim, and summative assessments.

Baseline assessments measure basic academic skills in English Language Arts and mathematics at the beginning of a school year or the beginning of a unit of study.

Formative assessments will be frequent and will include formal and informal performance based assessments in the context of classroom activities and daily learning. These assessments will help students and teachers to better understand students' strengths and areas in which they may be struggling. The information provided by the assessments will be used to guide instruction and to identify students who may need additional support and/or challenge.

Interim assessments fall between formative and summative assessments and provide standardized data that can be aggregated and analyzed. Interim assessments may predict student performance on an end-of-year summative assessment, they may provide evaluation information about the impact of a curriculum or a program, and they offer instruction information that helps diagnose student strengths and weaknesses.

Summative assessments will take place in English/Language Arts and Mathematics at the end of the year in the form of Smarter Balanced tests. Additional summative assessments will include end-of-year one-on-one reading assessments, which can be compared to the baseline assessments from the beginning of the year.

As further described in Element A above, teachers will analyze assessment results to identify student, class, and school trends, to find specific areas of instructional strength and weakness, identify students who need additional support, and ensure children are making progress towards grade-level proficiency as measured by the CCSS. Assessments will be used to inform instruction as well as to track and monitor student growth and learning. Rocketship has a comprehensive Response to Intervention program, further described in our At-Promise Students section in Element A, for students who fail to progress and/or achieve consistent with school expectations and goals.

Rocketship's current assessments are as follows:

• <u>State-mandated Assessments (summative)</u>—Students will be expected to meet statewide standards for academic achievement. Specifically, students will take the Smarter Balanced assessments for English Language Arts and Mathematics/CAASPP as applicable each spring. Additionally, the California Science Test will be administered annually in the spring to students in grade five. These tests will help monitor progress on grade level content and skill development,

- and will be reflected in meeting state measurements. The ELPAC will be administered to English Learners annually.
- <u>Leveled Reading Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)</u>—All students in grades K-5 will be assessed three times throughout the year using the mCLASS with DIBELS Edition 8 assessment. In addition to its use as a reading assessment, mCLASS with DIBELS Edition 8 will also be used as the schools K-2 universal screener in accordance with Education Code Section 53008. The mCLASS with DIBELS Edition 8 is one of the approved universal screener of reading difficulties platforms provided in 2024 by the CDE. 19
- Writing Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)—A writing sample will be collected and assessed for each student several times a year. Students will be instructed on how to use writing checklists throughout the writing process. Students will use these writing checklists for self-review and self-assessment on writing projects throughout the year. Teachers will also use these checklists to assess student writing.
- <u>Mathematics Assessments</u> (baseline, formative, summative)—Throughout the year, student progress in mathematics will be measured using formal and informal formative assessments. Ongoing assessment will take the form of teacher observations, assignments, and lesson exit tickets. At the end of each Eureka unit, student understanding and mastery will be measured through a formal assessment.
- <u>Standardized Assessments in Language Arts & Mathematics (interim)—</u>In addition to leveled reading assessments and formative math assessments, students will also take NWEA MAP Interim Assessments three times per year in Reading and Math to ensure they will be prepared for Smarter Balanced Assessments.
- <u>Science Assessments (formative, interim)</u>—We will assess student progress toward the Next Generation Science Standards using NWEA MAP Interim Assessments two times per year in Science (fall and winter). Teachers will also use a variety of formal and informal assessments such as responses to academic prompts, informal checks for understanding, and assessment of presentations or projects.
- <u>Social Studies Assessments (formative, summative)</u>—We will assess student progress toward California History–Social Science Standards using a variety of formal and informal assessments such as responses to academic prompts, informal checks for understanding, and assessment of presentations or projects.
- <u>Social Emotional Learning Assessments (formative, summative)</u>—Teachers will complete a social-emotional and behavioral screener three times a year to determine which students would benefit from additional supports, such as social skills groups, and to track social-emotional skills growth over the course of the year.

## **USE AND REPORTING OF DATA**

Rocketship will utilize its data warehouse and reporting dashboards to track and maintain student data. Rocketship teachers will be engaged in an ongoing process of data review and evaluation in connection to student learning outcomes. They will analyze individual data to review performance for students in their classrooms and work in collaborative teams to review class performance. Teachers will identify patterns of underperformance or high performance, and identify students who are not making adequate progress. Additionally, assessment data will be used to judge the effectiveness of curriculum units and teaching. This information will then be used to refine or change future units and instruction. Collaborative grade-level teams will use these opportunities to form questions that arise from the data, develop hypotheses around the questions, and pursue different strategies or actions to improve student outcomes. Teachers will meet to review reading, writing, and math assessments after initial assessments are done in the first month of school. CAASPP test data will also be reviewed at this time.

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<sup>19</sup> https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/cc/rd/

## REPORTING TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Rocketship places a high value on communication between parents and teachers. We plan to have regular parent/teacher conference periods and progress reports each year.

# REPORTING TO THE AUTHORIZER AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Rocketship will promptly meet all reasonable inquiries for data from the District and assure timely scheduled data reporting in compliance with the law. In accordance with Title III, Rocketship will adhere to all mandated reporting guidelines in relation to English learners, including notification to parents regarding ELPAC results and reclassification. In accordance with IDEA, Rocketship will comply with all state and federal laws regarding reporting requirements for children with IEPs.

## **ELEMENT D: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

"The governance structure of the charter school including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the charter school to ensure parental involvement."

- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(D)

In accordance with Education Code Section 47604, all Rocketship charter schools will be operated by RSED, a California non-profit public benefit corporation with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. All staff will be employees of RSED. RSED will be governed by a Board of Directors pursuant to its corporate Bylaws as adopted, and as subsequently amended from time to time, which shall be consistent with this charter. RSED's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are attached as Appendix 19 and 20, respectively.

RSED will operate independently from the District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(d), AUSD shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of RSED, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the Charter School as long as AUSD has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

RDL, operated by RSED, affirms that it shall comply with all applicable public transparency laws, including the Brown Act, CPRA, Section 1090, the PRA, and Education Code Section 47604.1.

#### **GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board is ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of each Rocketship school. Board members have a responsibility to solicit input from, and opinions of, both school staff and students' parents/guardians regarding issues of significance and to weigh the input and opinions carefully before taking action.

Rocketship's Bylaws state that the Board must consist of at least three and up to 25 members. Board members serve for staggered terms of two years and until a successor director has been appointed or elected as required by the position. This staggering of terms will create a natural flow for future elections and ensure that the Board does not experience full turnover at once. Bios of our current Board members are attached as Appendix 21.

The Board will be comprised of the following individual officers, at a minimum:

- Chairman of the Board, responsible for presiding over Board meetings and performing various duties as assigned by the Board.
- Secretary, responsible for keeping account of Board minutes, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, and notice of Board and committee meetings.
- Treasurer, responsible for overseeing and validating audits, federal and state annual information return filings, and corporate filings.

The Bylaws also authorize the Board to appoint one or more Vice Presidents, one or more assistant secretaries, one or more assistant treasurers, and other officers as deemed necessary. Rocketship affirms that AUSD shall be entitled to a single representative on the Board, consistent with Education Code Section 47604(c).

The Board will meet on a regular basis in accordance with the Bylaws. The Board may initiate and carry out any program or activity that is not in conflict with or inconsistent with any law and which is not in conflict with the purposes for which charter schools are established.

New directors will be elected as defined in the Bylaws. Qualifications of current and future board members include:

- Academic expertise, including subject and professional development knowledge in Literacy and Math
- Significant involvement in the communities served by Rocketship
- Operation of charter schools
- Real estate, legal, and financial expertise
- Fundraising ability
- Parents of current Rocketship students

## **BOARD DUTIES**

The Board will be responsible for Rocketship's operation and fiscal affairs, including but not limited to:

- Adopting policies that offer guidance and interpretation of the charter and procedures to assist the staff in facilitating the implementation of such policies.
- Setting Rocketship's enrollment and grade-level configuration;
- Approval of annual school budget, calendar, salary schedules, and fundraising plans;
- Monitor negotiation and approval of a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") or other contracts with the District;
- Approval of all financial policies that set the processes and controls for contracts, expenditures, and internal controls;
- Hiring and firing of the CEO and oversight over other personnel actions;
- Approval of bylaws, resolutions, and policies and procedures of school operation;
- Oversee material changes to the Charter School's charter;
- Participation as necessary in dispute resolution;
- Monitoring overall student performance and approval of the LCAP;
- Evaluation of Rocketship Executive Director;
- Monitoring Rocketship's performance and taking necessary action to ensure that the Charter School remains true to its mission and charter:
- Monitoring Rocketship's fiscal solvency;
- Participation in Rocketship's annual independent fiscal audit;
- Participation as necessary in student expulsion matters pursuant to Rocketship policy;
- Increasing public awareness of Rocketship.

RSED will update AUSD on any changes to the membership of the RSED Board of Directors.

The Board may execute any powers delegated to it by law and shall discharge any duty imposed on it by law. The Board may delegate to an employee of RSED any of those duties with the exception of those listed in the Bylaws. The Board, however, retains ultimate responsibility for the performance of those powers or duties so delegated. The Board may not delegate approval of the budget, approval of independent fiscal audit, approval of Board policies, hiring or termination of the CEO, or any other duties prohibited by law. Where the Board has formally taken action to delegate authority to staff, changes must:

- Be in writing;
- Specify the entity designated;

- Describe in specific terms the authority of the Board being delegated, any conditions on the delegated authority or its exercise and the beginning and ending dates of the delegation; and
- Require an affirmative vote of a majority of present Board members.

The Board may utilize an Executive Committee and establish other committees as necessary to perform various governance functions. If utilized, the Executive Committee will be composed of no fewer than two members. Standing committees of the Board shall comply with the Brown Act and the Rocketship Conflict of Interest Code.

### **BOARD MEETINGS AND TRAININGS**

The Board will meet regularly to review and act on its responsibilities. All meetings shall be held in accordance with the Brown Act and Education Code Section 47604.1(c), and thus be held openly and easily accessible to the public. Rocketship will establish an annual calendar listing the dates of its regular meetings and provide the locations of those meetings. Rocketship will ensure that a teleconference location, which will be staffed by a Rocketship staff member, is available at all schoolsites. The notice and agenda of each meeting will provide for public comment from each physical and teleconference location.

The Board will also hold special meetings as necessary, including for time-sensitive issues that may need the Board's attention outside of the regular Board meeting schedule. All special meetings will be held in accordance with the Bylaws and the Brown Act.

RSED has adopted a Conflict of Interest Code that complies with the Political Reform Act, Government Code Section 1090, et seq., as set forth in Education Code Section 47604.1, and applicable conflict restrictions required by the Corporations Code.

The Board of Directors meetings will be headed by a Board Chairman. As long as a quorum exists as defined by the Bylaws, measures voted on by the Board may be passed with a simple majority of present members as allowable under state law.

#### California Committee

We believe it is critical to form strong local partnerships to inform our growth and maximize our impact in each of the communities we serve. To this end, the Board has created a California Committee whose membership consists of a diverse group of parents and civic and business leaders committed to closing the achievement gap. The California Committee serves as an advisory board to the Board of Directors.

The primary responsibility of the California Committee is to serve as a formal structure giving voice to Rocketship student, family, and community needs. The California Committee may provide advice and counsel to Rocketship Education - California's Executive Director; provide meaningful input to the Board of Directors on topics such as plans and strategies for local growth, model improvement and operational plans, and build local partnerships to enhance the quality and sustainability of Rocketship schools.

#### **RSED STAFF**

As we continue to expand our network and reach nationwide, Rocketship has focused on building organizational capacity to maintain high-quality schools while also fueling growth. We have worked to develop and consistently apply deep functional expertise in each of the areas that comprise the complexity of school management.

The current support that RSED staff provides includes the following:

- High-quality support via centralized Schools Team and Program Team to increase student achievement (i.e. planning and designing instructional materials and resources; creating academic visions and goals; coaching of school leaders and teachers; guiding the data analysis process; facilitating professional development for teachers and school leaders)
- Talent management (i.e. recruitment; teacher and school leader pipeline development)
- Growth/policy (i.e. government relations; supervising community outreach and parent involvement)
- Finance (i.e. financial analysis and monitoring; budgeting; accounting, payroll, billing)
- Strategy (i.e. project management; cross-functional facilitation; devising systems for operational issues; overseeing network expansion)
- Facilities (i.e. site location, design, permitting, entitlements)
- Legal (i.e. compliance; completion of required filings; support with education and governance laws and policies)
- Human Resources (i.e. hiring, infrastructure, employment issues, benefits, compliance)
- Operations (i.e. coordinating with service providers; developing and managing systems)
- Communications (i.e. marketing and public relations)

The staff is overseen by a Senior Leadership Team ("SLT"), which is a group of department leaders with deep and diverse functional expertise. Bios of our current SLT members are attached as Appendix 22.

#### **FAMILY PARTICIPATION**

Family participation has been important to Rocketship since the very beginning of the organization. We understand that a parent/family is a child's first teacher and lifelong advocate. We strive to partner with parents in a variety of ways so that they can become active participants in the Charter School and the community as they promote their children's education. As described in Element A above, our teachers and school leaders conduct home visits and conferences and regularly communicate with parents via emails, phone calls, and notes home.

We also provide numerous opportunities for parents to get involved in the operations and governance of the Charter School. Families can become involved with the School Site Council or English Learner Advisory Committee (further described below).

We also encourage, but do not require, our families to complete at least 20 partnership hours each school year. Partnership activities vary widely and can include participating in Launch in the morning, a Rocketship daily tradition to foster excitement for the day of learning ahead, reading to their child at home, assisting in classrooms or participating in any school meetings or events. We also have special processes in place to involve families in the creation of the LCAP. In addition to the regular community meetings and parent meetings, RDL holds meetings specifically designed to help parents understand the components of the LCAP and to discuss the best ways for the Charter School to use LCFF funds to serve students in alignment with the state priorities. RDL has also developed a survey, translated into English and Spanish, to ask parents about their preferences regarding the allocation of LCFF funds for various services and resources.

#### SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL

Each Rocketship school forms a School Site Council, the composition of which mirrors the requirements of Education Code Section 52852 and will be comprised of the following:

- The Charter School Principal;
- School personnel, at least 50% of which are classroom teachers;

• Families of students attending the Charter School, or other community members selected by families.

The number of families/family-selected community members on the SSC must be equal to the number of school personnel. The SSC will implement bylaws that describe selection and replacement procedures.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 64001(j), the SSC will be responsible for participating in the development of the Local Control and Accountability Plan.

The LCAP is a three-year plan that describes the goals, actions, services and expenditures to support positive student outcomes that address state and local priorities. The LCAP governs how the Charter School will spend its state LCFF funding. The LCAP is a blueprint to improve the academic performance of all students through the coordination of all educational services at the Charter School. Additionally, the LCAP Federal Addendum will address how federal funds provided to the Charter School will be used to improve the academic performance of all students.

In developing the LCAP, the SSC will conduct an analysis of root causes of student academic challenges and research-based instructional strategies that enhance student achievement. To set school goals, the SSC will carefully review Charter School priorities; qualitative and quantitative student achievement data; and other performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional program. The SSC will provide review and update the LCAP annually. All updated LCAPs must be presented at a public hearing and be approved by the Rocketship Education Board of Directors.

The SSC will seek to empower parents in the education of their children. The SSC may engage in a number of activities and initiatives, including, but not limited to:

- Engage in professional development opportunities for families (e.g., through training in data analysis, budget review, curriculum and instruction, etc.).
- Review of attendance trends and policies.
- Review of English learner achievement and reclassification data.
- Review of the Family Survey and School Needs Assessment.
- Budget and categorical funding allocation (LCFF allocation).
- Review of the instructional model and curriculum.
- Provide input on school events, school culture, and staff professional development.
- Provide input on school policies, school safety plans, and discipline procedures.
- Implement initiatives to increase family engagement.

The SSC will hold regular meetings in accordance with its Bylaws. Records of attendance and meeting minutes for each meeting will be kept at the school site.

### **ENGLISH LEARNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

RDL shall establish an English Learner Advisory Committee of which parents/guardians of EL students constitute membership in at least the same percentage as their children represent of the total number of students in the Charter School. Other members of the ELAC can be parents/guardians of non-EL students, school staff, and /or community members as long as the minimum percentage requirement for EL parents is maintained.

The Charter School shall comply with the provisions of Education Code Section 52176(b) for the establishment and operation of an ELAC.

The ELAC seeks to fulfill the following tasks:

- Review and comment on RDL's EL Master Plan, including policies, guiding the consistent implementation of EL educational programs
- Assist with an RDL-wide needs assessment.
- Review and comment on RDL's program, goals, and objectives for EL programs and services.
- Review RDL's plan to ensure compliance with applicable EL Authorization and CLAD Certificate requirements applicable to RDL's teachers and instructional aides.
- Review and comment on RDL's reclassification procedures.
- Review and comment on the written notifications required to be sent to parents and guardians.

At Rocketship, we try to have our SSC and ELAC overlap to the extent desired by the Charter School and possible under the law.

The ELAC shall be responsible for advising the Principal and staff on programs and services for English learners and the School Site Council on the development of the LCAP.

Additionally, the ELAC shall assist the Charter School in the development of:

- The Charter School's needs assessment.
- A site plan for English Learners
- Ways to make parents aware of the importance of regular school attendance.

Along with the SSC, the ELAC will also engage in the additional functions and activities listed above.

### **DETERMINING SUCCESS OF FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

Family involvement is critical to the academic success of Rocketship students and the overall success of each Rocketship campus. The Board, along with Rocketship staff and school leaders, will use dashboard metrics to measure the success of parent involvement. The key goals for successful family involvement are:

- Enlisting family leaders at each campus: These individuals will help lead various activities at school as well as be key liaisons within the community to help inform other parents about Rocketship and promote grassroots, community efforts to help Rocketship eradicate the achievement gap in the community.
- Achieving at least 75% family attendance at school community events: These events include community meetings, exhibition nights, and other school events. A high percentage of participation demonstrates a deep parent engagement and commitment to RDL.
- Engaging each RDL family to complete at least 20 volunteer hours at the school per year: As described above, RDL families will be encouraged to volunteer at the Charter School to help tighten the link between the families and the Charter School as well as assist RDL teachers and staff with various school operations. Volunteer service, however, is not a requirement for admission or continued enrollment at any Rocketship school.

## **ELEMENT E: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS**

<u>Governing Law</u>: The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the charter school. -- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(E)

Rocketship Education recruits professional, effective and qualified personnel for all administrative, instructional, instructional support, and non-instructional support capacities who believe in the instructional philosophy outlined in its vision statement. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(1), Rocketship shall be nonsectarian in its employment practices and all other operations. Rocketship shall not discriminate against any individual (employee or student) on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

All employees should possess the personal characteristics, knowledge base and/or relevant experiences in the responsibilities and qualifications identified in the posted job description as determined by Rocketship. These criteria are further described in the remainder of this section.

All Rocketship teachers will hold the CTC certificate, permit, or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment. The Charter School may use local assignment options authorized in statute and regulations for the purpose of legally assigning certificated teachers, in the same manner as a governing board of a school district. Rocketship will maintain current copies of all teacher credentials, and they will be readily available for inspection and monitoring.

RDL is a school of choice and will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding background checks, clearance of personnel, and maintenance and disclosure of employee records. All employees are subject to state and federal employment laws.

### **PRINCIPAL**

The Principal is responsible for creating a school capable of achieving the Rocketship mission and goals. This will include leading RDL in all aspects of its day to day operations and working with the RSED Board of Directors, students, parents, and community members and the other governing bodies specified by local and state law.

The Principal is the instructional, cultural, managerial, and community leader of the Charter School. The Principal sets the vision for the Charter School and ensures that the Charter School is a high-achieving college preparatory environment where all students finish the fifth grade at or above grade level. Additionally, the Principal directly manages, supports, and develops the Assistant Principal and the Office Manager. The Principal may serve as the manager and coach of all educators, which includes conducting observation cycles, modeling lessons, and providing support and resources aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness and leadership. The Principal is also responsible for engaging and empowering parents to become lifelong advocates for their children's education.

#### **Qualifications:**

- Possession of a valid teaching credential.
- 2+ years of experience teaching in an urban city classroom and realizing significant gains
- Strong leadership skills and personal drive

- Relentless pursuit of high expectations
- Strong organizational skills
- Passion for urban children and their families
- Ability to build partnerships with community organizations
- Strategic planning experience
- Ability to engage and empower parents and families
- Strong communication skills
- An entrepreneurial spirit and a proven track record
- Experience in building and maintaining outstanding school culture
- Results-oriented and data-driven
- Ability to develop others
- Adaptable and able to thrive in a dynamic, fast-paced environment
- Background check, tuberculosis ("TB") test and fingerprinting
- BA from accredited university

## ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

RDL will have at least two Assistant Principals, focused full-time on the implementation of RDL's academic systems and mentoring teachers to improve their effectiveness.

Reporting directly to the Principal, the Assistant Principal plays a critical role in driving academic achievement for students. The Assistant Principal ensures academic excellence by working closely with the Principal to lead and implement the instructional vision for the Charter School. The Assistant Principal leads two primary streams of work: teacher coaching and professional development. The Assistant Principal directly coaches a number of educators, which includes conducting observation cycles, modeling lessons, co-planning lessons, real-time coaching, and providing support and resources aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness and leadership. The Assistant Principal also leads the design and implementation of group teacher professional development and collaborative planning time. This individual provides staff with the appropriate resources and support to ensure that each Rocketship school's Rocketeers realize over a year's worth of progress annually.

### Qualifications:

- Possession of a valid teaching credential.
- Have achieved significant gains with their students for at least the past year or years;
- Espouse RDL's culture of caring, showing concern not just for the academic, but for the emotional welfare of their students;
- Demonstrated the desire and ability to mentor young teachers. Teaching adults is different from teaching children. Mentoring requires a commitment on the part of an Assistant Principal to their Teachers and an ability to demonstrate and explain verbally their own practices;
- Ability to be a strong team player, helping to make the faculty cohesive in our goals of creating both a safe and supportive environment, and one in which students will make significant academic progress.
- 2+ years' experience teaching in an urban city classroom
- Strong time management and organizational skills
- Result-oriented and data-driven
- Relentless pursuit of high expectations
- Ability to inspire and motivate others
- Adaptable and able to thrive in a dynamic, fast-paced environment
- Ability to develop others
- Passion for urban children and their families
- Strategic planning and project management experience

- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Deep knowledge of elementary literacy and/or math instruction
- Experience with or interest in the use of technology in promoting teacher development a plus
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting
- BA from accredited university

#### **TEACHERS**

RDL shall comply with Education Code Section 47605(1), which states:

Teachers in charter schools shall be required to hold the Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment. These documents shall be maintained on file at the charter school and shall be subject to periodic inspection by chartering authority.

All teachers will have or be working toward CLAD certification or a CTC recognized equivalent.

Each year, teachers will be evaluated based on their ability to make significant gains. It is expected that some teachers will be able to make significant gains in a single year; others may take two or three, and still others may not be capable. In addition to significant gains, teachers must show a strong ability to work with and mentor their peers in order to be prepared to take on the role of Assistant Principal.

## Qualifications:

- Demonstrated mastery of classroom skills including classroom management, planning, assessment and instructional practice;
- Hold the CTC certificate, permit or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment;
- Demonstrate the potential to make significant gains for students.
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

Teachers receive competitive, performance-based salaries to support retention and recognize them for their impact in our schools.

Teachers assigned to a TK classroom shall additionally have at least one of the following:

- At least 24 units in early childhood education, or child development, or both;
- As determined by the local education agency employing the teacher, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool-age children that is comparable to the 24 units of education described above:
- A child development permit issued by the CTC.

## **EDUCATION SPECIALIST**

The Education Specialist is a full-time position that reports to the Charter School Principal. The Education Specialist will be responsible for managing the IEP caseload for Rocketship students who require special education services as outlined in their IEPs. The role of the Education Specialist is to improve students' success in the basic academics (reading, language and/or math, etc.) through implementing Rocketship approved curriculum; documenting teaching and student progress/activities/outcomes; modeling the necessary skills to perform assignments; providing a safe and optimal learning

environment and providing feedback to students, classroom teachers, parents and administration regarding student progress, expectations, goals, etc.

## **Qualifications**

- Embrace the mission of Rocketship Education
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Knowledge of curriculum, education code and special education law/policies
- Skills in appropriate special subject matter
- Ability to navigate school setting to support students in multiple spaces
- Skills in organization and planning in order to plan excellent instruction for students
- Thrive in an inclusive school setting, as well as an interest in participating in co-teaching and collaboration with other staff members
- Willingness to participate in ongoing PD over the course of th3e school year to develop one's practice and skills
- Ability to stand and walk for prolonged periods
- Perform a variety of specialized and responsible tasks: maintain records, establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with students, parents, other school personnel, meet schedule and compliance deadlines
- Possession of a valid California driver's license: willingness to provide own transportation in conduct of work assignments.
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required
- Valid Education Specialist Credential or enrolled in an accredited teacher preparation program working towards a credential
- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree optional

## **INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING SPECIALISTS**

Individualized Learning Specialists serve as tutors, working closely with a team of teachers to meet the needs of all students at that grade level.

### **Qualifications**

- Commitment to Rocketship's mission, vision, and goals
- Passion for working with children; ability to motivate and support children in reaching high levels of academic success
- Previous experience managing and/or teaching groups of elementary age students is strongly preferred
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Basic computer skills including troubleshooting and an ability to communicate about technical difficulties
- Ability to efficiently interpret, manage, and utilize multiple sets of data in order to best support students' progress
- Ability to learn laws, rules, practices and procedures related to public education and specific to Rocketship and RDL
- Fluency in English
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

## **PARAPROFESSIONAL**

The Paraprofessional will be responsible for providing individual and small group instruction for students with both special and typical learning needs in the general education environment including, but not limited to: the classroom, recess, and lunch area. The Paraprofessional will work under the supervision of a certificated Education Specialist who will provide weekly oversight, training and direction.

### **Qualifications**

- A team player who is detail-oriented, resourceful and able to manage his/her responsibility with confidence and discretion
- Comfort in a start-up environment with flexibility
- Interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy
- Passion for working with young children
- At least 2 years of college or passing score on Rocketship's Paraprofessional Assessment required
- Experience working with students with disabilities desired

### OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

The Occupational Therapist is a school-based position that provides both direct and indirect supports to students.

### Responsibilities:

- Lead specialized assessment related to sensory-motor development; write quality, compliant assessment methods
- Attend IEP meetings; present findings to team
- Develop IEP goals and objectives, as well as treatment plans
- Assist in the implementation of assessment as needed
- Work with parents to build knowledge of disability and inclusive supports
- Assist in providing in-service training to parents, teachers, administrators, and other professionals and paraprofessionals
- Assist in providing consultation and advisement to administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the general and special education programs as appropriate
- Assist in coordinating and seeking consultation with community agencies as appropriate
- Provide support and guidance to the organization as a member of the ISE Network Support Team
- Maintain a compliant practice
- Perform other duties as assigned or requested by the program administrator

#### **Qualifications:**

- Must possess a Bachelor's or Master's in occupational therapy from an accredited four year college or university and have a valid license of proficiency in occupational therapy services issued by the California Board of Occupational Therapy
- Experience working with elementary-aged students (preferred)
- Experience working with students with a range of disabilities (learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, autism, etc.)
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Embrace the Rocketship mission
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Ability to be adaptive and flexible in a work environment that is still evolving
- Perform a variety of specialized and responsible tasks; maintain records; establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with students, parents, other school personnel; meet schedule and compliance deadlines

 Possession of a valid driver's license; willingness to provide own transportation in conduct of work assignments

#### SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

The School Psychologist is an exempt position that will work under the direction and supervision of the Associate Director of Social Emotional Learning and will work with elementary school students. Rocketship School Psychologists are responsible for providing both direct and indirect support to students, families, and staff members in order to ensure high quality programming for students with disabilities.

### Responsibilities:

- Lead psycho-educational and formal behavior assessments; write quality, compliant assessment reports
- Attend IEP meetings; present assessment findings to the team
- Assist in the implementation of assessment recommendations as needed
- Participate in the pre-referral process and provide guidance to school teams regarding supports for struggling students
- Provide direct counseling or behavioral services to students as needed
- Work with parents to build knowledge of disability and inclusive support for students with disabilities
- Assist in providing in-service training in learning, child development and child management to parents, teachers, administrators and other professionals and paraprofessionals
- Assist in providing consultation and advisement to administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the general and special educational programs as appropriate
- Assist in coordinating, communicating and seeking consultation with community agencies as appropriate
- Provide support and guidance to the organization as a member of the Special Education Leadership Team.
- Maintain a compliant practice
- Perform other duties as assigned or requested by the appropriate administrator

### **Qualifications:**

- Valid California Pupil Personnel Services credential in School Psychology;
- Master's degree or Ph.D in School Psychology Bilingual, Spanish (preferred)
- Experience working in Response to Intervention models (strongly preferred)
- Experience working with elementary-age students (preferred)
- Experience working with students with a range of disabilities (learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, autism, etc.)
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Embrace the mission of Rocketship
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Ability to be flexible and adaptive in a work environment that is still evolving.
- Perform a variety of specialized and responsible tasks: maintain records, establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with students, parents, other school personnel, meet schedule and compliance deadlines.
- Possession of a valid California driver's license: willingness to provide own transportation in conduct of work assignments

#### SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST

The Speech-Language Pathologist will work with elementary school students in screening, evaluating, diagnosing, and treating disorders of communication. This is a school-based position.

## Responsibilities:

- Address child's speech production, vocal production, and language needs through speech therapy
- Deliver direct services via pre-referral interventions; monitor student progress
- Document and collect data on all consultation sessions and provide regular assessments
- Conduct student screenings and/or assessments of language, voice, fluency, articulation, or hearing
- Develop and implement high quality, legally compliant IEPs
- Maintain compliance with all special education laws and policies
- Maintain client files and treatment logs in an organized manner
- Communicate with program manager in regard to any change of status, problems, or intent to change the educational program
- Attend and participate in meetings as required
- Develop instructional materials and evaluate commercially available material for treatment
- Keep current on latest developments in the field of speech therapy by attending professional seminars, reading literature, and participating in professional organizations as assigned
- Provide professional development support to school staff and families
- Manage time efficiently

### Qualifications

- Valid Clinical Clear Rehabilitative Services Credential; Master's Degree required
- Bilingual in English and Spanish (or Vietnamese) (strongly preferred)
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Commitment and passion for Rocketship's mission and goals
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Ability to demonstrate skills necessary for fulfilling the job responsibilities of this role

## **OFFICE MANAGER**

The Office Manager will be responsible for daily operations at RDL. The Office Manager will report to the Principal.

#### Qualifications:

- Spanish/English bilingual fluency required, with excellent written and oral communication skills
- Knowledge and cultural competence of the local student and parent community
- Highly developed interpersonal skills using tact, patience, and courtesy
- Effectively prioritize and juggle multiple concurrent projects
- Comfort in a start-up environment and ability to work independently with minimal direction
- Ability to use a variety of software programs and quickly learn new ones
- Managerial skills preferred

## **BUSINESS OPERATIONS MANAGER**

The primary purpose of the Business Operations Manager role is to ensure the Charter School is safe, compliant, efficient, and financially sound. The BOM provides direct services to the Charter School that

enables instructional staff to better serve students and families. Ideal candidates will be self-motivated, flexible, and adept at managing change.

# **Qualifications**

- Minimum 5 years of relevant experience, with school-based experience strongly preferred. Many of our most successful BOMs have previously been teachers and/or School Leaders in other roles.
- Managerial experience is strongly preferred. Leadership and/or coaching roles among other adults can potentially substitute for this.
- Experience in a fast-paced, highly analytical, entrepreneurial environment. Ability to proactively manage multiple critical deadlines and quickly and confidently adapt to changing school needs, independently prioritizing and following through on completion of tasks and responsibilities. Demonstrated ability to be detail-oriented, organized, and resourceful.
- Team-player attitude and strong customer-service orientation. Skill at communicating respectfully and empathetically with students' families. Spanish language proficiency is preferred in many of our communities, but not required.
- Skilled at building strong and trusting working relationships with people in both senior- and junior-level roles, both within and beyond Rocketship. Ability to treat sensitive issues with respect and empathy, and maintain strict confidentiality where required.
- Strong PC-based computer skills, including the ability to use spreadsheets and the Google Suite, and ability to quickly become proficient in new software programs.
- Passion for Rocketship's mission, and the belief that all students can achieve high levels of academic success

### ENRICHMENT CENTER COORDINATOR

The Enrichment Center Coordinator provides students with the opportunity to engage in athletics, art, and various other enrichment activities. The Enrichment Center Coordinator plays a critical role in strengthening school culture. The Enrichment Center Coordinator oversees the effectiveness of the Enrichment Center and interacts with all students on a daily basis.

## **Qualifications**

- Commitment to Rocketship's mission, vision, and goals
- Passion for working with children; ability to motivate and support children in reaching high levels of academic success
- Belief in the value of enrichment, art, gardening, and physical education for all children
- Previous experience or training building teams with youth
- Previous experience managing and/or teaching groups of elementary-age students is strongly preferred
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Ability to learn laws, rules, practices and procedures related to public education and specific to Rocketship Education
- Fluency in English
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn
- At least 2 years of college or passing score on Rocketship's Paraprofessional Assessment required
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

#### **OPERATIONS TEAM MEMBER**

This position is responsible for ensuring that the day-to-day operations of lunch, recess, and arrival/dismissal at the school site run safely and smoothly. Furthermore, support staff members are also responsible for ensuring that students maintain appropriate behavior in all operational activities.

### **Qualifications**

- Commitment to Rocketship's mission, vision, and goals
- Passion for working with children
- Previous experience managing and/or teaching groups of elementary-age students is strongly preferred
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Ability to learn laws, rules, practices and procedures related to public education and specific to Rocketship Education
- Basic fluency in English
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

# CALIFORNIA REGIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

All of Rocketship's charter schools in California, including RDL, are overseen by a regional leadership team. Descriptions of the responsibilities and qualifications for those roles are attached as Appendix 23.

## **ELEMENT F: HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES**

- "The procedures that the charter school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall require all of the following:
- (i) That each employee of the charter school furnish the charter school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237.
- (ii) For all schools, the development of a school safety plan, which shall include the safety topics listed in subparagraphs (A) to (M), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 32282.
- (iii) That the school safety plan be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the charter school.

- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(F)

Rocketship maintains and regularly reviews and updates Board-approved policies and procedures designed to ensure the health and safety of its students and staff members including policies incorporated into the following handbooks and plans:

- Rocketship Education Employee Handbook, attached as Appendix 24
- Rocketship Education School Safety Plan, attached as Appendix 25
- Rocketship Public Schools Student/Parent Handbook, attached as Appendix 26.

To ensure ongoing compliance with relevant federal and state laws and regulations, the above-referenced handbooks and plans are reviewed, updated, and presented to the Board each year for approval. The policy versions attached as appendices here are presented as examples of the policies and procedures that demonstrate a reasonably comprehensive description for Element F regarding Health and Safety.

#### **PERSONNEL**

In accordance with Education Code 47605(c)(5)(F)(i), employees and contractors of the Charter School will be required to submit to a criminal background check and to furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1. Applicants for employment must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Charter School shall not hire any person, in either a certificated or classified position, who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony except as otherwise provided by law, pursuant to Education Code Sections 44830.1 and 45122.1. The Charter School shall monitor compliance with this policy on a regular basis. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee. (See also Employee Handbook, p.10., attached as Appendix 24)

The Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code Section 39875(c), if applicable, relating to background checks and testing for individuals providing transportation services for students.

Rocketship also has a number of other personnel policies and procedures in place designed to ensure health and safety of both staff members and students, all contained in its Employee Handbook. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Additional conditions for employment, including reference checks and tuberculosis screening,
   pp. 9-10
- Prohibitions on harassment, discrimination, and retaliation, p. 14
- Prohibitions on sexual harassment, **pp. 17-20**

- Lactation accommodation, p. 37
- Campus access and security protocols, p. 39
- Accident and incident reporting, p.40
- OSHA compliance, p. 44
- Workplace violence, p. 45
- First aid and CPR requirements, p.44
- Mandated reporter obligations, **p.87**

#### **SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN**

In accordance with Education Code 47605(c)(5)(F)(ii), the Charter School has a school safety plan ("SSP") that contains the safety topics listed in Education Code Section 32282(a)(2)(A)-(M), as further detailed below.

- Section 32282(a)(2)(A) Child abuse reporting procedures consistent with Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 11164) of Chapter 2 of Title 1 of Part 4 of the Penal Code. See SSP, pp. 81-87. Please note that the policy included in the SSP is also contained in the Employee Handbook that is attached as Appendix 24. The Employee Handbook is approved by the Board during a meeting that falls subsequent to the SSP. To the extent that any of the policies contained in the Employee Handbook differ from those contained in the SSP, the latter version governs Rocketship's operations and the SSP will be updated accordingly the following year.
- Section 32282(a)(2)(B) Disaster procedures, routine (see SSP, p. 14) and emergency (see SSP, pp. 8-14; 15-41), including adaptations for pupils with disabilities in accordance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.) (see SSP, p. 15). The disaster procedures shall also include, but not be limited to, both of the following:
  - (i) Establishing an earthquake emergency procedure system in every public school building having an occupant capacity of 50 or more pupils or more than one classroom. See SSP, pp. 19-22; 40
  - (ii) Establishing a procedure to allow a public agency, including the American Red Cross, to use school buildings, grounds, and equipment for mass care and welfare shelters during disasters or other emergencies affecting the public health and welfare.
     See SSP, p.14
- Section 32282(a)(2)(C) Policies pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 48915 for pupils who committed an act listed in subdivision (c) of Section 48915 and other school-designated serious acts that would lead to suspension, expulsion, or mandatory expulsion recommendations pursuant to Article 1 (commencing with Section 48900) of Chapter 6 of Part 27 of Division 4 of Title 2. See SSP, pp. 92-109.
- Section 32282(a)(2)(D) Procedures to notify teachers of dangerous pupils pursuant to Section 49079. See SSP, p.101
- Section 32282(a)(2)(E) A discrimination and harassment policy consistent with the prohibition against discrimination contained in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 200) of Part 1. See SSP, pp. 120-124.
- Section 32282(a)(2)(F) The provisions of any school wide dress code, pursuant to Section 35183, that prohibits pupils from wearing "gang-related apparel," if the school has adopted that type of a dress code. See SSP, p.97
- Section 32282(a)(2)(G) Procedures for safe ingress and egress of pupils, parents, and school employees to and from school. See SSP, p.7
- Section 32282(a)(2)(H) A safe and orderly environment conducive to learning at the school. See SSP, p.5
- Section 32282(a)(2)(I) The rules and procedures on school discipline adopted pursuant to Sections 35291, 35291.5, and 47605. See SSP, p.73.

- Section 32282(a)(2)(J)-(K) Procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents, including procedures related to individuals with guns on school campuses and at school-related functions. The procedures to prepare for active shooters or other armed assailants shall be based on the specific needs and context of each school and community. See SSP, pp. 24-28.
- Section 32282(a)(2)(L) Procedures to assess and respond to reports of any dangerous, violent, or unlawful activity that is being conducted or threatened to be conducted at the school, at an activity sponsored by the school, or on a schoolbus serving the school. See SSP, p.24
- Section 32282(a)(2)(M) Procedures to respond to incidents involving an individual experiencing a sudden cardiac arrest or a similar life-threatening medical emergency while on school grounds. See SSP, p.42

In accordance with Education Code 47605(c)(5)(F)(iii), the SSP shall be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the Charter School.

The SSP shall be drafted specifically to the needs of the facility in conjunction with law enforcement and the Fire Marshal. Staff shall receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.

Disaster procedures included in the SSP shall address and include adaptations for students with disabilities. To the extent an employee, parent/guardian, educational rights holder, or student brings concerns regarding the procedures to the Principal and, if there is merit to the concern, the Principal shall direct the School Safety Plan to be modified accordingly.

The Charter School shall develop an instructional continuity plan, consistent with Education Code Section 32282(a)(3), to establish communication with students and their families and provide instruction to students when in-person instruction is disrupted due to an emergency pursuant to Education Code Sections 41422 or 46392(a).

#### OTHER HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY SUMMARIES

The assurances below are included as further examples of Rocketship's commitment to student and staff health and safety and ensuring compliance with all statutory requirements pertaining thereto.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

All students enrolled and staff will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075.

#### MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

Rocketship will adhere to Education Code Sections 49423 and 49414 regarding administration of medication in school.

In accordance with Education Code Section 49414, the Charter School will stock emergency epinephrine auto-injectors to be used by the school nurse or trained personnel on persons suffering or reasonably believed to be suffering from an anaphylactic reaction. A school nurse or, if the Charter School does not have a nurse, a volunteer trained in accordance with applicable law, may administer an epinephrine auto-injector to a person exhibiting potentially life-threatening symptoms or anaphylaxis at school or at a school activity when a physician is not immediately available.

The Charter School will store the epinephrine auto-injectors in a secure but accessible, well-marked, unlocked location. Per AB 1651 (2023), the Charter School shall include that location in annual notices

required by law. To the extent the Charter School maintains a stock of albuterol inhalers to respond to respiratory distress in students, the Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code Section 49414.7, including with respect to training, notices, and the stocking of albuterol inhalers.

### VISION/HEARING/SCOLIOSIS

Students will be screened for vision, hearing, and scoliosis. Rocketship shall adhere to Education Code Section 49450 *et seq.* as applicable to the grade levels served.

#### DIABETES

The Charter School shall make type 1 diabetes informational materials accessible to the parent or guardian of a pupil when the pupil is first enrolled in elementary school.

## SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

The Charter School shall maintain a policy on student suicide prevention in accordance with Education Code Section 215. The Charter School shall review, at minimum every fifth year, its policy on pupil suicide prevention and, if necessary, update its policy. Pursuant to AB 58 (2021-22), the Charter School will also review and update its suicide prevention policy to incorporate best practices identified by the California Department of Education's model policy, as revised.

### MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS

The Charter School shall stock the Charter School's restrooms at all times with an adequate supply of menstrual products, available and accessible, free of cost, in all women's restrooms and all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men's restroom. The Charter School shall post a notice regarding the requirements of Education Code Section 35292.6 in a prominent and conspicuous location in every restroom required to stock menstrual products, available and accessible, free of cost, as specified. This notice shall include the text of this section and contact information, including an email address and telephone number, for a designated individual responsible for maintaining the requisite supply of menstrual products.

### ALL GENDER RESTROOMS

On or before July 1, 2026, the Charter School shall provide and maintain at least one all-gender restroom for voluntary student use at each of its schoolsites that has more than one female restroom and more than one male restroom designated exclusively for student use. The restroom shall have signage identifying the bathroom as being open to all genders, it shall remain unlocked, unobstructed, and easily accessible by any student, and be available during school hours and school functions when students are present. The Charter School shall designate a staff member to serve as a point of contact and to post a notice regarding these requirements.

#### SCHOOL MEALS

The Charter School shall provide breakfast and lunch free of charge during each school day to any pupil who requests a meal without consideration of the pupil's eligibility for a federally funded free or reduced-price meal, with a maximum of one free meal for each meal service period. The meals provided under this paragraph shall be nutritionally adequate meals that qualify for federal reimbursement.

The Charter School shall provide each student adequate time to eat as determined by the Charter School in consideration of available guidance.

#### RECESS

Except where a field trip or other educational program is taking place, if the Charter School provides recess, to the extent required by Education Code Section 49056, the Charter School shall provide supervised and unstructured recess, distinct from physical education courses and mealtimes, of at least 30

minutes on regular instructional days and at least 15 minutes on early release days. The Charter School shall not restrict a student's recess unless there is an immediate threat to the physical safety of the student or one or more of their peers.

### WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PLAN

The Charter School shall establish, implement, and maintain, at all times in all work areas, an effective workplace violence prevention plan consistent with the requirements of Labor Code Section 6401.9.

### **BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS**

Rocketship shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace. The Board has established a written "Bloodborne Pathogens" policy designed to protect employees from possible infection due to contact with bloodborne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV") and hepatitis B virus ("HBV").

Whenever exposed to blood or other body fluids through injury or accident, students and staff should follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

### DRUG-FREE/SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Rocketship shall maintain a drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free environment.

#### **FACILITY**

All facilities utilized by Rocketship must be in compliance with either the Field Act or the California Building Standards Code in accordance with Education Code 47610. All Rocketship facilities will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act access requirements. Rocketship will maintain accessible records documenting all such compliances. RDL has received a Certificate of Occupancy prior to the start of school.

Rocketship complies with the requirement contained in Education Code Section 47610 by utilizing private facilities that are compliant with the California Building Standards Code. However, Rocketship reserves the right to build a facility in compliance with the Field Act or to request Field Act compliant facilities from the local school district in the future under Proposition 39 and its implementing regulations. Rocketship agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. Rocketship shall conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION**

The Charter School shall adopt procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying. The Charter School shall annually make available the online training module developed by the CDE pursuant to Education Code Section 32283.5(a) to certificated schoolsite employees and all other schoolsite employees who have regular interaction with children.

## **GUN SAFETY NOTICE**

At the beginning of the first semester, the Charter School shall distribute a notice to the parents/guardians of each student addressing California's child gun access prevention laws and laws related to firearm safety utilizing the most updated model language published by the California Department of Education.

### **SAFETY Act**

Pursuant to AB 1955 (2024), employees of the Charter School shall not be required to disclose any information related to a pupil's LGBTQ+ identity to any other person without the pupil's consent unless

otherwise required by state or federal law. This provision shall not limit a parent's ability to request school records on behalf of their child.

# **EXTREME WEATHER POLICY**

On or before July 1, 2026, the Charter School will develop, adopt, and implement a weather policy that includes protocols for extreme weather conditions, and incorporate the standardized guidelines developed by the CDE.

## **ELEMENT G: MEANS TO ACHIEVE STUDENT POPULATION BALANCE**

Governing Law: The means by which the charter school will achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils, as defined by the evaluation rubrics in Section 52064.5, that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted. – Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(G)

Rocketship shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of any of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220, including immigration status. Furthermore, RDL shall strive, through recruitment and admissions practices, to achieve a balance of racial and ethnic students, special education students, and English learner students, including redesignated fluent English proficient students, among its students that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the District.

Specifically, the means by which Rocketship will strive to achieve these balances are described below. This list is not meant to be exhaustive. Any such strategies will comport with all applicable federal and state laws and Rocketship policies prohibiting discrimination in admission.

- Printing and distributing materials in English, Spanish, and any other languages reflecting the needs of the community.
- Cultivating strategic partnerships with community organizations that serve diverse constituencies.
- Recruiting and retaining a diverse, highly-qualified recruitment and community engagement staff that is primarily composed of individuals who reside in the local community.
- Holding focus groups with parents and community organizations in the local community.
- Employing an enrollment process that is well-publicized, scheduled, and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based application process.
- Developing and distributing promotional and informational material that reaches out to all of the various racial and ethnic, ability, and linguistic groups represented in the territorial jurisdiction of the District.
- Developing and distributing promotional and informational material that reaches out to families of students with special needs.
- Conducting continuous outreach activities throughout the community. These activities will be held at a wide range of times and locations to ensure that community members and Rocketship families have sufficient opportunities to attend.
- Conducting ongoing data-based research into the demographics of the District.

Rocketship shall analyze the success and/or weakness of its outreach initiatives. Rocketship shall utilize the data from the programmatic audit to make any necessary revisions to the outreach initiatives in order to correct student population imbalances.

## **ELEMENT H: ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

"Admission policies and procedures, consistent with [Education Code Section 47605] subdivision (e)." - Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(H)

RDL shall strive to achieve a student population that understands and values Rocketship's mission and vision statements and is committed to our instructional and operational philosophy.

RDL shall be an open enrollment and tuition-free public charter school and shall admit all pupils who wish to attend. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into RDL. RDL will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. Admission, except in the case of a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or their parent or legal guardian within the state.

In accordance with Education Code Sections 49011 and 47605(e)(2)(B)(iv), admission preferences shall not require mandatory parental volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A), the Charter School shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the charter school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii), including pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Similarly, in accordance with Section 47605(e)(4)(C), the Charter School shall not encourage a pupil currently attending the Charter School to disenroll from the Charter School or transfer to another school for any reason, including, but not limited to the academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii), as listed above.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(D), the Charter School shall post a notice developed by the CDE on the Charter School website, outlining the requirements of Section 47605(e)(4), and make this notice available to parents.

The Charter School's recruitment and enrollment processes shall be as described herein. The Charter School shall maintain on its website instructions for applying and information on the public random drawing and enrollment processes, including all pertinent dates and deadlines, and hardcopies of all such instructions and information shall be provided upon request. Any procedures used to verify student residency must comply with state and federal law, and must not discriminate against students or prospective students based on disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or any other characteristic protected by law, or association with persons with any of these characteristics.

### **APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION PROCESS**

The application process begins with the completion of a student interest form, which includes basic student and family identification information for the purposes of entry into public random drawing. Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open application period each year for enrollment in the following school year. RDL shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, subject only to capacity. In the event that this occurs, RDL will hold a public random drawing,

further described below, to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students, who are guaranteed enrollment in the following school year.

In order for students to be included in the public random drawing for admission to the Charter School (if a public random drawing is necessary), families must submit an application that includes only the student's name, grade, birthdate, and contact information for the family, including address, the current school that the student may attend, and whether a sibling attends the Charter School or other information in order to establish whether the student is entitled to admission preference. The admission application submitted prior to any public random drawing and before a student is offered a space at the Charter School shall specifically be limited only to the above-listed general information and in no event shall any application/registration/enrollment materials that are requested or required prior to the student being offered a place at the Charter School include any information concerning any protected characteristic of the student or their parent/guardian, including, but not limited to, mental or physical disability or current or prior eligibility for services pursuant to the IDEA or Section 504.

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

- Student enrollment form which contains student name, address, and other identifying and demographic information;
- Proof of immunization;
- Home Language Survey;
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form;
- Proof of minimum age requirements;
- Release of records<sup>20</sup>

## **LOTTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

As described above, RDL will implement a public random drawing in the event that applications for enrollment exceed capacity. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B), enrollment preferences in the case of a public random drawing shall be allowed in the following order of preference:

- 1. Siblings of students currently admitted to or attending RDL
- 2. Children of employees of RDL (not to exceed 10% of total enrollment)
- 3. Students who qualify for free or reduced price meals
- 4. Residents of the Antioch Unified School District
- 5 Other California residents

Public random drawing rules, deadlines, dates and times will be communicated on Rocketship's website. Public notice for the date and time of the public random drawing will also be posted once the application deadline has passed. RDL will also inform parents of all applicants and all interested parties of the rules to be followed during the public random drawing process via mail or email at least two weeks prior to the lottery date.

Each year, open enrollment occurs from the first Friday in November through the first Friday of March. The lottery is held on the Thursday of the second week in March. After that Thursday, the application opens again.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(B), the Charter School shall not request a pupil's records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit the pupil's records to the Charter School before enrollment.

The Board of Directors will take all necessary efforts to ensure lottery procedures are fairly executed. Lottery spaces are pulled in order of grade level by the designated lottery official. Separate lotteries shall be conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than students interested in attending. Enrollment preferences are handled sequentially. All lotteries shall take place on the same day. Separate lotteries shall be conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than pupils interested in attending. All lotteries shall take place on the same day in a single location. Lotteries will be conducted in ascending order beginning with the lowest applicable grade level. There is no weighted priority assigned to the preference categories; rather, within each grade level, students will be drawn from pools beginning with all applicants who qualify for the first preference category, and shall continue with that preference category until all vacancies within that grade level have been filled. If there are more students in a preference category than there are spaces available, a random drawing will be held from within that preference category until all available spaces are filled. If all students from the preference category have been selected and there are remaining spaces available in that grade level, students from the second preference category will be drawn in the lottery, and the drawing shall continue until all spaces are filled and preference categories are exhausted in the order provided above.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a wait list in the order of 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. Students may also apply to RDL after the open application period and their applications will be held in abeyance for a subsequent lottery, as needed.

In no circumstance will a wait list carry over to the following school year. Rocketship will notify all wait list families when the next year's application becomes available. Students who remain on the wait list at the end of a given school year will have to submit a new application for the next school year.

Parents will be notified on application and enrollment forms and annually in the handbook that volunteerism is not required for acceptance to or continued enrollment at the Charter School.

## **ELEMENT I: FINANCIAL AUDIT**

Governing Law: The manner in which annual, independent, financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.-- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(I)

The RSED Board will appoint an Audit Committee, which will select an independent financial auditor and oversee audit requirements.

An annual audit of Rocketship's books and records will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(c)(5)(I) and 47605(m). Rocketship's books and records will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law. The audit will employ generally accepted accounting procedures. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller's K-12 Audit Guide.

The Audit Committee will select an independent auditor through a request for proposal format. The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and will be approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in the applicable sections of the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200) and related OMB requirements.

The annual audit will be completed and forwarded to the District, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The Audit Committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Business Committee of the Board with recommendations on how to resolve them. The RSED Business Committee will then approve the audit. As soon as reasonably practicable, the Board will submit a report to the District describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved along with an anticipated timeline for the same. The Board and Executive Director of Rocketship Education - California will work with the District to ensure all audit exceptions and deficiencies are resolved to the satisfaction of the District. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel ("EAAP") in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit is public record to be provided to the public upon request.

The auditor will verify the accuracy of the Charter School's financial statements, attendance and enrollment, accounting practices, revenue-related data collection and reporting practices and will review the Charter School's internal controls. The audit will include a review of ADA as reported by the Charter School. Moreover, the audits will address whether the Charter School's money is being handled responsibly (in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles such as GAAP, LAO, GAGAS, and GAO) and that its financial statements conform to generally accepted accounting principles. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel ("EAAP") in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit of the Charter School is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

## **ELEMENT J: STUDENT SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

Governing Law: The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled from the charter school for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed from the charter school for any reason.... Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J)

Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy is maintained in RDL's Board-approved Student/Parent Handbook which, as discussed above in Element F, is attached and fully incorporated by reference as Appendix 26.

Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy is compliant with the federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements listed in Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J), as further detailed below. Moreover, Rocketship will comply with the requirement under Assembly Bill 2711 that, effective July 1, 2026, no Rocketship student shall be suspended or recommended for expulsion solely on the basis of (a) unlawfully possessing, using, or being under the influence of a controlled substance, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, or (b) having possessed or used tobacco, or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel.

- (i) For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, provide oral or written notice of the charges against the pupil and, if the pupil denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the pupil to present the pupil's side of the story. See Student/Parent Handbook, p. 59
- (ii) For suspensions of 10 days or more and all other expulsions for disciplinary reasons, both of the following:
  - (I) Provide timely, written notice of the charges against the pupil and an explanation of the pupil's basic rights. See Student/Parent Handbook, p. 61
  - (II) Provide a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer within a reasonable number of days at which the pupil has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the pupil has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate. See Student/Parent Handbook, pp. 61-70
- (iii) Contain a clear statement that no pupil shall be involuntarily removed by the charter school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than five school days before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian, or, if the pupil is a homeless child or youth, or a foster child or youth, in the native language of the homeless or foster child's educational rights holder. In the case of a foster child or youth, the written notice shall also be provided to the foster child's attorney and county social worker. If the pupil is an Indian child, as defined in Section 224.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the written notice shall also be provided to the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker. The written notice shall inform the pupil, the pupil's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker of the right to initiate the procedures specified in clause (ii) before the effective date of the action. If the pupil's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, or county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker or, if applicable, county social worker initiates the procedures specified in clause (ii), the pupil shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For purposes of this clause, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions specified in clauses (i) and (ii). See Student/Parent Handbook, p. 68.

Rocketship also maintains an Attendance and Truancy Policy in the Student/Parent Handbook that is attached as Appendix 26. The Attendance and Truancy Policy contains additional requirements pertaining to involuntary removals, which can be found on pp. 14-15 of the Student/Parent Handbook.

(iv) A foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker and an Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker shall have the same rights a parent or guardian of a child has to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, and other documents and related information. See Student/Parent Handbook, p. 68.

The full Suspension and Expulsion Policy is found on **pages 52-70** of the 2025-26 Student/Parent Handbook attached as Appendix 26. In addition to the above requirements, the Suspension and Expulsion Policy also contains:

- Procedures for in-school suspensions
- Homework assignments during suspension, in accordance with Education Code Section 47606.2
- Grounds for suspensions and expulsions
- Full suspension procedures and student rights during suspension
- Full expulsion procedures
- Special procedures for expulsion hearings involving sexual assault or battery offenses
- Special procedures for suspension or expulsion of students with disabilities
- Procedures for students not yet eligible for special education services
- Disciplinary records

## **ELEMENT K: STAFF RETIREMENT SYSTEMS**

<u>Governing Law</u>: The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, the Public Employees' Retirement System, or federal social security. -- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(K)

All full-time employees of Rocketship will participate in a qualified retirement plan. All full-time employees will be offered a 403(b) program with a 3% match from RSED. Full-time, eligible, certificated employees shall participate in the State Teachers' Retirement System ("STRS"), and all part-time employees and full-time non-certificated employees will participate in the federal social security system. The Charter School shall inform all applicants for positions within that Charter School of the retirement system options for employees of the Charter School. Rocketship employees may have access to additional Rocketship-sponsored retirement plans according to policies developed by the Board and adopted as Rocketship employee policies. Rocketship Education's Human Resources team, in conjunction with the Principal, ensures that appropriate arrangements for coverage have been.

Rocketship employees also have the option of participating in the Charter School's medical, dental and vision insurance plan. All employees and applicants are notified of their benefits options.

For more details on benefits offered to Rocketship employees, please see the Employee Handbook, attached as Appendix 24.

## **ELEMENT L: PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES**

<u>Governing Law:</u> The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the district who choose not to attend charter school. -- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(L)

No student may be required to attend RDL. Students who reside within the Antioch Unified School District who choose not to attend the Charter School may attend other district schools or pursue an intra-or inter-district transfer in accordance with existing district enrollment and transfer policies.

Parents and guardians of each student enrolled in RDL will be informed on admission forms that the students have no right to admission in a particular school of any local education agency as a consequence of enrollment in the Charter School, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the local education agency.

## **ELEMENT M: EMPLOYEE RETURN RIGHTS**

<u>Governing Law:</u> The rights of an employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school.-- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(M)

No public school district employee shall be required to work at Rocketship. Employees of a school district who choose to leave the employment of the school district to work at Rocketship will have no automatic rights of return to that district after employment by Rocketship unless specifically granted by the sending district through a leave of absence or other agreement. Rocketship employees who leave a school district to work at Rocketship shall have the return rights that the sending school district specifies, and any other rights upon return to the school district that the sending school district determines to be reasonable and not in conflict with any law.

Sick and vacation leave, and/or years of service credit, from any school district shall not be transferred to Rocketship Education. Employment by Rocketship Education provides no rights of employment at any other entity.

The Charter School acknowledges that employees are not required to engage in collective bargaining but they have that right if they choose to do so. The Charter School further acknowledges that only the school district has the authority to determine whether a collective bargaining agreement is controlling. Charter School staff shall not continue to earn service credit in a school district while employed at the Charter School.

Further, in the case of closure of RDL, RDL employees shall have no rights of employment/transfer to any other Rocketship school or entity, any school district, or any other employer.

For more details on employee rights at Rocketship, please see the Employee Handbook, attached as Appendix 24.

## **ELEMENT N: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS**

<u>Governing Law:</u> The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the chartering authority to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter."

- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(N)

### Disputes Between AUSD and the Charter School

The Charter School and AUSD will always attempt to resolve any disputes between them amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures. All timelines and procedures in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of authorized representatives of AUSD and the Charter School.

If either the Charter School or AUSD determines that a violation of the Charter or any other applicable law may have occurred or a problem has arisen related to the operation of the Charter School and/or AUSD's oversight obligations, or a dispute otherwise arises between AUSD and the Charter School, the following procedures shall be followed to resolve the dispute:

- (1) Should either party determine in writing that the violation or issue in question constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils, it shall not be bound by any portion of this dispute resolution process and AUSD may commence revocation proceedings immediately in accordance with Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing regulations, or take action as it deems necessary.
- (2) In the event that AUSD believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the Charter under Education Code Section 46707, participation in the dispute resolution procedures outlined herein shall not be interpreted to impede or act as a prerequisite to AUSD's ability to proceed with revocation in accordance with Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing regulations. Rather, AUSD may choose, in its sole discretion, to proceed directly with the revocation procedures as set forth in Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing regulations or may choose to participate in all or part of the dispute resolution procedures set forth below.
- (3) If the violation or issue in question does not constitute a severe and imminent threat and AUSD has not decided to commence revocation procedures without following this dispute resolution procedure, either party will provide written notification of the violation or issue ("the Dispute Statement") and refer the issue to the AUSD Superintendent and Charter School Executive Director, or their respective designees. The date that this written notice is provided or sent shall be the "Notice Date." Upon issuance of the Dispute Statement, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss and possibly resolve the dispute. Both parties must have representatives present at this meeting and the meeting shall be held within ten (10) calendar days after the Notice Date, or as mutually agreed upon by both parties. The AUSD representative at the meeting will be the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee, and the Charter School representative will be the Charter School's Executive Director or Executive Director's designee. If the dispute is not resolved at this meeting, or in strict accordance with any plan for resolution agreed upon at this meeting, the parties may proceed to step 4 or take any other action they deem appropriate in response to the dispute.
- (4) If the dispute is not resolved in accordance with the procedures through Step 3, either Party will have been deemed to have exhausted the administrative remedies within the Charter and may pursue any alternative legal options for resolution, including, AUSD may commence revocation of the Charter and/or other appropriate action in accordance with Education Code Section 47607 or applicable law.

The Charter School Board will adopt policies and processes for airing and resolving disputes, other than those between AUSD and the Charter School which are covered above. Parents, students, Board

members, volunteers and staff at the Charter School will be provided with a copy of the Charter School's policies and internal disputes process.

AUSD will refer all disputes or complaints it receives not related to a possible violation of the Charter or law, or to the operation of the Charter School or AUSD's oversight obligations to the Charter School's Executive Director for resolution according to the Charter School's internal dispute resolution process. AUSD may choose to submit disputes it receives that are related to possible violations of the Charter or the law or to the operation of the Charter School or AUSD's oversight obligations to the Charter School's Executive Director for resolution according to the Charter School's internal dispute resolution process. Should AUSD receive a complaint regarding the Charter School that is referred to the Charter School for investigation and/or resolution, the Charter School shall provide AUSD with updates regarding the Charter School's investigation and resolution of the matter upon request from AUSD and upon resolution of the complaint or issue. In the event that the Charter School's adopted policies and processes fail to resolve the dispute, AUSD agrees not to intervene in the dispute without the consent of the Charter School's Board unless the matter relates to a possible violation of the Charter or law or to the operation of the Charter School or AUSD's oversight obligations.

## Notice of Violation and Opportunity to Remedy

For any material violation of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the Charter or the terms of the Agreement, AUSD shall provide notice of violation, opportunity to remedy, and revoke the Charter as set forth in Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing Regulations.

## **Internal Disputes**

All internal Rocketship disputes will be handled internally and will be governed by RSED's adopted policies. Rocketship maintains a Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures and Title IX complaint procedures as required by state and federal law, respectively. Parents, students, Board members, volunteers, and staff at Rocketship shall be provided with a copy of the Charter School's policies and internal dispute resolution process. AUSD will promptly refer all disputes not related to a possible violation of the charter or law to Rocketship.

# **ELEMENT O: CLOSURE PROCEDURES**

Governing Law: The procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the charter school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of public records. --Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(0)

The Charter School shall comply with the applicable elements of California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Sections 11962 and 11962.1 and any other applicable legal requirements for closure of a charter school and the following requirements. The closure procedures set forth herein shall be collectively referred to as the "Closure Protocol." The official action by the Charter School's Board documenting the closure of the school for any reason will be referred to as the "Closure Action."

- A. Charter School shall identify an entity and person(s) responsible for closure- related activities and each notice required below shall include information on the responsible person and entity and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure.
- B. The Charter School Board shall provide written notification to AUSD and the Contra Costa County Office of Education of the determination of the Closure Action and of the effective date of the closure, and the contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure as a charter school within 72 hours of the Closure Action.
- C. Charter School shall provide written notification to the home districts of the list of returning students within 10 calendar days.
- D. Charter School shall provide written notification of the Closure Action and the effective date of closure of Charter School to the California Department of Education, the Charter School's SELPA, and the retirement systems in which Charter School's employees participate by registered mail within 10 calendar days.
- E. On closure, Charter School shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the Charter School.
- F. This notice to the parents and students will be provided within 10 calendar days of the Closure Action. The written notification shall include information on assistance in transferring each student to another appropriate school, and a process for the transfer of all student records. Parents/guardians will also be provided with student information that includes grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, and specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.
- G. Charter School will provide parents, students and the receiving school districts with copies of all appropriate student records. All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with FERPA. As permitted by each student's district of residence, the Charter School shall transfer all appropriate student records to the district of residence, or the district to which the student is transferring if requested by the parent/guardian. Charter School will ask AUSD to store original records of Charter School students for which the district of residence/district of attendance is not known or will not accept the records. If AUSD will not or cannot do so, Charter School will ask the Contra Costa County Office of

Education to determine a suitable alternative location for storage. All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred and maintained in accordance with applicable law.

- H. As soon as is reasonably practical, but no later than 90 days after the latter of the Closure Action or the effective date of the closure, Charter School shall prepare final financial records. The Charter School's independent audit completed by an independent auditor who meets the qualifications to perform Charter School's annual audits, as soon as is reasonably practical, but in no case later than six months after closure, and provide the audit report to AUSD promptly upon completion. The auditor and audit shall comply with all of the requirements for Charter School's annual audit as set forth in the Charter. Any costs for the audit incurred by AUSD shall remain a liability of Charter School until repaid in full. The final audit will delineate the disposition of all assets and liabilities. Any liability or debt incurred by Charter School shall be the responsibility of Charter School and not AUSD. Charter School understands and acknowledges that Charter School will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Charter School. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source.
- I. For six calendar months from the latter of the Closure Action or the effective date of the closure, sufficient staff as deemed appropriate by the Charter School Board will maintain employment to take care of all necessary tasks and procedures required for smooth closing of the Charter School and student transfers.
- J. In addition to the final audit, Charter School shall also submit any required year- end financial reports to the California Department of Education and AUSD in the form and timeframe required.
- K. If Rocketship Education does not operate any other charter school other than the Charter School, the corporation may be dissolved according to its Articles of Incorporation.

The Charter School will utilize the reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.

As RDL is operated by a nonprofit public benefit corporation, should the corporation dissolve with the closure of the Charter School, the Board will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a nonprofit public benefit corporation and file all necessary filings with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

# **BUSINESS OPERATIONS**

<u>Governing Law:</u> The petitioner or petitioners also shall be required to provide financial statements that include a proposed first year operational budget, including startup costs, and cash flow and financial projections for the first three years of operation. -- Education Code Section 47605(h)

# **BUDGETS AND CASH FLOW**

The following documents are attached as Appendix 3:

- A projected multi-year budget;
- Cash flow and financial projections;
- A narrative describing the above.

These documents are based upon the best data available to the Petitioners at this time. The Antioch Unified School District shall remit in-lieu property tax payments to the Charter School pursuant to Education Code Section 47635, which provides, in relevant part:

- (b) The sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer funding in lieu of property taxes to the charter school in monthly installments, by no later than the 15th of each month.
  - (1) For the months of August to February, inclusive, a charter school's funding in lieu of property taxes shall be computed based on the amount of property taxes received by the sponsoring local educational agency during the preceding fiscal year, as reported to the Superintendent for purposes of the second principal apportionment. A sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer to the charter school the charter school's estimated annual entitlement to funding in lieu of property taxes as follows:
    - (A) Six percent in August.
    - (B) Twelve percent in September.
    - (C) Eight percent each month in October, November, December, January, and February.
  - (2) For the months of March to June, inclusive, a charter school's funding in lieu of property taxes shall be computed based on the amount of property taxes estimated to be received by the sponsoring local educational agency during the fiscal year, as reported to the Superintendent for purposes of the first principal apportionment. A sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer to each of its charter schools an amount equal to one-sixth of the difference between the school's estimated annual entitlement to funding in lieu of property taxes and the amounts provided pursuant to paragraph (1). An additional one-sixth of this difference shall be included in the amount transferred in the month of March.
  - (3) For the month of July, a charter school's funding in lieu of property taxes shall be computed based on the amount of property taxes estimated to be received by the sponsoring local educational agency during the prior fiscal year, as reported to the Superintendent for purposes of the second principal apportionment. A sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer to each of its charter schools an amount equal to the remaining difference between the school's estimated annual entitlement to funding in lieu of property taxes and the amounts provided pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (2).
  - (4) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) of Section 14002, final adjustments to the amount of funding in lieu of property taxes allocated to a charter school shall be made in June, in conjunction with the third recertification of annual apportionments to schools.
  - (5) Subdivision (a) and paragraphs (1) to (4), inclusive, do not apply for pupils who reside in, and are otherwise eligible to attend a school in, a basic aid school district, but who attend a charter school in a non-basic aid school district. With regard to these pupils, the sponsoring

basic aid school district shall transfer to the charter school an amount of funds equivalent to the local control funding formula grant pursuant to Section 42238.02, as implemented by Section 42238.03, earned through average daily attendance by the charter school for each pupil's attendance, not to exceed the average property tax share per unit of average daily attendance for pupils residing and attending in the basic aid school district. The transfer of funds shall be made in not fewer than two installments at the request of the charter school, the first occurring not later than February 1 and the second not later than June 1 of each school year. Payments shall reflect the average daily attendance certified for the time periods of the first and second principal apportionments, respectively. The Superintendent may not apportion any funds for the attendance of pupils described in this subdivision unless the amount transferred by the basic aid school district is less than the local control funding formula grant pursuant to Section 42238.02, as implemented by Section 42238.03, earned by the charter school, in which event the Superintendent shall apportion the difference to the charter school from state funds.

The attached budget assumes that these payments will be made timely by the District as required by Education Code Sections 47635 and 42238.02. The program outlined in the petition is predicated, among other things, on the District meeting its obligation to provide in-lieu property tax payments in a timely fashion and the State of California maintaining at least the funding rates per pupil contained in the 2025-26 fiscal year budget.

## FINANCIAL REPORTING

Rocketship shall provide reports as required by Education Code Section 47604.33 as follows, and shall provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the District:

- By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year.
- By July 1, an LCAP and an annual update to the LCAP required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5.
- By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the Charter School's annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the County Office of Education, State Controller, and State Department of Education.
- By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
- By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the District shall include an annual statement of all the Charter School's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

The Charter School shall provide reporting to the District as required by law and as requested by the District including, but not limited to, the following: California Basic Educational Data System, actual Average Daily Attendance reports, all financial reports required by Education Code Sections 47604.33 and 47605(m), the School Accountability Report Card, and the LCAP.

The Charter School agrees to and submits to the right of the District to make random visits and inspections in order to carry out its statutorily required oversight in accordance with Education Code Sections 47604.32 and 47607.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604.3, the Charter School shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries including, but not limited to, inquiries regarding its financial records from the District.

#### **INSURANCE**

Rocketship shall acquire and finance general liability, workers compensation, and other necessary insurance of the types and in the amounts required for an enterprise of similar purpose and circumstance. AUSD shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of the Charter School.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

<u>Governing Law</u>: The manner in which administrative services of the charter school are to be provided. --Education Code Section 47605(h)

Administrative services will be managed in-house and contracted with appropriately qualified and/or credentialed (as necessary) outside providers to address all administrative services. Please see above Element D for the role of Rocketship Education as the primary provider of administrative services. The Charter School does not anticipate purchasing any services from the District, but reserves the opportunity to include a review of District services and pricing as the Charter School deems appropriate.

Selection of contractors includes a rigorous screening process. In the case where a contractor is paid for by federal funds, the Charter School shall follow applicable federal guidelines.

# **FACILITIES**

Governing Law: The governing board shall require that the petitioner or petitioners provide information regarding...the facilities to be used by the charter school. The description of the facilities to be used by the charter school shall specify where the charter school intends to locate. – Education Code Section 47605(h).

RDL is located at 1700 Cavallo Rd., Antioch, CA 94509. The Charter School plans to remain located at this site through the term of this renewal. The facility was originally built for RDL's specific program and has been carefully maintained and updated throughout RDL's occupancy.

# **IMPACT ON THE DISTRICT**

<u>Governing Law</u>: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the charter school and upon the school district -- Education Code Section 47605(h).

RDL is operated by RSED, a California non-profit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701(d). The specific purposes for which the corporation is organized are for the operation of public charter schools for educational services in accordance with the Education Code Section 47600, et seq.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(d), an entity that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit public benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by the Charter School if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

The Rocketship Education Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are attached as Appendix 19 and Appendix 20, respectively. Rocketship Education shall work diligently to assist the District in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other requested protocol to ensure the District shall not be liable for the operation of RDL.

Further, RSED and the District may enter into a memorandum of understanding or contract which shall provide for indemnification of the District by RSED. Insurance amounts will be determined by recommendation of the insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and type of program. The District shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of RDL.

The corporate bylaws of Rocketship Education and each of its schools shall provide for indemnification of the Rocketship Education and Rocketship Education Board of Directors, officers, agents, and employees, and Rocketship Education and Rocketship Board will purchase general liability insurance, Directors and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

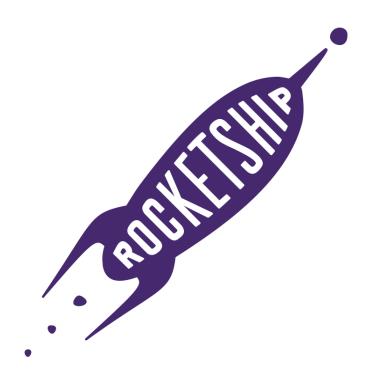
Rocketship Education and the Rocketship Education Board of Directors will institute appropriate risk management practices, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, staff, and participating families, and procedures governing financial transactions and dispute resolution.

# **CONCLUSION**

By approving the renewal of this charter, the Antioch Unified School District Board of Education will be fulfilling the intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 to improve student learning; increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning opportunities for all students who are identified as academically low-achieving; create new professional opportunities for teachers; provide parents and students with expanded choices in education; and be following the directive of law to encourage the creation of Charter Schools. The Petitioners are eager to work independently but cooperatively with the District to set the gold standard for charter schools. To this end, the Petitioners pledge to work cooperatively with the District to answer any concerns over this document and to present the District with the strongest possible proposal for establishment of a charter for a five-year term to begin July 1, 2026. In order to comply with rigorous District charter approval requirements, the Petitioners have attached a comprehensive series of detailed appendices. With the exception of Appendices 1, 18, 24, 25, and 26, these appendices are not intended to be incorporated by reference into the petition, but are provided to ensure that the District has a full and accurate understanding of the scope of the charter proposal and the means by which the Petitioners intend to achieve the academic results outlined in the charter.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(c) the chartering authority shall be guided by the intent of the legislature that: "...charter schools are and should become an integral part of the California educational system and that the establishment of charter schools should be encouraged. The governing board of the school district shall grant a charter for the operation of the school if it is satisfied the granting of the charter is consistent with sound educational practice and with the interests of the community in which the school is proposing to locate."

# **Rocketship Spark Academy**



Charter Renewal Petition For the term July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2031

Submitted to the Franklin-McKinley School District September 10, 2025

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# **CHARTER SCHOOL INTENT AND CHARTER REQUIREMENTS**

The Charter Schools Act of 1992, codified as Education Code Section 47600 *et seq.*, requires each charter school to have a charter that sets forth a reasonably comprehensive description of the required elements of charter petitions (Education Code Section 47605).

The California Legislature, in enacting the Charter Schools Act, sought to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, students, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following:

- (a) Improve student learning.
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are identified as academically low achieving.
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.
- (e) Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.
- (f) Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable student outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.
- (g) Provide vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools.

Rocketship Spark Academy is proud to have accomplished all of these intended results, as discussed herein.

# **AFFIRMATIONS AND DECLARATION**

Rocketship Spark Academy ("RSK" or the "Charter School"), operated by Rocketship Education d/b/a Rocketship Public Schools ("RSED" or "Rocketship"), authorized by the Franklin-McKinley School District ("FMSD" or the "District"), and located within the boundaries of FMSD, will follow any and all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations including but not limited to:

- 1. The Charter School will meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- 2. The Charter School declares that RSED shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(6)]
- 3. The Charter School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- 4. The Charter School will not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- 5. The Charter School shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case it will hold a public random drawing to determine admission. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(e)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or of that student's parent or legal guardian within the State. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(i)-(iv). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(A)-(C)].
- 6. The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- 7. The Charter School will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA"), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA").
- 8. The Charter School will meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]

- 9. The Charter School will ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold the Commission on Teacher Credentialing ("CTC") certificate, permit, or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment. The Charter School may use local assignment options authorized in statute and regulations for the purpose of legally assigning certificated teachers, in the same manner as a governing board of a school district. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(I)(1)]
- 10. The Charter School will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- 11. The Charter School will keep current necessary permits, licenses, and certifications related to fire, health, and safety within the building and on school property.
- 12. The Charter School will have at least 175 days of instruction and for each fiscal year, and will offer, at a minimum, the following number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D): to pupils in transitional kindergarten and kindergarten, 36,000 minutes; to pupils in grades 1 to 3, inclusive, 50,400 minutes; to pupils in grades 4 and above, 54,000 minutes.
- 13. If a pupil is expelled or leaves the Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including report cards or a transcript of grades, and health information. If the pupil is subsequently expelled or leaves the school district without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the school district shall provide this information to the Charter School within 30 days if the Charter School demonstrates that the pupil had been enrolled in the Charter School. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(3)]
- 14. The Charter School may encourage parental involvement, but shall notify the parents and guardians of applicant pupils and currently enrolled pupils that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(n)]
- 15. The Charter School shall adhere to each of the conditions in Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A)-(D), including: (A) not discouraging a student from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the Charter School for any reason; (B) not requesting a student's records or requiring a parent, guardian, or student to submit the student's records before enrollment; (C) not encouraging a student currently attending the Charter School to disenroll or transfer to another school for any reason; and (D) providing a copy of the California Department of Education ("CDE") notice regarding the requirements in Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A)-(D) to a parent/guardian or student if the student is 18 years of age or older: (i) when a parent/guardian or student inquires about enrollment, (ii) before conducting an enrollment lottery, or (iii) before disenrollment of a student. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A)-(D)]
- 16. The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(2)]
- 17. The Charter School shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)]

- 18. The Charter School shall comply with any applicable jurisdictional limitations to the locations of its facilities. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47605 and 47605.1]
- 19. The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47612(b) and 47610]
- 20. The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("ESEA"), as reauthorized and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA").
- 21. The Charter School shall comply with the California Public Records Act, Government Code Section 7920.000, et seq. ("CPRA").
- 22. The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g, 34 CFR Part 99 ("FERPA").
- 23. The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act, Government Code Section 54950, et seq. ("Brown Act").
- 24. The Charter School shall comply with Government Code Section 1090, et seq., as set forth in Education Code Section 47604.1 ("Section 1090").
- 25. The Charter School shall comply with the Political Reform Act, Government Code Section 81000, et seq. ("PRA").
- 26. The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of Education Code and Title 5 Regulations which are not otherwise waived under Education Code Section 47610.

Maricela (	Guerrero,	Executive I	Director, R	ocketship	Education -	California
Date						

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Rocketship's story began in 1999, when Father Mateo Sheedy, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, created the Juan Diego Scholarship to Santa Clara University. After realizing that none of the children in his parish qualified due to the lack of academic preparation in local schools, Father Mateo set forth a vision for a new kind of education—one that would provide children from historically underserved communities with the opportunity to thrive. Though Father Mateo passed away before his dream was realized, his legacy lived on. In 2006, parishioners partnered with John Danner and Preston Smith to found Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary, the first school in what has grown into a thriving network of high-performing public charter schools.

Just a few years later in 2013, that same spirit of vision and community came to life in South San Jose. Parents and staff, eager for another Rocketship school, gathered at Seven Trees Community Center to plan the future campus that would become Rocketship Spark Academy (RSK). Families united from all over South San Jose to discuss bringing a school to their community, seeing the impact it had had in other areas of San Jose. Wait lists were long in the East Side, and there was no Rocketship campus in South San Jose.

True to Rocketship tradition, parents are the deciders of the school's name. Families and parents come together to build a vision for the school, and decide what to name that vision. Through this community-driven process, many names were considered before families united around one word:

Spark. Parents shared that they wanted their school to "ignite change" in their community—an area that, at the time, had no Rocketship presence. Their vision was clear: Spark would be a school that set change into motion, unlocking opportunity for generations of children and anchoring families in a shared purpose.

Rocketship belongs to the community—and Rocketship Spark is committed every day to to reflect the strength of the community and the shared belief that our children can become the sparks that *ignite change for our community*!

Rocketship Spark Academy now serves over 500 students in grades TK to 5th. It is part of the Rocketship Public Schools network of high-performing public charter schools that was highlighted as a "gap busting" public school system in Stanford University's groundbreaking CREDO study of over 3 million public school students nationwide. The study found that Rocketship students gained the equivalent of 96 additional days of learning in reading and 138 additional days of learning in math in a single school year. This is the gap-busting model that Rocketship Public Schools is proud to offer students and families.

With a specific eye to academics, and as confirmed by the California Department of Education in March 2024, RSK has achieved the status of a **middle performing** charter school under the standards implemented in 2019 through Assembly Bill ("AB") 1505, and is entitled to renewal of its charter under the default approval standard in Education Code Section 47607.2(b). RSK is pleased to present a comprehensive analysis of its academic and other achievement data in the sections that follow, documenting why the charter should be renewed, and we note the following highlights:

- Consistent and improving academic indicator results on the California School Dashboard, demonstrating a bounce-back after pandemic lows
- Results among student subgroups that reflect schoolwide averages, thus eliminating the achievement gap
- Significant decreases in chronic absenteeism rate
- Verified data showing a year's progress for each year in school
- Achieving the blue performance indicator on the 2024 Dashboard for ELPI

Beyond our academic successes, the growth in diversity of our student body, the continuity of high quality learning, and increased supports for students' social-emotional needs throughout the pandemic, we celebrate many additional successes over the past charter term. These accomplishments include the establishment of daily Social-Emotional Learning blocks, the creation of a tier-3 family support role (Care Corps Coordinator), and the addition of a full-time wellness (mental health) teacher to further support increased tiered approaches to academic interventions, social-emotional interventions, and behavioral interventions. Other notable changes to be found within this charter petition, aside from a reasonably comprehensive description of new legal requirements of charter schools enacted since the charter was last approved, include curriculum updates and overall program elevation as a whole, to be found in full detail in the sections to follow.

Rocketship Spark Academy has reflected the intent and ideals of the Charter Schools Act of 1992, "to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish," among other objectives, "provid[ing] parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system ... hold[ing] the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provid[ing] the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems," and "[p]rovid[ing] vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools." We thank the Franklin-McKinley School District for its time reviewing our charter petition. On behalf of families, students and community, we ask for the FMSD to approve the renewal petition for a **five-year** charter term.

# **INTRODUCTION**

# CRITERIA FOR RENEWAL

## <u>Introduction</u>

Pursuant to the amendments made to Education Code Section 47607, and the creation of Education Code Section 47607.2, by Assembly Bill 1505 (2019), at the time of charter renewal, a chartering authority shall consider the performance of the charter school on the state and local indicators reported on the Dashboard, and, in some circumstances, the performance of the charter school on assessments deemed to be verified data.

In addition to the shift toward assessing Dashboard data, Assembly Bill 1505 also created a three-tiered system of evaluating charter schools' performance, plus a separate category for Dashboard Alternative School Status schools. Each of the three tiers has unique qualifying criteria.

The three performance categories are as follows:

- High Performing Presumptive renewal if the charter school meets the established renewal criteria Education Code Section 47607(c)(2).
- Low Performing Presumptive non-renewal if the charter school meets the non-renewal criteria, unless the chartering authority makes a finding to approve for a two-year term Education Code Section 47607.2(a).
- Middle Performing Renewal unless the charter school failed to meet or make sufficient progress toward meeting standards and closure is in the best interest of students, evaluated using the Dashboard and Education Code Section 47607.2(b).

Following a pause due to the suspension of state testing during the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDE has resumed publishing a list of high-, middle-, and low-performing charter schools. As determined by law and the CDE, RSK is designated as middle-performing, and is thus eligible for a five-year charter renewal term.

The 2024 Dashboard is the second year since 2019 to display the intended red, orange, yellow, green, and blue colors for schools' status and change scores in the state indicators. The 2022 Dashboard uses one of five Status levels (ranging from Very High, High, Medium, Low, and Very Low) for all state indicators based on the 2021-22 school year data.

The state indicators include the following:

- Chronic Absenteeism: kindergarten through grade eight
- Suspension Rate: kindergarten through grade twelve
- English Learner Progress: grades one through twelve
- Graduation Rate: high school only
- College/Career: high school only
- Academic: grades three through eight and grade eleven English Language Arts ("ELA") /Literacy and Mathematics

## **Rationale for Renewal of RSK Charter Petition**

For middle-performing charter schools, Education Code Section 47607.2 mandates that the chartering authority consider the performance, schoolwide and for all student subgroups, of RSK on the state and local indicators on the Dashboard. The chartering authority shall provide greater weight to measurements of academic performance, which include the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress ("CAASPP") ELA and math assessments and the ELPI.

Further, in addition to the state and local indicators on the Dashboard, the chartering authority shall also consider evidence, if provided by the Charter School, from assessments deemed verified data by the State Board of Education, showing measurable increases in academic achievement (at least one year's progress for each year in school), or showing strong postsecondary outcomes (college enrollment, persistence, and completion rates equal to similar peers).

In support of approval of its charter renewal petition, below RSK submits data from the Dashboard and verified data sources. As the data presented below demonstrates, RSK has met the criteria for renewal under Education Code Section 47607.2(b), as recognized by the CDE.

# STUDENT PERFORMANCE DATA

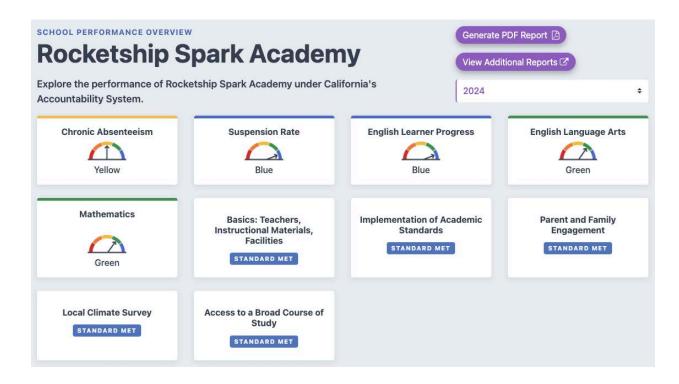
As noted above, Education Code Section 47607.2(b) provides that a chartering authority's decision to renew a school's charter shall be based upon the Charter School's performance on the state and local indicators adopted under Education Code Section 52064.5 (both on a schoolwide basis and by student subgroups). Pursuant to Education Code Section 52064.5(f), the California Department of Education has created the California School Dashboard, which tracks school performance data on such state and local indicators.

# CA DASHBOARD: STATE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

The most recent Dashboard Reports for RSK are attached to this petition as Appendix 1, and a snapshot of the overview for RSK's Dashboard Report is provided below.

We note that the AB 1505 renewal framework does not set any minimum threshold, or any other objective standard of measurement, for Dashboard data for the purposes of determining renewal of middle-performing charter schools. Rather, Education Code Section 47607.2(b) instructs chartering authority to *consider* the Dashboard data. Chartering authorities are further instructed to give greater weight to measures of academic performance under Education Code Section 47607.2(b)(2), but the statute remains silent on precisely what level of performance a charter school must show.

Therefore, the remainder of this section highlights Rocketship Spark Academy's Dashboard data from 2019 to 2024 for all students (schoolwide) and numerically significant student groups.



Per the Dashboard website, "Performance on state measures, using comparable statewide data, is represented by one of five colors. The performance level (color) is not included when there are fewer than 30 students in any year."



## STATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Education Code Section 47607.2(b) requires chartering authorities to consider the schoolwide performance on the state indicators, with greater weight given to the academic indicators. Rocketship Spark Academy's ELA and Math academic indicator performance levels have been Green and Blue, the two highest levels, in all years with performance colors (2019, 2023 and 2024). Rocketship Spark earned Blue, the highest level, on the ELPI in 2024, an improvement from the prior year.

With respect to the non-academic indicators, the Charter School's Chronic Absenteeism performance level has consistently been Yellow and its Suspension rate indicator has consistently been Blue, the highest level, in all year with reported performance colors.

Table 1 reports Rocketship Spark Academy's historical performance levels during its charter term. The state suspended indicator performance levels reporting in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://www.caschooldashboard.org/about/accountability.

pandemic, and the 2022 Dashboard published modified performance indicators. For 2022, current statuses ("very high" to "very low") are reported in the table for years when performance levels were not available.

Table 1 - Rocketship Spark Academy's Historical State Indicator Performance Levels

Indicator	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Chronic Absenteeism	Yellow	N/A	N/A	Very High	Yellow	Yellow
Suspension Rate	Blue	N/A	N/A	Very Low	Blue	Blue
ELA	Green	N/A	N/A	Medium	Blue	Green
Mathematics	Blue	N/A	N/A	Medium	Blue	Green
EL Progress	Low	N/A	N/A	Low	Red	Blue

## Comparisons to the State, the District and Comparison Schools

We have included the following Dashboard data to provide another analysis of Rocketship Spark Academy's student achievement. The Charter School is located in the Franklin-McKinley School District, and that is also where a significant number of its students reside.

In 2024, Rocketship Spark Academy was equal to or outperformed the state and FMSD on all five indicators. Rocketship Spark Academy outperformed the state and FMSD on each academic indicator. Furthermore, Rocketship Spark Academy earned the highest performance level (Blue) on 2 out of 5 indicators and the second highest level (Green) on another 2 indicators.

Table 2 - 2024 State Indicator Performance Levels: State and District

Indicator	Rocketship Spark Academy	CA State	FMSD
Chronic Absenteeism	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Suspension Rate	Blue	Green	Green
ELA	Green	Orange	Orange
Mathematics	Green	Orange	Orange
EL Progress	Blue	Orange	Red

The student population of Rocketship Spark Academy may differ greatly from the state and FMSD due to student demographics and grades served. Table 3 below provides a more direct elementary school ("ES")

comparison between Rocketship Spark Academy and local elementary schools in the surrounding neighborhood. The table also outlines the demographics of the Franklin-McKinley School District. Table 4 includes the 2024 Dashboard results for four comparison schools (elementary schools in close proximity to Rocketship Spark, serving a similar demographic of students): G.W. Hellyer Elementary School, Lairon College Preparatory Academy, Los Arboles Literacy and Technology Academy, and Ramblewood Elementary.

Table 3 - 2023-24 Demographics: Comparison Schools

Demographic	Rocketship Spark Academy	G.W. Hellyer ES	Lairon	Los Arboles	Ramblew ood ES	FMSD (Non-Charters)
% Asian	35%	20%	11%	10%	48%	30%
% Hispanic	54%	74%	83%	86%	37%	62%
% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged ("SED")	59%	74%	76%	79%	53%	71%
% English Learners ("EL")	47%	41%	51%	58%	29%	46%
% Students with Disabilities ("SwD")	10%	11%	19%	24%	17%	13%

Sources: California Department of Education Data Reporting Office (DataQuest) and California School Dashboard. Only numerically significant student subgroups at RSK are included in this table.

As reported in Table 4, Rocketship Spark Academy was equal to or outperformed all comparison schools on all five indicators in 2024.

Table 4 - 2024 State Indicator Performance Levels: Comparison Schools

2024 Indicator	Rocketship Spark Academy	G.W. Hellyer ES	Lairon	Los Arboles	Ramblewood ES
Chronic Absenteeism	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow
Suspension Rate	Blue	Blue	Orange	Green	Blue
ELA	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Orange
Math	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow

ELPI	Blue	Orange	Red	Orange	Orange
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# Chronic Absenteeism

The table below shows how most subgroups at Rocketship Spark Academy scored within one level of the schoolwide indicator in the years in which the indicator has been included on the Dashboard. Districts across the state and country have reported higher chronic absentee rates after the 2020 COVID-related school disruptions and Rocketship Spark Academy has experienced a similar trend.<sup>2</sup> While Rocketship Spark Academy's chronic absentee rates remain above pre-2020 levels, the Charter School significantly decreased its rate by over 3 percent to earn Yellow on the 2024 Dashboard. The Charter School is on-track to report another significant decrease in 2025.

Table 5 - Rocketship Spark Academy Chronic Absenteeism Indicator

Subgroup	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All	Yellow	N/A	N/A	Very High	Yellow	Yellow
Asian	Yellow			High	Orange	Yellow
EL	Green			Very High	Orange	Orange
Hispanic	Yellow			Very High	Yellow	Yellow
SED	Orange			Very High	Yellow	Yellow
SwD	Orange			Very High	Red	Orange

#### Suspension Rate

Rocketship Spark Academy did not suspend any students in 2022, 2023 or 2024 and, subsequently, earned the highest performance level school-wide and across all subgroups in 2023 and 2024. The Charter School is on-track to maintain its Suspension Rate indicator performance on the 2025 School Dashboard.

Table 6 - Rocketship Spark Academy Suspension Rate Indicator

Subgroup	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All	Blue	N/A	N/A	Very Low	Blue	Blue
Asian	Blue			Very Low	Blue	Blue

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Nat Malkus, "Long COVID for Public Schools: Chronic Absenteeism Before and After the Pandemic", American Enterprise Institute, January 31, 2024,

 $<sup>\</sup>frac{https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/long-covid-for-public-schools-chronic-absenteeism-before-and-afte}{r-the-pandemic/}$ 

EL	Blue		Very Low	Blue	Blue
Hispanic	Green		Very Low	Blue	Blue
SED	Blue		Very Low	Blue	Blue
SwD	Blue		Very Low	Blue	Blue

# **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

As described above, Education Code Section 47607.2(b)(2) requires that greater weight be given to the academic indicators on the Dashboard. Rocketship Spark Academy's ELA Academic Indicator performance level was Blue in 2023 and Green in 2024.

Rocketship Spark Academy's ELA Academic Indicators are based on the performance of its 3rd-5th graders on CAASPP. The 3rd-5th grade 2023 cohorts were in K-2nd grade at the start of the pandemic and the 3rd grade 2024 cohort started Kindergarten during the pandemic. Both 2023 and 2024 state testing cohorts experienced school disruptions during a critical period in their early literacy skill development. Earning the top two performance levels in 2023 and 2024 demonstrates Rocketship Spark Academy's academic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic disruptions. Furthermore, the Charter School achieved a higher Current Status (ELA Distance from Standard, or "DFS") than FMSD and against all of its local school comparisons in both years (see Table 9 for additional details).

Table 7 - Rocketship Spark Academy ELA Academic Indicator

Subgroup	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All	Green	N/A	N/A	Medium	Blue	Green
Asian	Green			High	Blue	Green
EL	Green			Low	Green	Yellow
Hispanic	Yellow			Low	Yellow	Orange
SED	Green			Low	Green	Yellow
SwD	Not Reported (Number of students <30)			Not Reported (Number of students <30)	Not Reported (Number of students <30)	Not Reported (Number of students <30)

# **MATHEMATICS**

Rocketship Spark Academy's Math Academic Indicator performance level was Blue in 2023 and Green in 2024.

As with ELA, the 2023 and 2024 3rd-5th grade cohorts were still recovering from the schooling disruptions of a formative period for Math skill development. Rocketship Spark Academy's Blue and Green performance levels demonstrate the Charter School's progress toward academic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic disruptions. The Charter School also achieved a higher Current Status (Math DFS) than the local school district and all its local school comparisons in both 2023 and 2024 (see Table 10 for additional details).

Table 8 - Rocketship Spark Academy Mathematics Academic Indicator

Subgroup	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All	Blue	N/A	N/A	Medium	Blue	Green
Asian	Blue			Very High	Blue	Blue
EL	Blue			Medium	Blue	Green
Hispanic	Blue			Low	Yellow	Orange
SED	Blue			Medium	Green	Green
SwD	Not Reported (Number of students <30)			Not Reported (Number of students <30)	Not Reported (Number of students <30)	Not Reported (Number of students <30)

# <u>Historical DFS Comparisons: Academic ELA and Mathematics Indicators</u>

The information presented below shows the "current status" as another demonstration of the Charter School's achievement on the academic Dashboard indicators, which we present as another form of analysis for the District to consider under Education Code Section 47606.2(b)(2). In contrast to the official performance indicator levels, which are contingent upon a valid Change metric based on two years of state testing data, a school's Status can be calculated as the average distance from standard --the difference between a student's scale score and the minimum threshold score grade level proficiency. The average DFS provides a direct comparison of absolute academic achievement between Rocketship Spark Academy and the comparison schools and FMSD.

Table 9 - Rocketship Spark Academy Average ELA DFS (Current Status)

School/District	2023	2024	2024 Difference from Rocketship Spark Academy
Rocketship Spark Academy	19.4	11.7	•

G.W. Hellyer ES	-19.0	-10.4	-22.1
Lairon	-66.4	-89.2	-100.9
Los Arboles	-60.3	-43.1	-54.8
Ramblewood ES	0.1	-10.7	-22.4
FMSD	-38.5	-43.4	-55.1
State	-13.6	-13.2	-24.9

In the past two years, Rocketship Spark Academy's ELA DFS outperformed all comparison schools, the District, and the State. Rocketship Spark Academy's ELA DFS was over 15 points higher than any of the comparison schools in both 2023 and 2024. Furthermore, the Charter School's ELA DFS was a higher Current Status Designation (High) than any of the comparison schools (ranging from Medium to Very Low) in both of the most recent years.

Table 10 - Rocketship Spark Academy Average Mathematics DFS (Current Status)

School/District	2023	2024	2024 Difference from Rocketship Spark Academy
Rocketship Spark Academy	18.1	21.9	-
G.W. Hellyer ES	-29.3	-19.9	-41.8
Lairon	-118.1	-134.8	-156.7
Los Arboles	-47.6	-21.9	-43.8
Ramblewood ES	-9.0	-8.2	-30.1
FMSD	-63.1	-64.5	-86.4
State	-49.1	-47.6	-69.5

Similar to ELA, Rocketship Spark Academy earned a higher DFS than the comparison schools, the District, and the State for the past two years. The Charter School's Math DFS was more than 25 points higher than any of the comparison schools in 2023 and 2024. Furthermore, the Charter School's Math DFS was a higher Current Status Designation (High) than any of the comparison schools (ranging from Medium to Very Low) in both years.

#### **ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRESS**

The ELPI measures the percentage of EL students making sufficient progress on the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California ("ELPAC"). The ELPI based on ELPAC first appeared on the Dashboard in 2019 and was reported as a school's baseline year data. Due to COVID-related school closures, data was not reported for two years, and the 2022 Dashboard reported a new baseline year. Performance level colors were not given due to the absence of a change metric from the immediate prior year, but the CDE decided to use the ELPI status level "as a proxy for color" for the 2019 charter school performance categories.<sup>3</sup> The ELPI performance level colors were reported for the first time in 2023. Rocketship Spark Academy earned Red the first year a performance level was reported and improved to Blue in the most recent year.

Table 11 - Rocketship Spark Academy English Language Progress Indicator

Subgroup	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All	Low	N/A	N/A	Low	Red	Blue

#### **LOCAL INDICATORS**

Education Code Section 47607.2(b)(1) also requires the chartering authority to consider performance on the Dashboard's local indicators. Performance on local indicators is rated through one of three designations: (1) Standard Met; (2) Standard Not Met; or (3) Standard Not Met for Two or More Years.<sup>4</sup>

As shown in Table 12 below, Rocketship Spark Academy has met the standard in all categories of the five Local Indicators in all reported years.

Table 12 - Rocketship Spark Academy Local Indicators

Category	Local Indicator	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Academic Performance	Implement ation of Academic Standards	Standard Met			Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
Conditions and Climates	Basics: Teachers, Instruction al Materials, Facilities	Standard Met	N/A	N/A	Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
	Parent and Family	Standard Met			Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> California Department of Education, "Determining Charter School Performance Category",

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/aC/cm/documents/determinecharterperf.pdf">https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/aC/cm/documents/determinecharterperf.pdf</a>>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See <a href="https://www.caschooldashboard.org/about/faq">https://www.caschooldashboard.org/about/faq</a>.

	Engageme nt					
	Local Climate Survey	Standard Met		Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
Academic Engagement	Access to a Broad Course of Study	Standard Met		Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met

# MEASURABLE INCREASES IN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT (Verified Data)

Education Code Section 47607.2(b)(3) requires that chartering authorities consider, if provided, "clear and convincing evidence" of academic progress of at least one year's growth for each year in school, as measured by verified data. In contrast to the Dashboard requirements of Education Code Section 47607.2(b)(1) and (2), this component of the renewal framework does include a threshold - one year. The remainder of this section provides a multitude of data from various verified data assessment measures and for different student populations. The data clearly demonstrates that Rocketship Spark Academy's students - as a whole, as broken down by student subgroups, and as cohorts of students who have been at the Charter School throughout its tenure - have largely made at least one year's growth for each year of the Charter School's charter term.

#### **ACADEMIC INDICATOR DFS**

If a student's individual DFS is constant or increases from the prior year, the student achieved at least one year of grade-level growth. Similarly, if the DFS of a school or subgroup is constant or improving, the school or subgroup has met a year of growth on average. Furthermore, a DFS increase of 15 points or more is classified as "increased significantly" and a change within +/- 3 points is classified as "maintained" for the ELA and Mathematics Academic Indicator change metrics.

Rocketship Spark Academy's overall school and all subgroup results have largely demonstrated one year of growth or more in ELA and Math each year by DFS improvement or maintenance. The year prior to 2020, the Charter School maintained its ELA DFS and significantly increased the Math DFS. The Charter School significantly increased both its ELA and Math DFS in 2023 across subgroups. In 2024, Rocketship Spark Academy demonstrated one of growth in Math by maintaining or increasing Math DFS levels for the overall school and each subgroup. While Rocketship Spark Academy's overall school and subgroup results declined in 2024 for ELA, the cohort composition should be taken into consideration. As stated in an earlier section, the 3rd-5th grade 2024 tested cohorts were greatly impacted by COVID-19 school disruptions and academic recovery is still ongoing.

Table 13 - Rocketship Spark Academy Average DFS and Change (2018-2024)

Subgroup	2018	2019	2019 Change	2022	2023	2023 Change	2024	2024 Change
				ELA				

All	28.4	31.4	+2.9	-0.9	19.4	+20.3	11.7	-7.6
Asian	76.5	73.5	-3.0	44.0	58.0	+14.0	50.3	-7.7
EL	24.2	27.5	+3.3	-5.4	3.4	+8.8	-2.0	-5.5
Hispanic	-1.7	-1.7	+0.0	-26.1	-13.4	+12.7	-27.0	-13.6
SED	13.1	12.5	-0.6	-11.6	4.6	+16.2	-4.4	-9.0
			Mat	thematics				
All	50.4	64.7	+14.4	-7.2	18.1	+25.3	21.9	+3.8
Asian	104.3	106.7	+2.4	59.0	76.6	+17.6	79.5	+2.9
EL	46.3	65.8	+19.5	-3.8	11.3	+15.1	11.7	+0.4
Hispanic	16.3	34.0	+17.7	-43.7	-31.3	+12.4	-31.0	+0.3
SED	34.5	49.3	14.8	-21.7	-1.6	+20.1	2.7	+4.2

Note: Change metrics are reported directly from state data files. The difference of the rounded DFS reported may slightly differ from the CDE's calculated change using the precise values.

Because the specific students included in a school or subgroup's DFS calculations will change each year, it is informative to look at how the average DFS progresses for continuously enrolled cohorts. The table below shows 6 different cohorts with growth during the period of Rocketship Spark Academy's charter term ("continuously enrolled students"). The continuously enrolled students improved or maintained DFS between 3rd-4th grade in both subjects in all three years, demonstrating one or more years of growth. While the 4th-5th grade cohort growth has been less consistent, two of the three cohorts showed improvement in ELA and one cohort maintained its Math DFS.

Table 14 - Rocketship Spark Academy Growth of DFS (CAASPP) for Continuously Enrolled Students

School Years	3rd Grade	4th Grade	Change	4th Grade	5th Grade	Change
			ELA			
2018 to 2019	29.1	42.4	+13.3 improvement	8.2	31.2	+23.0 improvement
2022 to 2023	-17.2	15.4	+32.6 improvement	-10.5	0.1	+10.6 improvement
2023 to	25.3	43.2	+17.9	-27.9	-41.7	-13.8

2024			improvement			decline		
	Mathematics							
2018 to 2019	72.9	73.0	+0.1 maintain	14.4	14.0	-0.4 maintain		
2022 to 2023	-18.0	21.0	+39.0 improvement	-11.4	-25.4	-14.0 decline		
2023 to 2024	22.0	43.0	+21.0 improvement	-11.0	-65.6	-54.6 decline		

#### **VERIFIED DATA: NWEA MAP**

As described above, Education Code Section 47607.2(a)(3) requires a chartering authority to consider, if provided by a charter school, clear and convincing evidence of one year's progress for each year in school, as demonstrated by "verified data." Education Code Section 47607.2(c) further defines "verified data" as "data derived from nationally recognized, valid, peer-reviewed, and reliable sources that are externally produced." The SBE published an approved list of valid verified data sources which includes MAP Growth by NWEA, Grades K–12. The Charter School has consistently administered the Northwest Evaluation Association ("NWEA") Measures of Academic Progress ("MAP"), a nationally-normed assessment recognized across the nation as a high-quality and valid assessment. More than 8,500 schools in the United States, including more than 450 districts and school partners in California, use NWEA MAP.6

The CDE's recommended growth metric for NWEA is the Conditional Growth Index ("CGI"), a standardized, normed growth measure. The CGI calculates the difference between a student's observed growth and the expected growth based on their grade-level peers (aka their growth norm) and then divides by the growth standard deviation to produce a standardized measure that can be used to compare growth outcomes across student groups and grades. According to the NWEA guide to using CGI for AB 1505, a CGI range between -0.2 and +0.2 can be used as an approximation of one year's growth.

Rocketship Spark Academy's students have achieved at least one year of growth as demonstrated by the Charter School's NWEA MAP average CGI every year in each subject. Table 15 below shows that Rocketship Spark Academy's average school-wide CGI was either within the one year's growth range or above it for all six years with assessment results. Blue cells indicate accelerated growth above 0.2, green cells indicate one-year growth and orange cells indicate growth that was less than one year. Rocketship Spark Academy achieved accelerated growth, with CGI averages above 0.2, for five of the six years in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup><u>https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ch/verifdataacadprogress.asp</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> https://www.nwea.org/state-solutions/california/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://connection.nwea.org/s/article/Conditional-Growth-Index?language=en\_US

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>https://calauthorizers.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/NWEA-Using-MAP-Growth-Data-for-AB1505-Guidance-Doument-MAY23.pdf

Mathematics and four years in Reading. Furthermore, the Charter School's numerically significant subgroups also largely made at least one year's progress as measured by the NWEA MAP assessment.

Table 15- Average CGI at Rocketship Spark Academy (2018-19 – 2024-25)

Student Group	2018-19	2019-20*	2021-22 2022-23		2023-24	2024-25					
Mathematics											
All students	1.10	0.47	0.18	0.34	0.40	0.39					
Asian	1.40	0.73	0.34	0.38	0.49	0.53					
EL	1.16	0.59	0.19	0.36	0.47	0.45					
Hispanic	0.87	0.24	0.24 0.04 0		0.36	0.32					
FRL	1.02	0.37	0.13	0.33	0.39	0.30					
SwD	0.84	0.08	-0.43	0.54	0.44	0.74					
Reading											
All students	0.50	0.31	0.13	0.26	0.30	0.17					
Asian	0.63	0.68	0.32	0.31	0.34	0.23					
EL	0.62	0.33	0.10	0.28	0.36	0.02					
Hispanic	0.40	-0.04	0.02	0.23	0.28	0.12					
FRL	0.48	0.26	0.06	0.26	0.23	0.11					
SwD	0.51	0.40	-0.25	0.93	0.04	0.39					

<sup>\*</sup> Growth reported is Fall-to-Winter because spring assessment could not be administered due to COVID-19 school closures

Growth based on 2020 NWEA Norms

# **Conclusion**

RSK is proud to have earned "middle-performing" status. In accordance with the applicable legal standard, the Charter School is entitled to default approval of this charter renewal petition, for a five-year renewal term.

## RSK AS PART OF THE ROCKETSHIP EDUCATION NETWORK

Rocketship's story began back in 1999, when Father Mateo Sheedy, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, created the Juan Diego Scholarship to Santa Clara University. After an extensive search for candidates, Father Mateo was surprised to discover that of the hundreds of children in his parish, none of them met the basic academic requirements to qualify them to attend their hometown college, or any other top-tier university.

Father Mateo immediately began researching ways to solve this problem. He soon became convinced that the public schools around his parish were failing to educate the students in his church. He decided that the children of his parish needed to have an alternative to their neighborhood district school.

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 low-income 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 empowered teachers and engaged parents can have on student success.

The original campus, Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary, opened soon after and our students quickly showed strong results in academic achievement. In fact, Rocketship Mateo Sheedy became the highest ranked low-income elementary school in Santa Clara County and the seventh ranked school in California. As more families joined the waiting list, we realized the need for even more high quality schools in the San Jose community. The founders decided to expand its nonprofit benefit corporation, Rocketship Education, to serve other schools in the needlest neighborhoods.

Rocketship Education has taken the successful model pioneered at Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary School and translated it into critical systems necessary for successful replication. As described above, Rocketship Education provides each of its schools with systems and support for Curriculum, School Leadership, operations, Finance, Legal, Online Technology, Human Resources, and other services. By capturing best practices, Rocketship Education allows each of its schools to avoid many of the startup hurdles faced by most charters and quickly produce strong academic results and a solid school culture by focusing on the key levers that drive student achievement.

Rocketship operates thirteen schools in California. Ten of these schools are in San Jose, where we have grown to become a well-established presence over the past decade. We also have a campus in Redwood City, which opened in the 2015-16 school year. Rocketship also operates two schools in the East Bay.

RSK is part of a network of high-performing charter schools that is centrally governed and operated by Rocketship Education, a non-profit public benefit corporation with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. As further described in Element D below, Rocketship Education is governed by a Board of Directors ("Board") comprised of diverse and experienced community leaders with a broad range of expertise in relevant fields, including academics, education reform, community engagement, finance, management, real estate, law, and fundraising.

The Board is ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of each Rocketship school. Board members have a responsibility to solicit input from, and opinions of, both school staff and students' parents regarding issues of significance and to weigh the input and opinions carefully before taking action.

In addition to benefiting from a deeply experienced Board of Directors, RSK receives support from our centralized network staff. As we have expanded our network and impact over the past decade, we have focused on building organizational capacity to support a robust network of high-quality schools in historically disadvantaged communities. We have worked to develop and consistently apply strong functional expertise in each of the areas that comprise the complexity of school management (i.e. academic and social-emotional instruction, talent, community relations, finance, strategy, operations, legal, technology, human resources). Our centralized management structure is further described in Element D below.

## **ELEMENT A: THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

"The educational program of the charter school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the charter school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an "educated person" in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners."

"The annual goals for the charter school for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve those goals."

- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(A)(i)-(ii)

# MISSION, VISION, AND MODEL

At Rocketship Public Schools, we believe in the infinite possibility of human potential. We believe that every student deserves the right to dream, to discover, and to develop their unique potential. And it is our responsibility and our privilege to unleash the potential inside every Rocketeer we serve. Our non-profit network of public elementary charter schools propels student achievement, develops exceptional educators, and partners with parents who enable high-quality public schools to thrive in their community.

# **Our Vision**

Equal access to opportunity for all.

#### **Our Mission**

To catalyze transformative change in low-income communities through a scalable and sustainable public school model that propels student achievement, develops exceptional educators, and partners with parents who enable high-quality public schools to thrive in their community.

#### **Our Pillars**

The Rocketship model is built on three foundational pillars of excellence:

- **1. Personalized Learning -** Tailoring instruction, content, learning experience, and pace to unleash the potential of every student.
- **2. Talent Development -** Investing in the growth and development of every team member to unleash their full potential in the classroom and beyond.
- **3. Parent Power** Unleashing the power of parents to champion their children's education, hold leaders accountable, and enable high-quality public schools to thrive.

## **Rocketship Model**

Unlike traditional elementary schools, students at Rocketship rotate between four content blocks every day: Humanities, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics ("STEM"), Learning Lab and Enrichment. This model allows us to improve student outcomes by developing teachers who specialize in either STEM or Humanities. Content specialization also means our teachers collaborate together to develop classroom management strategies, create lesson plans, and engage parents.

Our teachers lead the learning process for every single student we serve in both whole group grade level instruction and differentiated instruction that meets students at their individual level. Independent learning, small group tutoring, and adaptive online learning programs augment teacher-led instruction and provide valuable time for students to develop more ownership of their learning and achieve the mastery they need to advance. This carefully orchestrated combination of instructional methods is made possible through robust and regular data streams that map precisely where students need support to achieve mastery – from concept acquisition all the way through practice and repetition. This is how we ensure we are purposeful in our use of technology, targeted in our tutoring, and optimizing our teachers' talent and instructional time.

We educate the whole child at Rocketship. We pride ourselves on creating schools that promote our core values of persistence, empathy, responsibility, and respect. We also supplement our core instruction in Humanities and STEM with social emotional learning and positive behavior interventions and supports. All our schools offer a diverse array of enrichment classes, selected in partnership with our parents, such as art, nutrition, gardening, music, dance, and more. Delivering a well-rounded education builds the critical thinking, team work, character skills and values that our Rocketeers need to thrive in school and life.

Rocketship schools are community schools. Across all our schools, families are deeply engaged in their student's academic life and our school community. Our parents name our schools, help design the enrichment offering, and select the Charter School's unique fifth core value. Then, every fall, our teachers and leaders visit the home of every student we serve to learn more about their family, life, and experiences outside of school. By changing the dynamic from parent in a teacher's classroom, to teacher in a parent's house we are able to develop much deeper ties with our parents that carries through the school year and beyond. Additionally, Rocketship Spark Academy is a proud participant in the statewide California Community Schools Partnership Program, having been awarded a multi-year grant which supports the amazing work of our Care Corps Coordinator (providing services and referrals for at risk families) and our Wellness Counselors (providing mental health supports and social-emotional interventions for our rocketeers with Tier 3 social and behavioral needs).

We staff every Rocketship campus with a principal, assistant principals, a business operations manager, and an office manager. Together, they lead a team of teachers, tutors, enrichment coordinators, and support staff who collectively deliver gap-closing, personalized instruction to students from pre-K to grade 5. Principals and assistant principals provide instructional leadership and professional development ("PD") by regularly observing classrooms, providing continuous feedback, co-planning units of study and lesson plans, and leading data analysis cycles. Office managers lead our family engagement and student information systems. And our Business Operations Manager ("BOM") helps ensure the Charter School has a consistent culture across all spaces, manages school logistics and compliance, keeps our students safe, and ultimately enables instructional staff to focus on teaching and learning.

We believe that all children have potential and that great public schools unleash that potential. But the quality of public education in our country today still depends on where you live and how much money

your parents earn. We are building a movement to create educational equity in disadvantaged communities across our country. As demonstrated in the Stanford Center for Research on Education Outcomes ("CREDO") study of over 3 million public school students, Rocketship Public Schools was highlighted as a "gap busting" public charter school network that is providing empirical proof that high-quality public education is possible anywhere. The full Stanford CREDO National Charter School Study is attached as Appendix 2. In short, we still have a long way to go to realize our vision of equal access to opportunity for all, but the progress we are making for the students and families we serve is transformational.

#### SCHOOL POPULATION – WHOM THE SCHOOL IS ATTEMPTING TO SERVE

As described above, Rocketship's program is designed to serve students who are or may be at risk of achieving below grade level. The average Rocketship student is between one and two years behind grade level upon entry. RSK will continue outreach efforts to students from predominantly socio-economically disadvantaged neighborhoods where access to high-quality, high-performing schools is limited. As Table 16 below shows, the vast majority of RSK students that we serve are socioeconomically disadvantaged. The majority of our students at RSK are either Asian or Hispanic/Latino. We also serve a significant percentage of English learners and students who are eligible for special education and related services.

Table 16 below shows the demographic breakdowns at RSK at the time of submission of this petition for charter renewal.

Table 16 - Demographic Percentages at RSK

School Year	SED	EL	Hispanic	Black	Asian	White	Special Education
2013-14	73.1	58.3	66.4	2.8	28.6	0.6	5.9
2014-15	80.1	61.6	65.8	2.1	30.3	0.5	6.9
2015-16	80.4	59.4	62.6	1.3	33.9	0.7	7.8
2016-17	76.0	46.5	59.1	1.5	34.2	0.5	8.5
2017-18	74.0	37.4	56.7	2.2	37.6	0.7	8.0
2018-19	68.9	34.5	51.6	3.3	38.8	0.5	7.4
2019-20	65.5	44.7	48.5	2.9	41.7	1.1	7.5
2020-21	62.0	51.0	47.0	3.4	44.2	1.8	7.7
2021-22	60.8	54.2	49.6	3.4	43.1	2.3	8.3
2022-23	59.5	49.1	51.1	3.2	39.8	3.0	9.7
2023-24	59.0	46.7	53.7	3.1	38.6	1.5	9.7
2024-25	57.3	48.4	56.4	2.6	37.2	0.9	10.3

# **ENROLLMENT**

RSK enrolls approximately 545 students. Table 17 below shows the enrollment numbers at RSK over the past five school years.

We expect this to remain steady over the next five years, as further shown in our Budget Narrative, attached as Appendix 3 and incorporated into this petition. To absorb expected attrition, the Charter School will continuously enroll vacated spaces to maintain its enrollment numbers. Attrition is primarily

driven by families leaving the area and is similar to other Rocketship and high-performing charter schools in the area. Currently, Rocketship uses PowerSchool for student attendance accounting and reporting.

Table 17 - Enrollment Numbers

School Year	TK	К	1	2	3	4	5	Total
2013-14	68	113	117	118	62	31	30	539
2014-15	51	108	108	111	113	55	22	568
2015-16	26	112	112	115	112	97	39	613
2016-17	0	115	109	111	117	105	34	591
2017-18	22	106	107	111	113	110	32	601
2018-19	25	115	116	115	112	98	27	608
2019-20	22	113	121	114	110	109	29	617
2020-21	28	111	118	117	109	105	37	625
2021-22	27	102	102	108	108	93	31	571
2022-23	32	95	99	98	100	97	37	558
2023-24	46	80	94	105	98	91	30	544
2024-25	44	109	91	87	102	86	27	546

RSK currently serves students in grades TK-5.9

### **OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN EDUCATED PERSON IN THE 21ST CENTURY

We believe that an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century possesses a depth and breadth of academic and critical life skills that will enable them to develop into a self-motivated, competent, lifelong learner.

The academic skills that we strive for our students to develop are rooted in critical thinking, problem-solving, and meta-cognition. To meaningfully contribute to and participate in this increasingly global society, we believe that students must not only possess an extensive knowledge base, but also skills on how to analyze and access more information. Students must be prepared to apply things they have learned to solve novel problems, think critically and creatively, and communicate precisely and effectively across many different mediums. Students must be prepared to work with and adapt to rapidly-changing technological resources. Students should also have the ability and disposition to explore the thinking and learning process and to explain their rationales to others.

The critical life skills that we strive for our students to develop are rooted in a sense of self, relationship and social skills, and commitment to learning. We believe that students must be able to work cooperatively and collaboratively with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and cultures. They will need strong and resilient social and emotional skills to be prepared to formulate healthy relationships at school, at home, and in the workplace. Through it all, students must remain focused and motivated as they learn and grow both inside and outside the classroom. Students should be motivated to pursue goals and take responsibility for academic, social, and emotional self-development.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> RSK affirms that it shall comply with the adult to student ratios and teacher qualifications for TK, as set forth in Education Code Section 48000(g).

Rocketship's program focuses on academic and critical life skills designed to help students flourish in multiple aspects of their lives during their time at Rocketship and beyond.

## HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS

Our instructional model is based on our beliefs that learning best occurs in the following ways:

- Through a thoroughly-planned, standards-aligned academic curriculum that centers on higher-order critical thinking and complex problem solving and that authentically integrates a variety of content throughout the school day.
- Through instruction in critical life skills that include teaching core values, strong behavioral skills, and habits of excellence.
- Through personalized instruction that includes targeted interventions and blended classroom-based and adaptive online learning.
- Through differentiation and integrated and focused supports for special student populations.
- Through data-driven instruction, planning, and analysis.
- Through careful selection of educators, and consistent and rigorous intellectual professional development and growth opportunities to keep teachers and staff members invested and effective.

The sections below in Element A further describe how we execute each of our beliefs.

#### **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

### STANDARDS-ALIGNED CURRICULUM

The Rocketship curriculum follows California's adoption of the Common Core State Standards ("CCSS") for English/Language Arts and Mathematics; English Language Development ("ELD") Standards; the Next Generation Science Standards ("NGSS"); the History-Social Science Framework; and the remaining State Content Standards for other content areas including Social Studies and Visual and Performing Arts (collectively referred to herein as "State Standards").<sup>10</sup>

We understand and appreciate the rigor of the CCSS. Additionally, the CCSS-aligned Smarter Balanced assessment system tests a wide range of complex cognitive skills that require students to both engage in and articulate higher-order thinking across content areas. Our classroom instructional practices similarly teach students to not only build skills, but then to apply their understandings in a diverse variety of tasks and settings. These practices also help further the academic skills that, as described above, we believe all educated persons in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must possess.

Our teachers develop and align their classroom practices to the rigor of the CCSS and CAASPP. Rocketship's centralized network Program Team, in partnership with the California Regional Achievement Team, is tasked with designing an intellectual preparation process to best set teachers and students up for short and long-term success. The Program Team partners with regional leaders (school principals and assistant principals, and teachers), to develop plans and materials that span from long-term curriculum maps to daily lessons. Teachers also meet regularly throughout the school year with their school-based coaches and members of the Program Team to explore content covered in various units, thinking about questions like, "What are the key understandings and skills needed for the relevant standards?" and "What should students be able to do/produce if they have mastered the standard?"

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(d).

The Program Team works year-round to dissect, analyze, and further investigate the standards for all content areas that we teach. The Program Team, along with the Analytics Team and California Regional Team, also design and analyze standards-based assessments throughout the year to help further differentiate instructional materials and supports, and to track student progress. Through it all, we constantly share our learnings with teachers and leaders to develop processes for receiving feedback from the "ground level." We make adjustments as necessary to ensure that our teachers continue to feel motivated, supported, and prepared and our students continue to make significant growth.

The below sections provide further details on our curriculum and instruction. 11

#### **ELA/LITERACY**

## **CCSS-ALIGNED INSTRUCTION**

Each of the elements of our reading and writing instruction are focused on the CA CCSS for ELA and Literacy. For each of the strands called for in the CCSS (reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language, each further described below), our instruction includes the College and Career Readiness anchor standards and their accompanying grade-specific standards to ensure that our students are on track to meet end-of-year expectations.

Reading Strand. In accordance with the CCSS for ELA/Literacy, our reading instruction for both literature and informational text focuses on the anchor and grade-specific standards in the following areas: (1) key ideas and details (i.e. determining central ideas and themes, making logical inferences from text, analyzing how ideas and characters develop); (2) craft and structure (i.e. analyzing meaning, structure, and point of view of a text); (3) integration of knowledge and ideas (i.e. evaluating content, comparing information from multiple sources); and (4) range of reading and level of text complexity (i.e. reading and comprehending complex literary and informational texts). We also teach the reading standards for foundational skills, which include print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency. Our instructional strategies for teaching reading are further described in the following section.

Writing Strand. Our writing instruction focuses on the anchor and grade-specific standards in the areas of (1) text types and purposes (i.e. learning to write narratives, informative/explanatory texts, arguments, and a variety of other subgenres); (2) production and distribution of writing (i.e. producing and sharing clear, coherent and organized writing through a well-planned writing process); (3) research to build and present knowledge (i.e. assessing the credibility of sources, analyzing research, and integrating findings to support writing); and (4) range of writing (i.e. writing over short and long time frames for a variety of purposes and audiences).

**Speaking and Listening Strand.** Our speaking and listening instruction, which we integrate not only into our ELA/Literacy lessons but also throughout the entire school day, focuses on the anchor and grade-specific standards in the areas of (1) comprehension and collaboration (i.e. preparing for and participating in a wide range of conversations with diverse partners, integrating and evaluating

<sup>11</sup> These sections describe our instruction as it is currently being implemented in accordance with the State Standards. We constantly monitor any changes in the State Standards and assessment systems and may at times adjust elements of our instruction, curriculum, and/or teaching materials to ensure that teachers and students are best equipped for mastery. Consistent with the standards in Education Code Section 47607, we will notify the District at any time should any adjustment become of the magnitude that may constitute a material revision to our charter.

integration presented in a variety of formats, and evaluating other speakers' reasoning and rhetoric); and (2) presentation of knowledge and ideas (i.e. presenting findings with supporting evidence, making strategic use of media and data displays to express ideas, adapting speech to a variety of tasks).

Language Strand. Our language instruction focuses on the anchor and grade-specific standards in the areas of (1) conventions of standard English (i.e. grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation); (2) knowledge of language (i.e. understanding how language functions in different contexts); and (3) vocabulary acquisition and usage (i.e. using context clues to determine the meaning of unknown words, understanding figurative language and word relationships, acquiring and using a range of academic language).

Additionally, in alignment with the CCSS, we are committed to: (1) regular practice with complex texts and their academic language; (2) reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from texts, both literary and informational (i.e. asking students to answer not solely from their prior knowledge but rather from a close, careful reading of the text); and (3) building knowledge through content-rich information (i.e. students are immersed in information about the world around them, especially through content-rich nonfiction). Overall, through both our whole group and small group instruction, students receive consistent exposure to both narrative *and* nonfiction text, with opportunities to synthesize their thinking verbally and in writing.

### **COMPONENTS OF OUR LITERACY INSTRUCTION**

Our reading and writing instruction includes four different components to teach the standards and strands described above: (1) explicit teaching of the building blocks of literacy; (2) explicit teaching of reading comprehension skills; (3) application of the building blocks and reading comprehension skills; and (4) explicit teaching of writing skills and process.

- (1) *Explicit teaching of the building blocks of literacy.* Our instructors teach phonics (sound-spelling relationships), phonemic awareness (distinguishing individual sounds within words), and language arts (word and structural analysis); and fluency.
- <u>Phonics:</u> Students will learn to relate sounds to spellings to decode words. Our instruction will include concepts like long and short vowel sounds, consonant and vowel combinations, consonant clusters, diphthongs, digraphs, and variant vowels.
- <u>Phonemic awareness:</u> Students will learn how to distinguish individual sounds (phonemes) within words. Our instruction will include activities like categorization (recognizing the "odd" sound in a word), isolation (identifying a single sound in a word), rhyming, segmenting (separating spoken words into individual sounds), and oral blending (combining individual sounds in a word).
- <u>Language Arts:</u> Our instruction will zoom in on the concept of word and structural analysis, engaging in in-depth study of topics like morphemes (i.e. prefixes, suffices, root words), compound words, homophones, and syllabication.
- <u>Fluency:</u> Our instruction will focus on helping students acquire automaticity (rapid and automatic word recognition) and prosody (reading with phrasing and recognition of punctuation). Our teachers will build students' fluency through modeling good oral reading, teaching students phrasing, and offering many opportunities for students to practice with guidance and support (i.e. repeated reading). Additionally, teachers will expose students to high-frequency words and sight words to allow students to focus less energy on decoding and more on comprehension during their reading lessons.

(2) Explicit teaching of reading comprehension skills. Reading comprehension instruction occurs at all grade levels. Teachers will identify a CCSS-aligned standard and objective for the lesson. Teachers will model the skill as well as the metacognition (thinking about the comprehension that students will be asked to do in their own reading). Teachers will read with the students, making pre-designated stops to highlight the skill and ask students to also interact with the text themselves, either in small groups or individually, and practice the skill.

Reading comprehension instruction may also take the form of a read aloud, which is emphasized more heavily in the younger grades, where teachers will use an anchor text to model a particular reading skill/strategy. The teacher will define the skill, explain why good readers use the skill, and model how to apply the skill. The teacher may also provide either a preview of the text or a summary from the previous day's reading, including review of specific vocabulary words. The teacher will then read the text, modeling fluency, and take pre-planned pauses to do a "think aloud" to describe the comprehension strategies she is using, any comprehension problems that she is encountering as well as ways to address them, and continue to build enthusiasm and engagement about the text. Teachers will also assess comprehension of the text by posing literal, inferential, and critical thinking discussion questions.

(3) The application of building blocks and reading comprehension skills. This element of our reading instruction occurs primarily through small group reading instruction which is the cornerstone of the literacy and comprehension skills that we teach. Our guided reading primarily occurs in small, homogeneous groups, and instruction is focused on what each individual student needs at the moment to advance in reading ability.

We use assessments as the starting point for our guided reading instruction. Our assessments, particularly the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills ("DIBELS") assessment system, are designed to provide teachers with critical and targeted information on how students process information and read texts. Teachers will use this data to gauge students' approximate "reading levels," assess reading growth over time, and plan guided reading instruction. Teachers' plans will include selecting a text that will give multiple opportunities for students to practice a skill or strategy, designing a pre-reading activity to focus students, observing and coaching students during reading, and leading a comprehension conversation to practice and assess students' comprehension.

Our students may also practice reading comprehension through independent reading. Our teachers are trained to organize leveled libraries, which will include multiple text formats and reading levels, various genres, a range of content areas, and appeal to students' interests. Our teachers will also set independent reading expectations with their students and develop ways to hold them intellectually accountable.

(4) The explicit teaching and application of writing skills and the writing process. Our writing instruction includes both teacher-driven and student-driven components.

As further described below in our Special Populations section, we also incorporate the **ELD** standards into our ELA/Literacy block through both integrated and designated ELD instruction.

#### INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING AND PREPARATION

As described above, our teachers and school leaders are provided with a plethora of resources to effectively and efficiently plan and prepare their ELA/Literacy instruction. These include:

- End-of-unit, CCSS-aligned assessments to test mastery and prepare students for the SBAC requirements
- Ongoing unit assessments to be administered every three to four weeks, depending on the grade level and unit
- Scope and sequence curriculum maps, which lay out the standards-aligned objectives for each unit throughout the school year
- Unit plans
- Objective plans
- Sample daily lesson plans
- Fiction and nonfiction texts that correlate with the lesson plans, objectives, and units

Samples of Rocketship's preparation materials, including scope and sequence maps, are attached as Appendix 4.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **CCSS-ALIGNED INSTRUCTION**

Our mathematics instruction is centered on the California CCSS for Mathematics ("CA CCSSM"). Lessons incorporate the CA CCSSM's eight Mathematical Practice Standards, which are designed to develop students' broader mathematical understanding across all grade levels, as well as the CA CCSSM's Content Standards, which are a progression of grade-level specific mathematical topics.

**Practice Standards.** We believe that all students should develop the varieties of expertise that are reflected in the practice standards, as these standards are designed for all levels of mathematical maturity and will enable students to become strong in mathematics even beyond their elementary school experience at Rocketship. The eight practice standards, as well as a brief summary of what proficiency looks like for each of them under the CA CCSSM, are described below.

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them: Proficient students will be able to
  explain to themselves the meaning of a problem, plan a solution pathway, consider analogous
  problems, monitor and evaluate progress toward a solution, and check their answers using a
  different method.
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively: Proficient students will be able to make sense of quantities and their relationships, create a coherent representation of the problem at hand, consider the units involved, and know how to use different properties of operations and objects.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others: Proficient students will make
  conjectures and build ways to explore them, recognize and use counterexamples, make plausible
  arguments about data, distinguish logical vs. flawed reasoning, justify and communicate their
  conclusions
- Model with mathematics: Proficient students will apply the mathematics they know to solve
  problems arising in everyday life (even if this is as simple as writing an addition or subtraction
  equation to describe a situation). Proficient students will also be able to identify important
  quantities in practical situations and map relationships using tools such as diagrams, two-way
  tables, graphs, flowcharts, and formulas.
- <u>Use appropriate tools strategically</u>: Proficient students will be able to consider the available grade-appropriate tools when solving a problem, make mathematical models, and identify external mathematical resources.

- <u>Attend to precision</u>: Proficient students will use clear definitions, articulate the meaning of chosen symbols, carefully specify appropriate units of measure, calculate accurately and efficiently, and provide explanations of their reasoning.
- <u>Look for and make use of structure</u>: Proficient students will discern patterns, deconstruct equations, and shift perspectives.
- <u>Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning</u>: Proficient students will look for repeated calculations and shortcuts, notice regularity, and maintain oversight of calculations they are working to solve.

**Content Standards**. While the practice standards describe the ways in which mathematics learners should be engaging with subject matter, the content standards include the actual grade-specific subject matter. They are designed to work in conjunction with the practice standards. The CA CCSSM Content Standards identify several "critical areas" of focus for each grade level, on which we center our mathematics instruction.

- <u>Kindergarten:</u> (1) representing, relating, and operating on whole numbers, initially with sets of objects; and (2) describing shapes and space.
- <u>Grade 1:</u> (1) developing understanding of addition, subtraction, and strategies for addition and subtraction within 20; (2) developing understanding of whole number relationships and place value; (3) developing understanding of linear measurement and measuring lengths as iterating length units; and (4) reasoning about attributes of, and composing and decomposing geometric shapes.
- <u>Grade 2:</u> (1) extending understanding of base-ten notation; (2) building fluency with addition and subtraction; (3) using units of measure; and (4) describing and analyzing shapes
- <u>Grade 3:</u> (1) developing an understanding of multiplication and division and strategies for multiplication and division within 100; (2) developing understanding of fractions; (3) developing understanding of the structure of rectangular arrays and area; and (4) describing and analyzing two-dimensional shapes.
- <u>Grade 4:</u> (1) developing understanding and fluency with multi-digit multiplication, and developing understanding of dividing to find quotients involving multi-digit dividends; (2) developing an understanding of fraction equivalence, addition and subtraction of fractions with like denominators, and multiplication of fractions by whole numbers; and (3) understanding that geometric figures can be analyzed and classified based on their properties, such as having parallel sides, perpendicular sides, particular angle measures, and symmetry.
- Grade 5: (1) developing fluency with addition and subtraction of fractions, and developing understanding of multiplication of fractions and division of fractions; (2) extending division to two-digit divisors, integrating decimal fractions into the place value system and developing understanding of operations with decimals to hundredths, and developing fluency with whole number and decimal operations; and (3) developing understanding of volume.

# **COMPONENTS OF OUR MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTION**

To best meet the demands of the CCSS, our math instruction will include all of the following elements at all grade levels:

- Instruction and learning activities focused on math concepts and application of understandings
- Explicit instruction on math vocabulary and language
- Spiral review on concepts already covered, with a specific focus on application of understandings across a diverse range of concepts

- Protected intervention and corrective instruction time during the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math ("STEM") block
- Well-designed routines closely matched to grade-level content and the development of number sense and math strategies (calendar math, oral fluency, e.g.)

In order to accomplish all of these each day, it is imperative that our STEM blocks are designed to make the most of every minute, and ensure that the teacher is able to be as impactful as possible with their time and attention.

**Core Grade-Level Instruction.** To address the mathematical standards at each grade level, we utilize Eureka Math as our core curriculum. The Eureka block is the portion of the math instructional block where new skills are taught. While the breakdown of each component varies slightly by grade level and lesson, a typical Eureka block consists of the following components:

- Fluency: Activities are strategically designed to both provide necessary practice on critical fluencies for the grade level and to prime students for the day's objective.
- Application Problem: This component focuses on developing students' ability to comprehend story problems through the read-draw-write framework.
- Concept Development & Problem Set: The new objective for the day is introduced, building towards independent practice.
- Student Debrief: Students engage in discussion of the day's objective to solidify their understanding.

The math lesson begins with fluency activities. These activities are meant to provide necessary practice with fluency skills, including counting, fact fluency, and automaticity with current-module skills. A typical Eureka lesson contains more fluency activities than can reasonably be completed in the allotted time in the block. Teachers strategically select activities that align to their students' areas of need while incorporating a variety of different activities over the course of a week or topic.

A typical math lesson then includes an application problem before transitioning to the concept development portion of the lesson. The application problem serves a number of different purposes in the lesson.

- It provides consistent exposure to and practice with understanding word problems and gives an opportunity to teach and practice the Read-Draw-Write comprehension strategy.
- It serves as either a review of previously taught content or as an entry point to the day's lesson.
- It is important to note that to achieve the purpose of the application problem, it does not need
  to be fully completed and debriefed every day. For example, if students need additional support
  in drawing a model to support their comprehension of a story problem, the teacher could
  choose to focus just on that aspect of the problem-solving process and continue supporting the
  student in subsequent lessons.

Concept development is the component of the math lesson where new content is taught. Rather than following a more traditional I do - we do - you do structure, concept development is meant to be a shared experience where students are actively engaged in the understanding of a new concept through discourse and guided problem-solving.

While concept development is meant to be a teacher-led, guided experience, the problem set provides an opportunity for students to engage in practice independent of the teacher. This does not mean that students cannot receive help on the problem set – group work can be utilized during this time, and the teacher should be coaching individual students and addressing whole-class misconceptions as needed. However, providing students with the opportunity to engage in productive struggle during this portion of the block is critical to their learning process.

The student debrief follows the independent problem set and provides an opportunity for students to discuss and synthesize their learning before concluding the day's lesson. A strong student debrief should focus on a common misconception from the lesson (guided by the debrief questions provided in the lesson plan), allow opportunities for all students to engage with each other in discourse, and end with a transferable stamp of the key takeaway. The student debrief is followed by the exit ticket.

**Spiral review.** Spiral review is critical to ensure our learners are repeatedly engaging with content and applying their burgeoning understandings to a wide assortment of contexts and challenges. This block also keeps skills fresh in the minds of students and allows teachers opportunities to shore up small misconceptions, review key vocabulary, and investigate application of previously learned content in new situations. There are two main forms of spiral review: math meeting (Grades TK & K) and math board (Grades 1-5).

- Math meeting: Math Meeting is a daily routine in the TK & K classroom, where students practice routinized skills (e.g., counting), explore the calendar for math patterns, and spiral review previously taught content. At the beginning of the year, math meeting is a group exercise, while students become more independent as they become more familiar with the routine. Kindergarten students start the year with math meeting, and transition to math board by the end of the year in preparation for Grade 1.
- Math board: Math Board is a review worksheet with 4-6 problems aligned to previous objectives and skills. Students spend the first half of their spiral review time completing these math board problems independently. Teachers then use the remaining spiral review time to review 1-2 targeted problems as a class, focusing on key misconceptions from their formative assessment data or important background knowledge required for upcoming content. For maximum effectiveness, math board can be differentiated to reach students at different levels.

**Intervention and Corrective Instruction.** While strong tier 1 instruction on grade-level content is foundational to a student's success in a Rocketship math classroom, we know that some students will need additional instructional support to show mastery. This support needs to address both unfinished foundational learning and misconceptions about current grade-level content. As a result, our vision for remediation is two-pronged and seeks to balance **proactive** intervention (addressing foundational learning) and **responsive** reteaching (addressing current grade-level content).

Responsive instruction, just like any portion of the math block, is at its best when it is data-informed. Effective responsive instruction relies on a variety of assessment data:

- Exit tickets, topic quizzes, and module assessments to provide data on mastery of grade-level content
- Diagnostic assessments and universal screeners to place students along a continuum of foundational knowledge that allow access to grade-level content.

Our approach to addressing unfinished foundational learning relies heavily on the approach laid out in Accelerate, Don't Remediate, a TNTP report from 2021, which is attached as Appendix 5. We believe that by addressing unfinished learning right as it becomes necessary to access grade-level content, we can both close gaps and help students find success with the rigorous work expected of them at their grade level. We utilize the Bridges intervention curriculum to support students across all tiers of support.

Bridges offers targeted supplemental instruction that aligns with core mathematical curricula, providing essential support to students whose instructional needs are not met through the Eureka curriculum alone. Bridges' detailed lesson plans align with the concrete-pictorial-abstract continuum utilized in Eureka and focus on building conceptual understanding.

Even the most skilled teachers will not reach 100% mastery with every objective they teach. Responsive reteaching seeks to address precise misconceptions so that students can increase their proficiency with concepts in their journey towards grade-level mastery. Effective responsive reteaching is data-informed and follows analysis of an assessment, such as a topic quiz or module assessment, to both identify students who require additional support and specific misconceptions that need to be addressed. It is most often taught in a small-group setting but can be taught to a whole-group, as indicated by data.

Responsive reteaching is not simply reteaching a lesson in the same way it was initially presented – to effectively reteach or remediate a misconception, content must be taught in a different way. The most common lesson model for responsive reteaching is a teacher model followed by a gradual release towards independent practice. All responsive reteach lessons should end with some sort of formative assessment to help teachers determine if student mastery increased as a result of their instruction.

## INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING AND PREPARATION

The need for solid planning and intellectual preparation is especially important to ensure that teachers leverage the interconnectedness of the CA CCSSM Practice and Content Standards. As described in Section A above, our teachers and School Leaders are provided with many resources to help them effectively plan and execute their mathematics instruction. These include:

- Scope and Sequence Map: This is a curriculum map that identifies the key practice and content standards, skills, and concepts to be taught throughout the year as well as the assessments to be used to track and evaluate progress.
- Intellectual Preparation Resources: All school leaders and teachers are provided with guidance on strong intellectual preparation, including lesson planning checklists, exemplar intellectual prep, and module launch meeting agendas.
- Curriculum-Specific Resources: All teachers have access to Eureka Math's vast suite of resources to support understanding of content at a lesson and module level.

Samples of our preparation materials are attached as Appendix 4.

### SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION

# **INTEGRATED CONTENT INSTRUCTION**

At Rocketship, we have three main learning spaces: the Humanities classroom, the STEM classroom, and the Learning Lab. As further described above, the Humanities classroom is where we teach ELA/Literacy and social studies. The STEM classroom is where we teach mathematics and science. The Learning Lab, further described below, is where students receive targeted interventions, a variety of enrichments, and engage with hands on centers and online learning programs.

"Content instruction" describes the subject matter that students are learning about. Our primary goals for content instruction are to provide students with exposure to a wide breadth of science and social studies topics, build skills and competencies around learning investigations, foster curiosity in various types of content, and provide opportunities for students to continually practice and utilize knowledge.

Because the CCSS calls for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects to be integrated into K-5 reading literacy instruction, our instructional framework is rooted in integration, with science and social studies content appearing in not only reading but also in writing, mathematics, arts, and language instruction.

Our content instruction contains four main components.

**Skills and competencies.** We teach science and social studies skills that can be applied to various subject matter at any time (e.g., recording observations, reading maps, using timelines). We generally try to frontload skills and competencies related to our content instruction at the beginning of the school year so that students have the opportunity to apply them in an increasingly sophisticated manner.

**General content exposure.** As described above, we aim to expose our students to a wide variety of science and social studies content to bolster curiosity and broaden their horizons in an authentic way. This is often done through reading nonfiction text, which (as described in Section A above) is a key emphasis of the CCSS.

**Explicit vocabulary instruction.** Consistent with the goals of the English Language Development standards to authentically expose students to academic vocabulary, we teach students vocabulary during our instructional blocks. For example, teachers will select domain-specific Tier 2 and Tier 3 words that are reviewed at the beginning of every reading comprehension lesson.

**Projects and investigations.** We provide students with opportunities to conduct research, do projects, and make observations while learning new content and applying learned skills. This can occur during either the Literacy or Mathematics block, as well as through hands-on projects such as Lego Robotics in the Learning Lab.

Our content instruction model requires a high degree of communication and collaboration among classroom teachers and instructional staff, for which our rotational model and professional development structure (further described below) are well suited. We strive to ensure that classrooms are aligned on the various skills and content being taught in science, social studies, and beyond. We also routinely analyze performance data across all content areas to plan and evaluate our instruction and ensure that instruction progresses fluidly through grade levels.

# **SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION**

Our Social Studies instruction is designed to provide students with an understanding of historical, cultural, and societal concepts that align with the National Council for Social Studies ("NCSS") standards. The units emphasize the development of civic competence through the study of social studies strands such as history, geography, and economics.

Additionally, our Social Studies materials are designed to build upon students' knowledge progressively over time. Here is a snapshot of the key topics that are covered across the grades and how they evolve over time:

- In **Kindergarten**, students are introduced basic concepts of family and community life, setting the foundation for understanding more complex societal structures.
- In **First Grade**, students expand their idea of community by examining everyday life in different historical and cultural contexts.
- In **Second Grade**, students explore communities of early America in order to better understand the importance of civic engagement and personal responsibility.
- In **Third Grade**, students focus on significant historical changes and continuities in America by exploring Colonial times.
- In **Fourth Grade**, students broaden their understanding of history, geography, and economics by exploring topics such as the Founding Documents and Westward Expansion.
- In **Fifth Grade**, students deepen their historical knowledge by focusing on a pivotal event, Juneteenth, that highlights the complexities of freedom, citizenship, and civil rights.

Overall, our Social Studies instruction is aligned with the NCSS standards, ensuring that students develop a robust understanding of history, culture, civics, and geography. By building on their knowledge over time, students are able to better understand their community, country, and world – which is essential in preparing them to be informed and engaged citizens.

## **SCIENCE INSTRUCTION**

**NGSS-Aligned Instruction.** At Rocketship, we are continuing to monitor and participate in the CDE's NGSS Implementation Plan, which addresses how the CDE, schools, and community stakeholders can collaboratively work to actualize the NGSS in California classrooms.

We have participated in meetings, trainings, and workshops and developed teaching and coaching tools for NGSS-aligned instruction. We use resources that are available on the CA NGSS Digital Center, research best practices, and use high-quality sample CA NGSS-aligned assessment resources.

**Components of Rocketship Science Instruction.** Science instruction is an integral component of our model both in and out of the STEM block. We build an NGSS-aligned science unit into the STEM scope and sequence, along with including weekly science instruction in students' enrichment rotation. We also administer NGSS-aligned benchmark assessments twice a year for grades 3-5.

Our science instruction is dually focused on building content knowledge and schema, as well as using strategies to support language acquisition. We provide opportunities for hands-on experiments, supported by the standards-aligned STEMscopes curriculum. Our units encompass the three Disciplinary Core Ideas of the NGSS:

- 1. <u>Physical Sciences.</u> Our instruction includes grade-appropriate lessons in the NGSS focus areas of motion and stability, waves and their application in technologies, and matter and its interactions.
- 2. <u>Life Sciences.</u> Our instruction includes grade-appropriate lessons in the NGSS focus areas of molecules and organisms, heredity (inheritance of traits), ecosystems, and biological evolution.

3. <u>Earth Sciences.</u> Our instruction includes grade-appropriate lessons in the NGSS focus areas of earth's systems, earth's place in the universe, and the effects of global activity on the earth.

As described above, science instruction is also integrated into our Humanities and STEM blocks to ensure that students are having an authentic and meaningful experience with the content they are learning.

Specifically, the science unit taught by STEM teachers covers grade level content in a similar structure to enrichment, however two key differences are allow instruction in the STEM science unit to go into greater depth, due to:

- **Increased in minutes in each block:** while science in enrichment will typically have a maximum of 45 minutes, the STEM block will have a minimum of 60 minutes.
- Increased frequency of lessons: since the science unit and lessons will be taught *in place of daily math lessons*, there will be new learning and exploration daily as opposed to 1-2x a week in enrichment.

#### ARTS AND ENRICHMENT

Our instructional program incorporates a number of enrichment opportunities for our Rocketeers.

We have a strong focus on wellness, and as such we will aim to align our Enrichment Program to incorporate physical activity. We will administer the Physical Fitness Test ("**PFT**") to our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Each Rocketship school has at least two enrichment programs. We hire enrichment instructors who have demonstrated expertise and interest in a specific enrichment content area. Currently, RSK offers enrichment courses including athletics, STEAM, art, and hands-on science. Students rotate through these courses throughout the school year to ensure that students can delve into the units in a robust and meaningful way and get to know the instructors better. RSK's bell schedule is attached as Appendix 6.

Where relevant, our instructors strive to align their curriculum with the California Visual Performing Arts framework. This framework provides guiding principles, planning and implementation strategies, curriculum development, assessment resources, and professional development for instruction in dance, music, theater, and the visual arts. As with all members of our instructional staff, our enrichment instructors receive regular coaching, training, and professional development. We continually strive to ensure that all enrichment content is rigorous, standards-aligned, and data-driven.

### SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

We believe that students must master both academic and critical life skills to truly be successful participants in and contributors to society. To this end, our instructional program includes a social-emotional learning curriculum as well as other initiatives to help students develop into confident, competent, self-motivated, and productive lifelong learners. We look to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning ("CASEL") to define and describe our intentions when developing programs and measuring students' social-emotional development, the CASEL Framework identifies 5 competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Our daily schedule reflects our value of Social Emotional Learning as every student begins their day with a Community Meeting that blends relationship-building elements with an SEL lesson that includes prosocial skills instruction and highlights our core values: respect, responsibility,

persistence, empathy, and curiosity. Our Tier 1 SEL Curriculum is designed with consideration for the CASEL framework, our Rocketship core values, and culturally responsive pedagogy.

#### **CORE VALUES**

At every Rocketship campus, we teach four core values— respect, responsibility, persistence, and empathy. Additionally, each school chooses a fifth core value of its own. RSK's fifth core value is "curiosity."

Core values form the basis of our behavioral instruction and management systems. At the beginning of the school year, teachers explicitly teach core values lessons in which they demonstrate what different core values look like in action. Every school also has its own system to promote/incentivize the core values, such as providing students with Positive Behaviorial Intervention and Supports ("PBIS") store stickers for their trackers that are aligned to academics and behaviors, which can be redeemed at the school store.

#### LAUNCH

Each Rocketship campus begins the school day with Launch, which is a period of time for the whole school to come together around some school wide foci. This usually includes one of the core values (i.e., a "core value of the month"). During Launch, the school may also promote a particular successful student habit, such as preparedness, going above and beyond, or persisting through a challenge. Schools may also teach a new feature of an incentive or behavior management system. Launch is also a time to promote school wide academic progress. School leaders may teach everyone a word or idiom of the day or celebrate progress toward achievement goals. Finally, schools may use Launch time to foster school culture and pride and student engagement. The whole school, including the staff, may learn a song or a dance together or celebrate a particular student or classroom's recent accomplishment.

#### POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

**PBIS** is our framework for creating learning environments that are consistent, predictable, positive, and safe. We believe that students need to be taught how to behave, and struggling students must be taught replacement behaviors.

Each school has a PBIS Team comprised of a wide cross-section of staff members, including teachers, school leaders, and operational and support staff members.

## **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL CURRICULUM**

Our SEL approach also draws upon resources from multiple research-based curriculum including RULER, Zones of Regulation, and the Kimochis curriculum. Along with our SEL lessons, we have developed a community meeting framework for teachers to ensure there are relationship building opportunities for students to connect, disengage stress, make commitments, and unite as a community.

Kimochis (Grades TK-2). The Kimochis Social-Emotional Learning curriculum is a yearlong, structured program that uses engaging characters, emotional vocabulary, and communication tools to help students build self-awareness, empathy, and positive relationship skills. Organized into thematic units—such as Respect and Inclusion, Mindfulness, Kindness and Friendship, and Responsibility—the curriculum introduces weekly "I can..." statements, character-driven lessons, and feelings-based activities that align with PBIS goals. Through modeling, guided practice, and reflection, students learn to identify and

express emotions, use respectful communication strategies, resolve conflicts, and make mindful choices that support a caring, inclusive classroom community.

The Shortest Distance (Grades 3-5). The Shortest Distance Curriculum ("SDC") is our own SEL curriculum which seeks to inspire crucial conversations, skills development, and storytelling in classrooms. The curriculum title is inspired by the words of Anthody de Mello, "...the shortest distance between a human being and truth is a story." By centering stories, the curriculum builds from the research-base of developmental bibliotherapy and culturally responsive pedagogy, creating an opportunity for students to see themselves and diverse community members represented in stories as they consider themselves and their world. The Shortest Distance Curriculum provides teachers with daily lessons which are presented on slides and embedded into a daily community meeting structure which also includes relationship building activities. While some curricula provide suggested activities or skills-based lessons, SDC relies on storytelling and provides guidance for teachers to lead meaningful yet brief (10-15 minutes) lessons. The slides allow teachers to provide visuals and share texts with students, additionally this format promotes a high level of fidelity to the curriculum plan (as teachers are cued and prompted to follow the lesson sequence daily through the use of the slide decks. Over the course of the week students closely listen to a text, which is read aloud. The story pairs with a weekly "commitment" or objective statement and these weekly lessons are anchored in multi-week units themed around Rocketship core values and practices such as inclusion, respect, kindness, responsibility, persistence, and mindfulness.

## PERSONALIZED INSTRUCTION

"Personalized instruction" describes our overall approach to serving our Rocketeers, where we strive to give every student the right level of academic support at the right time through the right instructional method. We use a blended learning approach to further our goal of personalized instruction, in which we strategically leverage whole-group classroom instruction and activities, small-group instruction and activities, targeted customized interventions, and our suite of online learning programs. Across all content areas, teachers differentiate instruction based on a variety of assessment data. (For more information on how we use data to drive instruction, please see below.) Students may work individually or in small groups with the classroom teacher, Individualized Learning Specialist ("ILS"), or other service providers to address any unique needs, gaps, or learning styles.

## **LEARNING LAB**

As our overall approach to providing each student with the most customized and appropriate instruction for their unique needs, personalized learning inherently occurs throughout the entire school day. To further maximize this targeted approach, we have also set aside a specific block during each school day – the Learning Lab – to support students' individual learning needs and supplement the high-quality instruction occurring in our classrooms.

The Learning Lab is designed to be an extension of the classroom that provides valuable small-group and collaborative learning and instructional opportunities. We use this space for students to engage in age appropriate hands-on activities such as Developmental Play (TK/Kindergarten) and Lego Robotics (1st-5th grade) that target the 21st century skills of collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. During this block, some students may also work with an interventionist, called an Individualized Learning Specialist, to refine a particular skill, concept, or strategy. Students may also engage in independent leveled reading. Enrichment may also be taught in the Learning Lab block. Finally, this space may be used for students to supplement their learning through Online Learning Programs ("OLP"), further described below.

The Learning Lab is staffed by ILSs or classroom teachers and enrichment specialists, and it is closely supervised by our School Leaders (the Principal and Assistant Principals). The School Leaders oversee the managerial aspects (i.e. hiring ILSs and enrichment teachers, monitoring student behavior, selecting appropriate OLPs, designing and laying out the learning space). They also play a vital role in ensuring the substantive quality of the education that occurs in the Learning Lab. Our School Leaders also serve as coaches to the ILSs. They train our ILSs to use pre-selected, evidence-based intervention curricula to respond to individual student needs and engage in regular progress-monitoring of each ILS to identify areas for additional training or other supports. Along with our classroom teachers, our School Leaders also work with the ILSs to collect and analyze data from in-person and online interventions to help design personalized support for our Rocketeers. ILSs also receive the same support and professional development as classroom teachers on campus.

In addition to playing a vital role in the Learning Lab, our ILSs have invaluable short and long term benefits for our students and their families. Our ILSs often come from the communities that we serve and thus bring exceedingly important perspective into the Charter School. We strive to have a staff body comprised of diverse backgrounds and experiences, and our ILSs are an integral part of our make-up. Our ILS model is also intended as a potential pipeline for bringing high-quality certified instructors into our classrooms. We provide support to ILSs who are interested in obtaining a teaching credential by helping them navigate credentialing requirements, teacher preparation programs, and degree programs. By investing in ILS development and supporting ILS training, we are hoping to provide our schools with a steady supply of dedicated teachers who are well-prepared, diverse, and deeply connected to the communities we serve.

For more details on the responsibilities and qualifications for various staff roles at Rocketship, please see Element E below.

## ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAMS

As mentioned above, part of our blended learning approach to personalized instruction includes the purposeful use of adaptive technology through OLPs. OLPs deliver many benefits, including:

- Personalized instruction delivered on a constant, reliable basis. While we believe that effective
  instructors are at the heart of effective instruction, the reality is that no single teacher can reach
  all learners at every minute. OLPs broaden the swath of students that we can effectively reach to
  give students additional opportunities to practice content they have learned in the classroom.
  This is especially critical to us given that the student population that we serve often arrives at
  Rocketship achieving significantly below grade level.
- Basic skill remediation. Students must develop foundational knowledge in various content areas
  if they are going to successfully progress as learners. As with any classroom, our teachers' time is
  limited. Allowing some of the remedial work to occur through reliable online programs (our
  selection process is further described below) enables students to build the foundations they
  need while freeing up teachers to focus their time on higher-level instruction.
- Student accountability, motivation, and engagement. Through tracking features of our various OLPs, students can assume responsibility for their own progress toward individualized learning goals.
- Data analysis. Our OLPs are a valuable data resource. The programs consistently generate a
  variety of data for our teachers and school leaders to analyze while planning and personalizing
  instruction.

• Real-time teaching. Many of our OLPs are designed to adjust content in real-time based on students' individual progress to keep students working on the most appropriate material and advancing along their individualized learning pathways.

Each OLP that we introduce to our suite undergoes a rigorous selection and piloting process to ensure that it meets our well-defined criteria. We generally look for programs that maximize adaptability, assignability, and analytics.

**Adaptability.** A program is adaptive if it automatically senses a student's gap in understanding or mastery of a skill and systematically changes the pace or lessons. Often, programs will assess student understanding through instructional lessons or intermittent mini-tests, adjusting as necessary to focus on that individual student. While our OLPs are always subject to change to reflect the latest advances in adaptive technology, our current programs that assess regularly in this fashion include Amplify Boost, Amira, Lexia English, Reflex and IXL. Through these intelligent adaptive systems, students focus on their own personalized levels, working on the skills that they need to practice most.

**Assignability.** Additionally, we leverage programs that allow for in-program assignability. Rather than giving online programs 100% control over the online content that students engage in, we balance both online assessment systems as well as teacher input. Some of our current programs, including Zearn, allow teachers to assign lessons and reorder objectives. All programs allow customization down to the individual student, allowing teachers to modify content below and above grade level as appropriate for each student. Through this balance of integrated adaptive assessments and teacher input based on other assessments, we can ensure that the programs truly match student needs, both inside and outside of the programs.

**Analytics.** The last, arguably most important, feature that we utilize in our online learning programs is the teacher analytics. These dashboards give teachers real-time data on how students are performing. They break down assessments, individual lessons and overall usage, allowing teachers to adjust both online and in-class programming. Teachers may utilize assignability features to assign specific lessons or domains of instruction or even adjust the order of objectives that classes encounter. Through these insights, teachers can ensure our programs are highly focused and continually benefiting student outcomes.

A chart displaying the various features of our current OLPs is attached as Appendix 7. As described above, students may engage with OLPs during any of the instructional blocks, including Humanities, STEM, and the Learning Lab.

## CALENDAR AND INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES

## **EXTENDED LEARNING TIME**

RSK will have at least 175 days of instruction, barring emergency school closure(s), and for each fiscal year offer, at a minimum, the following number of minutes of instruction:

- to pupils in TK and kindergarten, 36,000 minutes.
- to pupils in grades 1-3, inclusive, 50,400 minutes.
- to pupils in grades 4-5, inclusive, 54,000 minutes.

We expect a significant number of our students to arrive at Rocketship below grade level, and so we aim to provide students with maximal instructional time to make the progress that they need to catch up. We will typically offer the same or greater number of instructional days as the District. We also operate on an extended school day. School runs from approximately 7:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. (varies slightly depending on grade level).

The number of annual instructional minutes that we offer for all grades will meet or exceed the state requirements (described above and found in Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)). Table 18 below delineates subject areas and approximate time per grade level, but we reserve the right to adjust students' instructional minutes in each subject and learning space based on students' personalized learning needs.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> We define instructional minute as minutes spent under the immediate supervision and control of a certificated employee (Education Code Section 47612.5(e).

Table 18 - Rocketship Daily Minutes

	Humanitie s	STEM	Launch/ Social-Emotional Learning	Total Daily Instructional Minutes	Learning Lab	Enrichment	Total Daily Minutes
T K	115	70	50 + 15 T-led recess	245	25	40	365
K	170	80	50	300	45-50	40-45	445
1	170	90	45-50	305	35	45	450
2	170	90	45	305	40	45	450
3	180	90	45	315	40-45	45-50	465
4	180	90	45	315	35	55	465
5	180	90	45	315	35	55	465

A sample full day RSK bell schedule is attached as Appendix 6.

#### **ROTATIONAL MODEL**

Our unique rotational model allows students to receive instruction in core academic subjects from specialized teachers. Students will be divided into cohorts in which they rotate to various classes throughout the day. For example, a kindergarten cohort may begin their day in the Humanities block and receive instruction from a credentialed teacher who focuses on Humanities instruction. Students may also receive social studies content instruction during this time, as further described above. At the same time, a second cohort of kindergarteners will be receiving instruction from a second credentialed teacher in a separate Humanities classroom, also for 170 minutes. The third cohort of students will be in their STEM block with a third credentialed teacher who focuses on mathematics and science instruction. This cohort will spend 80 minutes in this class. The final cohort will be in the Learning Lab, overseen by a School Leader and run by an ILS, Humanities, or STEM teacher. After 85 minutes, the third and fourth cohorts switch classroom spaces. This completes the students' first half of the day.

The entire grade level will then rotate. The first and second cohorts will move to either the STEM block or the Learning Lab, and swap after 80 minutes. The third and fourth cohorts will move to the two Humanities classrooms and receive 170 minutes of Humanities instruction.<sup>13</sup>

All of our teachers hold a multiple subject credential or permit (or other document required by the CTC for their certificated assignment) and will teach multiple subjects. However, as described above, each teacher "specializes" in particular instructional areas. Specialization allows our teachers to hone their skills and develop a profound expertise in a focused instructional area, which we believe is especially important in light of the shift to the increasingly rigorous CCSS. Furthermore, specialization encourages -

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> This breakdown is meant as an illustration. Depending on our enrollment, staffing, and bell schedule, the numbers may be slightly different at the Charter School.

indeed, necessitates - collaboration across grade levels. Not only does such collaboration require our teachers to be constantly thinking about the inherent multidimensional nature of the content that they teach, but it also ensures that each student will have multiple educators' eyes monitoring and investing in their progress.

## DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION

Our instructional program is profoundly data-driven. We provide constant opportunities for comprehensive and systematic assessment, analysis, goal-setting, progress monitoring, and data tracking.

### **ASSESSMENT**

We use an assortment of assessments to measure students' achievement levels. These include the NWEA MAP assessment, which allows us to measure our students' proficiency against national norms for CCSS performance, and the DIBELS assessment developed by the University of Oregon, which provides teachers with a granular breakdown of students' reading ability in terms of "fundamental skills" and general comprehension skills. We also administer assessments under the CAASPP as well as the state-mandated English language assessments.

We also conduct additional bi-monthly standards-aligned assessments of each student in reading, writing, and math. These assessments drive decisions about whether students need additional classroom support or tutoring. They also allow us to progress-monitor our students throughout the year in a way that annual assessments do not.

#### **ANALYSIS**

Assessment data provides many opportunities to analyze and reflect on both student and teacher progress and gaps. We are deeply committed to data analysis throughout the school year.

Following administration of our major interim assessments, Rocketship holds Data Days. These are full days of professional development for teachers, assistant principals, and the principal to take a deep dive into the analysis of the data.

A key component of these data days is the identification of overall positive trends as well as any challenges and/or achievement gaps among students. This exercise then leads the teacher to begin to identify specific "focus" students within the groups where we are not yet seeing the growth we know is possible. After identifying three to five students, the teacher begins to dig deeper and identify specific instructional areas that have been challenging for these students. The teacher then sets academic goals for these students to be accomplished within the next four weeks and eight weeks. The teacher then begins to develop an instructional plan for these specific students, which is intended to ensure that the student will realize the goals that have been set for them in the next four to eight weeks. The plan is not meant to be limited to these specific students. We expect teachers to use it to guide instruction for all students facing similar challenges. Thus, by focusing in-depth on focus students, the modified instruction should be able to positively impact the student achievement of all students within this group. Sample materials from a Data Day are attached as Appendix 8.

## **GOAL SETTING AND PROGRESS**

After teachers analyze the data from diagnostic interim assessments during Data Days, students, teachers, and parents work together in a variety of ways to set and/or revisit goals to help ensure that all students are on track to make the requisite growth during the school year.

**Conferences.** Students review and discuss individual progress after each interim assessment period. Teachers prepare and review data summaries with students to identify places in which performance is on track to achieve established goals and areas in which improvements are needed. Teachers also communicate with parents (via parent/teacher conference, phone calls home, e-mails, notes in backpacks, home visits, and other mechanisms as needed) about student goals. Additionally, teachers facilitate in-person family conferences three times a year to discuss student progress and share resources that families can use at home with their students.

**Classroom Tracking.** Each classroom or grade-level publicly tracks a number of class-based and individual goals, including progress toward ELA/Literacy and mathematics benchmarks, as well as other measures such as sight word recognition, and letter/sound mastery. Each teacher defines their specific data-tracker approach, but all Rocketship classrooms display individual student goals and progress to student goals. For example, some classrooms use frogs that jump from lily-pad to lily-pad; others use "rocket ships" to align with school mascots. (See Appendix 9 for photos of classroom goal trackers.)

Online Learning Programs. Each student has individualized Online Learning Program goals for the week, which focus on individual progress during computer-based learning time. Students track progress on an internally created data platform called JetPacked. In addition to helping students build a habit of showing quality work, goal tracking helps teachers and the Individualized Learning Specialists hold students accountable for their independent work. JetPacked helps to build communication between classroom teachers, ILSs, students and parents. Parents receive biweekly updates on Mondays and Thursdays with their child's goals for the week and progress towards those goals. A parent guide with instructions for OLP notification signup in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese is Appendix 10; See also Appendix 11 for a sample parent update message.)

**School wide Recognition.** Outside of the classrooms, our entire school celebrates progress toward goals as well. Every week during the Rocketship Launch time (further described in Section F above), we celebrate achievements and give out awards based on growth and mastery. For example, we may award Reading Capes to the classes with the highest percent of students who met their reading minutes on one of our Literacy OLPs (e.g., Amplify Boost), or we may award "Math Medals" to the class who demonstrated the greatest proficiency on a recent formative assessment.

Furthermore, we highlight the connection between individualized goal setting and success in college by focusing on college readiness from the first day our students enter our schools. Our hallways are lined with college banners, and each student belongs to a homeroom named for a college mascot (e.g., "Bears" for UC Berkeley). Community members speak to students about college and broader experiences related to college attendance. Students and parents participate jointly in college visits to experience the excitement and diversity of a college campus. As a result, all students believe and expect that they will go to college. See Appendix 12, picture of college banners in a Rocketship hallway.

**Report Cards.** Students' progress is shared with parents through CCSS-aligned report cards that are shared with parents online as well as printed out for parent conferences which occur at least three times annually. (See Appendix 13 for a sample report card.)

### **DATA TRACKING TOOLS**

We use various tools to track and manage data, several of which are described below.<sup>14</sup>

**EdCite.** The EdCite platform provides educators with easy access to assessment items, and supports the scoring and data capture of assessments. Through EdCite, educators can administer standards-aligned assessment questions to measure the progress of their students and modify their approach as needed.

**Data Warehouse/Dashboards.** Rocketship's data warehouse is used to collect and organize student achievement, enrollment, and attendance data. The data warehouse incorporates data from a broad set of data systems across the organization and various external platforms which the Rocketship Analytics team uses to build reports, visualizations, and dashboards for educators and school leaders. Most reports are built in Tableau, a visual analytics platform, to allow educators to access and understand the needs of their students in real time. Through the use of data dashboards, a teacher can quickly gain an understanding of which students have mastered a particular standard and the tool provides educators with both high-level and detailed comparisons of student achievement. Comparisons can be made by school, by grade, and by standard.

Approximately every four to six weeks, our teachers reassess to show student progress, as further described in Section XI.B above. To facilitate the identification of students in need of more focused support, teachers can use the data dashboards to create data displays for each class that show which students fall into each achievement category.

#### SERVING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF STUDENTS

#### AT-PROMISE STUDENTS

# MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS: OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

Multi-Tiered System of Supports ("MTSS") is a data-based instruction and intervention model designed to efficiently identify at-promise and academically low-achieving students, match them with appropriate, evidence-based interventions, and guide teams in engaging in a clear problem-solving process to ensure that every student receives the support they need in order to achieve grade level expectations. According to the National Center for Response to Intervention, a comprehensive MTSS/RtI model contains four essential components:

- 1. Universal Screening: a systematic process for identifying a subset of students from the entire student population who are struggling academically and/or behaviorally, and are at-risk of negative short- or long-term outcomes
- 2. Multi-Level Prevention System: the service delivery model of providing a graduate sequence of intensifying interventions in order to match services to student need
- 3. Ongoing Progress Monitoring: the continual monitoring (using research-based assessment methods) of the ongoing progress of students participating in intervention, in order to assess the effectiveness of interventions for specific students and overall
- Data-Based Decision Making: the utilization of student progress monitoring data to make decisions whether to intensify, modify, keep in place, or remove particular interventions or supports.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> As with all aspects of our instructional program, we constantly monitor development in data analysis tools. With ever-increasing sophistication of education technology, we strive to keep abreast of advances that may lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness. We may at times alter our data analysis tools and will notify our District if we plan any changes that may be sufficiently significant to require the need for a material revision to our charter.

In order to support the MTSS process, we have ensured that we are implementing evidence-based interventions and supports at each level of support. In addition, we systematically monitor the implementation of interventions in order to ensure that they are implemented as intended to enable appropriate and legally defensible decision-making. Finally, we employ a structured problem-solving process that guides the school team's behavior in: identifying the problem, analyzing the problem, developing a plan of action, implementing the plan, and evaluating the outcome of the plan.

When implemented in accordance with these guiding principles, MTSS has many potential benefits for students from diverse economic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. This model promises to provide equitable access to standards-based curricula for all students and reduce over-identification of students with learning difficulties, which is a longstanding problem that is especially predominant among low-income and culturally diverse populations. In the article *Cultural Considerations with Response to Intervention Models*, Klinger and Edwards state that Rtl "...has dramatic implications for culturally and linguistically diverse students who historically have been disproportionately overrepresented in special education programs...Rtl models hold promises for preventing academic failure by providing support for culturally and linguistically diverse students before they underachieve." (pg.108).

# MTSS AND THE SPECIAL EDUCATION IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

The IDEA governs the identification, evaluation, and implementation of special education services. Interventions within the general education program shall be implemented before referral for a special education evaluation. (Education Code Section 56303). Rocketship also recognizes the requirement to proceed without delay in the initiation of an evaluation when the Charter School has reason to suspect that a child has a disability. For that reason, even when a formal evaluation of a student is in process, academic and/or behavioral interventions are planned and implemented in order to support the student while the evaluation is completed.

Rocketship also responds formally to all parent and staff requests for special education evaluation in accordance with state and Special Education Local Plan Area ("SELPA") guidelines and regulations. If a verbal request for special education evaluation is made by a parent or staff member, the receiving staff member assists the parent in putting their request in writing. Written requests are day and time stamped by the receiving staff member and immediately delivered to the special education team, including a special education teacher, a school leader and a school psychologist. The Charter School team then schedules a formal Student Success Team ("SST") meeting, which includes the parent, to respond to the formal request for evaluation. During that meeting, if it is determined that there is reason to suspect the child may have a disability, an assessment plan is drafted and provided to the parent. Parents will receive a written Assessment Plan within 15 days. Parents will be given at least 15 days to provide consent. If the parent provides consent to proceed with the evaluation, the special education team completes the evaluation and schedules an Individualized Education Program ("IEP") meeting to discuss the results, including a recommendation for eligibility for special education services, within 60 days of the receipt of written consent to Assessment Plans and Prior Written Notice documents are always provided to parents in their primary language, and are accompanied by a current copy of the SELPA's Procedural Rights and Safeguards.

### MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT AT ROCKETSHIP

Rocketship has adopted an MTSS framework to serve our at-promise students. Our model encompasses each of the essential MTSS components detailed above.

**Universal Screening.** Rocketship utilizes a "multiple gating" process in our approach to universal screening. Multiple gating refers to the process of using the results from a variety of universal screening tools in order to ensure all students who are struggling academically or behaviorally are identified in a timely manner. For academics, our first screen is our STEP assessment. Students who fall below a certain cut point on each of these assessments are further screened using a Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) in order to further pinpoint the specific area of academic deficit. Once that area of deficit is identified, further diagnostics are administered in order to identify specific intervention starting points for each student. For social-emotional and behavior, we use an evidence-based universal screener, the Student Risk Screening Scale. It measures both internalizing and externalizing areas of a student's social-emotional and behavioral competencies.

**Multiple Tiers of Support.** Rocketship uses a three-tiered model to organize our instructional and social-emotional supports for all students.

- Tier 1- General Classroom Instruction: All Rocketship students participate in and benefit from the instruction and support that takes place at the Tier 1 level. Examples of academic supports that take place at the Tier 1 level include homogenous guided reading groups in the ELA classroom, CCSS-aligned units in the math classroom, and adaptive online learning programs in the learning lab. Examples of behavioral and social-emotional supports that occur at the Tier 1 level include school wide positively stated behavior expectations, access to a school wide incentive system, and social-emotional curricula that are implemented as a component of our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports model.
- <u>Tier 2- Supplemental, Small Group Supports:</u> Even in the best of instructional models, some students will require additional supports in order to reach grade level proficiency. At Rocketship, we have a number of evidence-based interventions that are delivered in a small group setting to students at the Tier 2 level, including but not limited to small group phonics and fluency intervention in the learning lab and small group behavior interventions (such as small group counseling and Check-in/Check-out).
- Tier 3- Intensive, Individualized Supports: Students who don't respond favorably to supports at the Tier 1 and Tier 2 levels may be referred for a more intensive level of intervention. Intervention at the Tier 3 level is more targeted and more individualized. At Rocketship, we may use an alternative curriculum which is more specifically focused on an area of skill deficit (for example, Seeing Stars, and Lindamood Bell curriculum that addresses phonemic awareness), and our interventions will also be more specifically targeted to the individual student (for example, developing and implementing an individualized behavior intervention plan). At the Tier 3 level, we may also make a referral further assessment and evaluation to determine if the student is presenting with a disability that requires special education services and supports.

**Evidence-Based Interventions.** Rocketship implements a comprehensive set of evidence-based interventions designed to support students across all tiers of academic and behavioral needs. These interventions are grounded in research and tailored to address both learning and social-emotional development.

 Academic Interventions: Structured, sequential instruction focused on foundational math and literacy skills, including phonics and phonemic awareness; targeted fluency development routines; as well as evidence-based strategies to enhance reading comprehension and numerical reasoning.  Behavioral and Social-Emotional Interventions: Support systems may include structured daily check-ins, individualized counseling, data-informed behavior assessments, and the development and implementation of positive behavior support plans.

**Ongoing Progress Monitoring.** Rocketship utilizes a variety of tools to conduct ongoing progress monitoring of students participating in interventions. Students participating in Tier 2 and Tier 3 academic intervention participate in weekly progress monitoring activities using curriculum-based measurements. The progress of students participating in Check-in/Check-out ("CICO") is tracked daily by CICO coordinators. For our students who have a behavior intervention plan, we regularly progress monitor the frequency and duration of key student behaviors.

**Data-Based Decision Making.** Rocketship's four to six week data cycles support the data-based decision making component of our MTSS model. On data days, school staff analyze the progress monitoring data of students who have participated in intervention in order to determine whether to continue, modify, or discontinue the intervention for each individual student. We have developed a number of protocols and structures to support school staff in engaging in this problem-solving process, examples of which can be found in Rocketship's "Pre-Referral Handbook" (See Appendix 14).

**Treatment Integrity.** Rocketship Assistant Principals and Network Support staff conduct regular 'implementation fidelity' reviews of all staff conducting intervention using our evidence-based interventions. These reviews are not utilized for evaluation purposes; rather, they are designed to provide valuable feedback to intervention providers in order to ensure that intervention programs are being implemented according to their design.

**Problem-solving**. Rocketship uses a variety of structures to engage in the problem-solving component of the MTSS process. Our pre-referral process consists of Student Huddle meetings, wherein grade level teams and school leaders meet to discuss and plan supports for individual students, followed by formal SST meetings where more intensive and targeted supports can be planned. Rocketship's current "Pre-Referral Handbook" can be found in Appendix 14.

Transparency is an important component to the MTSS framework. We regularly communicate with parents throughout the entire process, beginning with a written notification that their child has been selected to participate in MTSS interventions.

## ACADEMICALLY HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

High-achieving students are those who score at least one grade level above on standardized tests or internal metrics for ELA/Literacy and/or Mathematics. These students benefit from the same practices that are helpful to our struggling students. Because our internal systems measure student gains every four to six weeks, we will be able to monitor our high-achievers to make sure that their gains continue and do not regress to class averages.

In addition to applying elements of our MTSS program to high-achieving students (e.g., guided reading groups, use of adaptive OLPs, regular progress-monitoring, and data-based decision making), we serve this population in a variety of ways, described below.

**Early Detection.** Rocketship will use internal assessment in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics to help us identify high-performing students within the first four to six weeks of school and monthly thereafter.

Frequent and ongoing assessment will ensure that we are meeting the needs of all students as they arise and tracking progress to ensure our strategies are supporting improved achievement.

**Differentiation.** Differentiation describes an instructional method where instruction styles, content, and materials are targeted at the specific needs and characteristics of individual or small groups of students. Teachers will use assessment and progress-monitoring data to plan enrichment activities with their high-performing student. These will occur both in whole-class and small-group lessons.

**Family Communication.** We will inform families as soon as we have assessed students' performance. Teachers may provide high-performing students with additional books and enrichment work to perform at home to increase their understanding of a particular subject area.

**Teacher Collaboration**. At least weekly, subject area teachers will gather to compare their student data, discuss students, and discuss instructional strategies, interventions and enrichment. This will be realized through a schedule that will allow the staff to have an early dismissal day one day a week and common planning time, further described above.

**Focused Instruction.** Rocketship's standard instructional approach is for teachers to plan their lessons with at least three groups of students broken out who are striving for different sub-goals in their development towards meeting the same overall grade-level standards. One such subgroup is students who are performing above grade level. All students, including high-performing students, will receive targeted small group Guided Reading instruction in Humanities. High-performing students may also participate in student-led literature circles and book clubs. In addition, our academic model allows for students to access material at their instructional level throughout the academic day. For example, students have access to a wide array of reading material, spanning many genres and reading levels, in our classroom libraries. Our STEM teachers also differentiate math centers, homework, and daily review exercises by difficulty level.

**Daily Enrichment.** The Learning Lab is an additional space where high-performing students can receive adaptive software and hands-on activities, such as Lego Robotics, that challenge them. We anticipate providing other activities to our high-achieving students during Learning Lab which let them examine the current grade-level concepts in more depth.

**Ongoing Assessment.** Data is gathered both through frequent real-time assessments performed in the subject areas and daily feedback given teachers from the online programs in the Learning Lab. Teachers will have the tools they need to track all of their students and make sure that students who began the year ahead are continuing to progress.

# SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

RSK will comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the IDEA, Section 504, the ADA, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights ("OCR"). Furthermore, RSK will comply with applicable District guidelines, and all California laws pertaining to special education students.

# **OVERVIEW**

Rocketship's commitment to ensuring equal access to opportunity for all, including students with diversity of learning, social emotional and behavioral needs. The mission of the Integrated Special Education ("ISE") department within Rocketship is to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free

and appropriate public education within the least restrictive environment. We partner as school and regional teams to ensure access, participation and success to the core curriculum, general education spaces and peers. For the ISE specific aims, this is accomplished through: individualized educational programming for all students with disabilities. We will accomplish this through several means: high quality direct services provided to students, strategic professional development of our ISE and general education staff members, and a consultation and coaching model that empowers classroom teachers, school leaders, and families to appropriately support each student's individualized education plan.

In order to fulfill this mission, Rocketship seeks to apply current, research with evidence based best practices to create Individualized Education Programs that support students with disabilities. We believe that all students are best served within an inclusive model, and our service delivery model is grounded in students first, family centered, and team-based decision making. We approach educational programming for our students from a positive, strength-based perspective. Our ISE staff members serve as teachers, coaches and consultants who empower key stakeholders to support the academic and social development of our students both within the classroom and in their communities. We believe that our families are our students' greatest advocates, and we strive to support them to advocate to the fullest for their child.

RSK intends to continue to operate as a Local Educational Agency ("LEA") for purposes of special education, as a LEA member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a). All of Rocketship's existing California charter schools are members of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA. A change in LEA status or SELPA membership shall not require a material revision of this charter.

As an LEA, RSK will be solely responsible and liable, in the same manner as a school district, for providing special education and related services. As an LEA for special education pursuant to 47641(a), Rocketship will assume full responsibility for providing special education and related services to eligible charter school students, in accordance with state and federal law. Rocketship agrees to follow policies and procedures of the SELPA in which it is a member and shall utilize SELPA information guidelines necessary to identify and serve students who qualify for special education. Rocketship agrees to collaborate with the SELPA to respond to inquiries and requests and provide access to information and records, as needed, and shall be responsible for maintaining confidentiality of students' records.

RSK strives to achieve a student population representative of the community which we are serving. Whether a child is eligible for special education services under IDEA, or is provided a plan under Section 504, they are considered with all others for enrollment at RSK. Disability or non-disability status is not a factor for enrollment or acceptance. Admission is based solely on capacity at the Charter School.

# **INTEGRATED SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**ISE Model.** At Rocketship Public Schools we serve all students. The core of our Integrated Special Education program is providing a continuum of supports and services for Rocketeers that is grounded in equitable access to rigorous instruction leading to gap-closing results.

We partner as regional leaders, school teams, and with our families to craft IEPs that are founded in meaningful inclusion and have individualized goals based on each student's academic, social emotional, and behavioral development needs. The core of our ISE Program is high-quality, rigorous, and inclusive instruction for the growth and absolute achievement of our Rocketeers. Special and general education teachers work in collaborative arrangements designed to bring appropriate instructional supports to each child in the

general school environment. Support is built on culturally relevant differentiation and instruction through universal access to content-driven curriculum.

Rocketship students are placed in general education classrooms and then provided flexible instructional opportunities that include large group, small group, and one-to-one instruction for those students with more significant needs. At Rocketship, we employ a variety of curricular and pedagogical options to maximize student learning in an array of teaching arrangements in environments that can be accessed by all learners, not just those with specific disabilities. In the Rocketship model, all teachers are responsible for all learners. Ongoing support develops the capacity of all teachers to teach to a diverse range of students' learning needs. A system of general and special education teachers proactively supporting students are better able to put into place effective interventions prior to student failure. In the following sections, please find a description of the continuum of our special education services.

**Differentiation within the General Education Program.** At Rocketship, students with disabilities are educated in the general education environment, alongside their neurotypical peers, to the greatest extent possible and appropriate for each individual student. In this model, it is essential that the general education program is scaffolded and differentiated to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Special education and general education staff closely collaborate in order to identify and design needed scaffolds and supports. Supports in the Tier 1 program vary by student and according to need, but may include:

- Accommodations based on a Universal Design for Learning framework
- Heterogenous small group reading instruction
- Modified homework and independent classwork
- Visual supports, such as visual schedules or visual behavior supports
- Assistive technology supports
- Testing accommodations
- Co-Teaching
- Sensory supports

We believe these supports benefit all learners, and the close collaboration between general and special education professionals to serve any student who has diverse learning needs will help us meet our goal of helping every student reach 1.5 years of growth in each grade.

**Specialized Academic Instruction.** Specialized academic instruction ("**SAI**") is provided to students for whom it is required in order to access and benefit from the educational program. SAI services are tailored to the individual needs of the student, and may be provided within the general education setting or in a pull-out setting, in a small group or individually. All SAI services are fully described in the IEP and are provided by or under the supervision of credentialed special education staff. At Rocketship, we use a suite of research and evidence-based curricula to support the implementation of SAI services, although each child's program is individualized based on their identified needs. At Rocketship, Education Specialists also work with qualified paraprofessionals to provide special education services. The paraprofessional works under the direction of the Education Specialist to provide additional instructional support and services to identified students.

**Related Services.** Rocketship provides related services, including but not limited to speech and language services, occupational therapy services, physical therapy services, deaf and hard of hearing, vision, orientation and mobility, and adaptive physical education as needed to meet eligible students' IEP needs.

The services are provided by certified or licensed professional staff. Service delivery ranges in time and intensity based on the needs of the students as identified in the IEP. All services are drafted and proposed in the IEP, agreed to, and finalized fully executed by the ISE staff with the assistance of the general education staff and administration with only qualified, trained and knowledgeable personnel all based on the needs of the student population.

Rocketship has directly hired most of its related service providers, including speech language pathologists, school psychologists, occupational therapists, and adaptive physical education providers. Other low incidence related services, including vision services and deaf/hard of hearing services are provided by contracted, certified Non-Public Agency ("NPA") providers. In accordance with SELPA guidelines, Rocketship develops a Master Contract and Individual Service Agreements for all services provided by NPAs.

**Referral to Non-public School.** In some exceptional cases, when a student may require a placement in a more restrictive setting, the IEP team will consider a referral to a non-public school. If a parent agrees to and or request placement for a student at a non-public school, private school or residential facility, Rocketship will immediately inform the SELPA.

**Educationally Related Mental Health Services.** As an LEA for the purposes of special education, Rocketship is responsible for the provision of Educationally Related Mental Health Services ("ERMHS") for any student who requires this related service in order to access and benefit from their educational program. Rocketship conducts Social-Emotional and Behavior assessments and develops recommendations for ERMHS provision in accordance with state regulations and SELPA guidelines. ERMHS services are provided by a combination of Rocketship Mental Health Providers and contracted NPAs, depending on the recommendations of the IEP team and needs of the individual student. See Appendix 15 for additional information regarding ERMHS procedures.

**Transportation.** Rocketship will provide transportation to any student if required by a written statement in the student's IEP, and only with the written consensus of the IEP team as needed, for any eligible child to and from school and all school related activities. As an IEP team during an IEP meeting, transportation will be discussed in accordance with state law regarding eligibility.

Supports for Students with Moderate to Severe Learning Needs: Rocketship's flexible and supportive approach to special education reduces the need for separate Special Day Class ("SDC") placements for many students, and we have historically found that the vast majority of students who enter Rocketship from an SDC placement are able to be successful in an inclusive model with the appropriate supports and collaboration between special and general educators. Because of our open lottery process, we have students with a variety of learning and behavioral needs in our schools, and have developed supports and structures to support all learners within our model. Students with moderate to severe learning needs are case managed by a teacher with a moderate to severe Education Specialist credential, on a caseload with a much lower student-to-staff ratio than students with mild learning needs. Our moderate to severe teaching staff have access to professional development opportunities uniquely designed for their specific student needs. Inclusion in the general education program is still a critical component of the educational program for students with moderate to severe learning needs, but we recognize that these students often have additional, unique needs that must be addressed. Towards that end, we have adopted a suite of curricular resources specifically designed to support students with more significant needs, and our moderate-to-severe teaching staff weave support and instruction in adaptive and communication skills throughout the day for these learners.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

Rocketship understands its responsibility to ensure that all children with a documented or suspected disability that may require special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated, regardless of the severity of the disability. Although Rocketship will not administer any assessment or evaluation for the purposes of admission, in accordance with the Child Find mandate, we make a continuous and proactive effort to identify students with special needs and those in need of a pre-referral intervention plan.

In order to proactively identify students who have already been found eligible to receive accommodations and/or services via an IEP or Section 504 plan, Rocketship includes a "Child Find Supplement," which asks families to indicate if the enrolling student has a current IEP or 504 plan, has recently been evaluated for any purpose, or if the family has additional concerns. (For a sample Child Find Supplement, please see Appendix 15.) This information is entered into our student information system, and our special education staff work with office managers and families to secure copies of IEPs, 504 plans, and/or evaluation reports in order to ensure that a student's identified supports and services are in place at the start of the school year. In accordance with California state special education regulations, an interim IEP meeting is held within the first 30 days of school for any student enrolling with a current IEP; however, services are provided as outlined in the current IEP and in accordance with SELPA guidelines immediately upon the start of the school year for all identified students.

Rocketship also implements a systematic approach to identifying and evaluating any student who the Charter School has reason to believe may have a disability. Rocketship's pre-referral process includes the following student and staff supports:

- A Universal Screener Administered to all students at least three times a year to get an understanding of student knowledge.
- A "student huddle" process, wherein grade level teams and school leaders collaborate to plan classroom-level supports for students with identified academic and/or behavioral needs.
- A formal Student Study Team, which includes family members, classroom teachers, school leaders, the school psychologist, and other staff as necessary, which plans targeted, individualized students who present with more significant academic and/or behavioral needs. (For a copy of our Pre-Referral Handbook, please see Appendix 14.)
- Tier 2 and 3 social emotional, behavior, and academic interventions, further described above, delivered to students identified as needing them through the universal screening process
  - Diagnostic Assessment For more specific information on a student's skill development needs.
  - Progress Monitoring Weekly data collection aligned to the interventions provided to students in Tiers II, III, and special education. This supports the Charter School teams to review data and make data-based decisions regarding instructional supports and programmatic needs.

Generally, students who do not respond to targeted pre-referral interventions after two cycles that have been delivered with fidelity may be referred for formal evaluation to determine whether they meet criteria for special education services or accommodations under a Section 504 plan. Intervention cycles can range from 6-10 weeks and may align with Data Days set by the Academic Calendar. If the student has not demonstrated adequate responsiveness to interventions during these cycles, the SST or intervention team may consider whether a referral for special education evaluation is appropriate. The

IDEA governs the identification, evaluation and implementation of special education services. Interventions within the general education program shall be implemented before referral for a special education evaluation. (Education Code Section 56303). Rocketship also recognizes the requirement to proceed without delay in the initiation of an evaluation when the Charter School has reason to suspect that a child has a disability. For that reason, even when a formal evaluation of a student is in process, academic and/or social emotional and/or behavioral interventions are planned and implemented in order to support the student while the evaluation is completed.

Rocketship also responds formally to all parent requests for special education evaluation in accordance with state and SELPA guidelines and regulations. All requests, verbal and written, are day and time stamped by the receiving staff member and immediately delivered to the special education team. The Charter School team then schedules a formal SST meeting to respond to the parent request for evaluation. During that meeting, if it is determined that there is reason to suspect the child may have a disability, an assessment plan is drafted and provided to the parent. Parents will receive a prior written notice within 15 days of their request. If the parent provides consent to proceed with the evaluation, the special education team completes the evaluation and schedules and IEP meeting to discuss the results, including a recommendation for eligibility for special education services, within 60 days of the receipt of written consent to Assessment Plans. Prior Written Notice and all documents are provided to parents in their primary language, and are accompanied by a current copy of the SELPA's Procedural Rights and Safeguards.

All Rocketship staff, including office managers and business operations managers, are trained in the Child Find mandate and pre-referral process prior to the start of each school year.

#### **ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW**

An assessment for special education services is a comprehensive, in-depth evaluation of a student's school, health, and family history, and present academic and social-emotional functioning. An assessment is the same as evaluation in IDEA (CFR Section 1414, Title 20). At Rocketship, students are assessed by a multidisciplinary team in all areas of suspected disability. The assessment team includes a lead assessor (generally the School Psychologist or the Speech Language Pathologist), the family, the Education Specialist, classroom teachers, and any other individual knowledgeable of the student. Additional specialists, such as occupational or physical therapists, adapted PE teachers, social workers, mental health providers, etc. may be involved depending on the student's needs. Rocketship will inform parents that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

IDEA mandates that "No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for an individual with exceptional needs." Consequently, the assessment team utilizes many data sources (record reviews, interviews, observations, formal and informal testing, etc.) to make a recommendation regarding eligibility for special education services. All assessments used by Rocketship are validated for the specific purpose for which they are used, and assessors take particular caution when selecting assessments that reliably evaluate the performance of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Students are also assessed in their primary language, and Rocketship employs bilingual school psychologists and speech language pathologists to accommodate this requirement. Hearing and vision data is also included as a component of all formal special education evaluations. In

<sup>15</sup> California state law prohibits the use of IQ tests with African American children. Assessment teams use alternative methods of assessing cognitive functioning for these students.

the case that a parent provides outside evaluation information, the IEP team also considers this information as a component of the formal evaluation.

Classroom teachers participate in the assessment process by consulting with the assessors regarding the student's academic, behavioral and social functioning. They may also provide data demonstrating the student's performance as compared to his or her peers. Education Specialists complete the academic portion of the evaluation, which includes formal as well as informal assessment.

If a student is found eligible to receive special education services under one or more of the 13 qualifying conditions, the team meets to create an IEP for the student. The team then meets no less than annually to review the IEP, and every three years to hold a triennial IEP meeting. The team may also meet in other circumstances, including:

- After the student has received a formal assessment or reassessment;
- Within 30 days of a parent's request;
- When an Individual Transition Plan is required at the appropriate age;
- If a manifestation hearing is required.

Rocketship assessment reports include the following: the student's present level of educational performance; the relevant behavior noted during the observation of the student in an appropriate setting; the relationship of that behavior to the student's academic and social functioning; the educationally relevant medical findings, if any; a determination concerning the effect of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage; a statement as to if and how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum; the student's historical and current functioning in the general education curriculum regardless of the setting; deficits in the student's cognitive functioning, communicative functioning, social and emotional functioning and physical functioning that might serve as a barrier to their successful involvement in the general education curriculum; and what has been the impact of the student's attendance on his/her achievement. Assessment reports will be provided to parents in their primary language whenever indicated.

In the case where a parent disagrees with Rocketship's assessment in a particular area, they are informed of their right to request an Independent Educational Evaluation, which is provided at public expense.

Every three years, a student with an IEP is re-evaluated. The triennial assessment serves two purposes: to review progress made since the last formal evaluation, and to determine if the student continues to be eligible to receive special education services.

Prior to the triennial IEP, the IEP team reviews existing evaluation data, including evaluations and information provided by the parents of the student, current classroom-based assessments and observations, and teacher and related service providers' observations. On the basis of that review and input from the student's parents, the IEP team identifies what additional information is needed to establish the present levels of performance and determine the educational needs of the student. An assessment plan reflecting proposed assessment in these identified areas is presented to the parent, and assessments are conducted within the same timeframe as initial evaluations (60 days).

Rocketship assumes full responsibility for IEP review. Unless otherwise specified on the student's IEP, parents will be informed four times a year of the student's progress toward meeting annual goals. If

reassessment is requested any time during the year, the Charter School will have thirty days, not including school vacations greater than five days, to hold the IEP meeting.

#### IEP DEVELOPMENT

At the conclusion of a formal evaluation for special education services, the IEP Team—comprised of, at a minimum, the Education Specialist, general education teacher, administrator or administrative designee, assessors, related service providers, and the parent, will then meet to reach an eligibility determination in consideration of all of the data, observations, and assessment results.

Rocketship follows all applicable federal and state laws governing the IEP process and procedural safeguards. Parents, general education, special education services staff, other professionals and other service providers or professionals as appropriate will be involved throughout the IEP process. As members of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA, all of the current Rocketship schools use the SEIS electronic IEP form for documenting this process. The IEP will include a child's present level of academic performance, annual progress goals and the way that they will be measured, dates, frequency and duration of services to be provided, and the degree of inclusion for this student in the general education classroom. Our current forms are all on SEIS.

Rocketship designs IEPs such that it can be reasonably expected that the child will receive meaningful educational benefit from the program that is developed. IEP teams focus on developing the accommodations and services that are necessary for the student to access and benefit from the general education program, and we take very seriously our mandate to educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. Towards this effort, whenever possible, special education services are provided by specialists within the general education classroom (see Appendix 16 for a sample professional development session for school leaders outlining our approach to co-teaching). We do, however, understand that an environment can only be considered "least restrictive" when the student is receiving meaningful educational benefit from the program, and as such, a critical component of the IEP process is designing the systems that will allow the team to continually monitor student progress and adjust the plan in the case that a student is not making adequate progress. While we have adopted an inclusive approach to our special education service delivery and place a high priority on students with disabilities spending as much time as is appropriate in the general education environment, alongside their neurotypical peers, based on student needs and IEP, we do provide pull-out specially designed services when the IEP team determines that this placement is most appropriate for the individual student.

In the case that a student is exhibiting behaviors that significantly impede the learning of themselves or others, the IEP team develops a behavior intervention plan ("BIP") as a formal component of the IEP. When necessary, the IEP team will conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment ("FBA") to determine the function of the child's behavior, as well as environmental conditions that may be contributing to the behavior. The FBA consists of observations, interviews, record reviews, and formal testing as necessary. The results of the FBA are then used to develop the BIP, which outlines a functionally equivalent replacement behavior, specific behavior goals, services and supports (including necessary environmental changes) needed to make progress towards the goal, and a clear response plan should the behavior occur again in the future.

When a student with an IEP transfers out of Rocketship, our practice is to notify the superintendent of the student's district of residence in writing of the IEP.

## INTERIM AND INITIAL PLACEMENTS OF NEW CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS

Rocketship shall comply with Education Code Section 56325 with regard to students transferring into the Charter School within the academic school year. Rocketship shall provide transferring students with free and appropriate public education, including services comparable to those listed in the existing IEP. If transferring from another school within the same SELPA, Rocketship shall continue to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP, unless parents/guardians and school agree otherwise. If transferring from another school within a different SELPA, Rocketship, pursuant to Education Code Section 56325(a)(1), shall continue to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP for a period of up to 30 days, by which time Rocketship shall adopt the previous IEP or, in consultation with parents/guardians, develop and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

In accordance with Education Code Section 56325(a)(2), in the case of an individual with exceptional needs who has an IEP and transfers into the Charter School from a district operated program under the same special education local plan area of the Charter School within the same academic year, the Charter School shall continue, without delay, to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP, unless the parent and the Charter School agree to develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

If transferring from a school outside of California, Rocketship shall provide the student with services comparable to those described in their existing IEP, until Rocketship conducts an assessment pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Section 1414 of Title 20 of the United States Code, if determined to be necessary by Rocketship, and develops a new IEP, if appropriate, in accordance with federal and state law.

#### **SECTION 504 PLANS**

In addition to IDEA, Rocketship follows Section 504 the ADA, which prohibit discrimination based on a disability. The Charter School 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 be subjected to discrimination under any program of the Charter School. A student 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, is eligible for protections under Section 504.

A 504 team will be assembled by the Assistant Principal and shall include the parent/guardian and other qualified persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement option, and accommodations. The 504 team will review the student's existing records, including academic, social, and behavioral records, and is responsible for making a determination as to whether a recommendation for 504 services and/or supports is appropriate. If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under IDEA, those evaluations can be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team who will evaluate the nature of the student's disability and the impact upon the student's education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities.

The 504 team may also consider the following information in its evaluation:

- 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.
- Tests are selected and administered to 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.

The final determination of whether the student is eligible for accommodations under Section 504 must be made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language along with the procedural safeguards available to them. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEA, a referral for assessment under the IDEA will be made by the 504 team.

If the student is found by the 504 team to have a disability under Section 504, the 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the student receives a free appropriate public education ("FAPE"). In developing the 504 Plan, the 504 team considers all relevant information utilized during the evaluation of the student, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by the school's professional staff.

The 504 Plan describes the Section 504 disability and any program accommodations, modifications or services that may be necessary.

All 504 team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the student's education, including substitutes and tutors, will be provided with a copy of each student's 504 Plan. The site administrator will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that the teacher reviews the 504 Plan with a long-term substitute. A copy of the 504 Plan will be maintained in the student's file. Each student's 504 Plan will be reviewed as needed and on a regular basis to determine the appropriateness of the plan, needed modifications to the plan, and continued eligibility. Any student with a 504 Plan has a Confidential File Folder maintained by the 504 Case Manager. This folder is a supplement to the student's cumulative folder.

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR EL STUDENTS**

Because the majority of current Rocketship students are ELs, Rocketship carefully considers the cultural and instructional needs of students with English as a second language. Verbal and written translation of all materials, notices, documents, reports and communications is offered to parents when indicated or provided at parents request. Assessments are to be conducted in a student's primary language, or with translation as appropriate, whenever a student's English language development level may require such assessment in order to better understand a student's learning needs. Rocketship follows all applicable laws in providing general education instruction and special education services to eligible EL students, as well as ensuring parent procedural safeguards. Teachers providing core content instruction, as well as special education services, have appropriate training and certification. Training is provided to specialists to ensure that IEP goals are written to support the unique learning needs of EL students with disabilities.

The results of the Home Language Survey and state-mandated language assessment (i.e., ELPAC), further described below, are considered when developing a student's IEP. Testing accommodations described on the child's IEP, are considered for administering required language assessments.

## **STAFFING**

All special education services at the Charter School shall be delivered by individuals or agencies qualified to provide special education services as required by the Education Code and the IDEA. Our ISE team is typically comprised of a Program Director, Program Specialist, School Psychologist, Education Specialists (mild to moderate support needs and extensive support needs), Paraprofessionals, Speech Therapists, Speech and Language Pathologist Assistants, Occupational Therapist, and other specialists as might be required by a student's IEP.

All roles are crucial to provide the appropriate amount of services personalized for the student. All service providers will have the appropriate credentialing and/or licensing to meet all of the ESSA requirements.

The ISE Paraprofessional is responsible for providing individual and small group instruction for students with special needs, students with typical learning needs, students with behavioral needs, and students with emotional needs in the general education environment including, but not limited to: the Learning Lab, recess, the lunch area, and in the classroom setting. This role is responsible for implementation and recording of data for personalized instructional programs and positive behavior support plans. The Paraprofessional works under the supervision of ISE teachers and the School Psychologist who will provide weekly oversight, training and direction.

The Education Specialist is responsible for managing the IEP caseload for Rocketship students who need ISE/special education services as outlined in their IEPs. This role will improve students' success in the basic academics (reading, language and/or math, etc.) through implementing Rocketship-approved curriculum; documenting teaching and student progress/activities/outcomes; modeling the necessary skills to perform assignments; providing a safe and optimal learning environment; and providing feedback to students, classroom teachers, parents and administration regarding student- progress, expectations, goals, etc.

Special education staff participate both in the professional development opportunities available to all Rocketship teachers, as well as professional development uniquely tailored to the needs of special educators. PD topics include (but are not limited to):

- Universal Design for Learning
- Co-teaching models and best practices
- Assistive technology, including augmentative communication devices
- Behavior assessment, analysis, and planning
- Crisis Prevention Intervention
- Writing and implementing high quality IEPs
- Facilitating high quality IEP meetings
- Data-based decision making

Special education staff also receive ongoing direct coaching from both an on-site administrator (principal or assistant principal), as well as an assigned Program Specialist who provides special-education specific consultation and support.

#### PARENT INVOLVEMENT

**Participation and Training.** Rocketship parents are encouraged to participate in the school community through volunteer hours and monthly community meetings. Parents of students with IEPs are full members of the parent/school community. Parents are invited to participate in Community Advisory Committee meetings through the SELPA, either in person at the school site or via online connection, to learn more about topics related to special education needs. All meetings requiring translation are translated. These meetings provide additional training to parents in collaboration with our Charter SELPA. Lastly, we combine additional parent trainings on numerous subjects for all parents—those with IEPs and those without—with our monthly school community meetings.

**Progress Updates.** Education Specialists, in collaboration with General Education Teachers, begin their school year with a home visit to all students on their caseload. Education Specialists are available and in contact with parents by email, phone and home/school communication notebooks on a regular basis throughout the year.

In addition, all students' progress is updated in writing on a trimester basis and at least as frequently as report cards are provided for the Charter School's non-special education students. In addition to a progress report on the IEP goals, the Education Specialist will participate in these quarterly parent teacher conferences. This allows for total involvement of the entire IEP team throughout the year rather than just on an annual basis.

Rocketship is committed to having all documents provided in the primary language of the parents/guardians in a timely manner. All meeting notices, IEPs, assessment reports, progress updates, are translated if requested by the parents. This includes verbal and written translations.

**Dispute Resolution.** Our SELPA offers mediation as an Alternative Dispute Resolution method. In the event that the issue cannot be resolved through the standard IEP process, we attempt all means of mediation as a way to meaningful settlement of issues. Parents have a right to file a complaint with Rocketship or the California Department of Education.

Rocketship believes that all parents have a right to be informed of their procedural rights in their preferred language. Parents are provided procedural safeguards prior to any special education assessment process or IEP meeting. The case manager asks if the parent would like a thorough review of these safeguards prior to every IEP meeting and, while some parents do decline, many parents appreciate the additional explanation.

Rocketship implements systems-wide special education protocols and conducts regular monitoring in an effort to maintain compliance with state and federal mandated laws to protect the rights of students and parents. In the event of a legal dispute, Rocketship legal counsel will work very closely with staff, our SELPA and the family (as well as other relevant stakeholders) to come to a resolution.

# **ENGLISH LEARNERS**

At Rocketship, we serve a significant number of English Learners. [16] As such, our instructional model is targeted toward ensuring that all of our students become Lifelong Language Learners who have reached full proficiency in the English language. Rocketship will follow all applicable laws and regulations in serving its ELs, including long-term English Learners or English Learners at risk of becoming long-term

English Learners, as they pertain to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing and reporting requirements. Rocketship will implement policies to ensure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELs and the rights of students and parents. Rocketship will provide access to grade-level core curriculum for all ELs.

[16] Legal guidelines clarify that an English learner is a student in kindergarten through grade 12 for whom there is a report of a language other than English on the Home Language Survey and who, upon initial assessment in California using an appropriate state assessment (currently the ELPAC) is determined to lack the clearly defined English language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing necessary to succeed in the school's regular instructional programs.

# **IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT**

We will administer the Home Language Survey ("HLS") upon a student's initial enrollment into a California public school. If a student's HLS shows a response other than English to the first three questions, the student must be tested for English comprehension, speaking, reading and writing within 30 days and for primary language assessment within 90 days, as required by law. School personnel shall arrange for these assessments and will place the HLS in the student's cumulative file.

#### ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

State and federal laws require that schools administer a state test of English language proficiency. Pursuant to California law, we will administer the English Language Proficiency Assessments of California once each year to ELs until they are Reclassified Fluent English Proficient ("RFEP"), unless a student is classified as Initial Fluent English Proficient ("IFEP") upon the initial ELPAC administration. <sup>16</sup> For more details on these classifications, please see below. ELPAC scores will be placed in the student's cumulative file.

All students who indicate that their home language is other than English will be tested with the ELPAC. The ELPAC has four proficiency levels (Level 4: well developed; Level 3: moderately developed; Level 2: somewhat developed; and Level 1: minimally developed) and is aligned with the 2012 California ELD Standards.

The ELPAC consists of two separate assessments:

### Initial Assessment ("IA")

The ELPAC IA is used to identify students as either an English Learner, or as fluent in English. The IA is administered only once during a student's time in the California public school system based upon the results of the home language survey. The locally scored IA will be the official score. The IA is given to students in grades K–12 whose primary language is not English to determine their English proficiency status.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The 30-day requirement applies to students who are entering a public school in California for the first time or who have not yet been ELPAC-tested. All other students who have indicated a home language other than English will continue with annual ELPAC testing based upon the date last tested at the prior school of enrollment.

# Summative Assessment ("SA")

ELs will take the SA every year until they are reclassified as fluent English proficient. The ELPAC SA is only given to students who have previously been identified as an EL based upon the IA results, in order to measure how well they are progressing with English development in each of the four domains. The results are used as one of four criteria to determine if the student is ready to be reclassified as fluent English proficient, to help inform proper educational placement, and to report progress for accountability.

Both the ELPAC SA and IA are assessments administered in seven grade spans—K, 1, 2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–10, and 11–12. In kindergarten and grade 1, all domains are administered individually. In grades 2–12, the test is administered in groups, exclusive of speaking, which is administered individually. The ELPAC IA and SA will be administered via a computer-based platform, while the ELPAC Writing Domain for Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will continue to be administered as a paper-pencil test.

Testing times will vary depending upon the grade level, domain, and individual student. Both the ELPAC IA and SA are given in two separate testing windows through the school year.

The IA testing window will be year-round (July 1–June 30). Any student whose primary language is other than English as determined by the home language survey and who has not previously been identified as an English Learner by a California public school or for whom there is no record of results from an administration of an English language proficiency test, shall be assessed for English language proficiency within 30 calendar days after the date of first enrollment in a California public school, or within 60 calendar days before the date of first enrollment, but not before July 1 of that school year.

The SA testing window will be a four-month window after January 1 (February 1–May 31). The English language proficiency of all currently enrolled English Learners shall be assessed by administering the test during the annual assessment window.

The ELPAC will be used to fulfill state and federal requirements for annual English proficiency testing. The purpose of the ELPAC is to (1) identify new students who are ELs, in kindergarten through grade twelve; (2) determine their level of English proficiency; (3) monitor their progress in learning English on an annual basis; and (4) determine when students have met one of the criteria to be reclassified to RFEP status. Rocketship will notify all parents of the ELPAC testing requirements and of ELPAC results within 30 days of receiving results from the publisher.

# CLASSIFICATION OF INITIAL FLUENT ENGLISH PROFICIENT

A student's initial ELPAC score determines whether the student is classified as an English learner or whether the student is eligible to be classified as IFEP. The student is classified as IFEP if they meet the ELPAC initial assessment proficiency criterion set by the state.

# RECLASSIFICATION AS RECLASSIFIED FLUENT ENGLISH PROFICIENT

In general, English learners are no longer classified as "EL" once they have attained the language skills necessary to compete with mainstream English speakers in age and grade appropriate settings in all areas of language development without the use of modified English materials.

Under current state law, students who are identified as English learners must participate in the annual administration of the ELPAC until they are identified as RFEP.

Our reclassification policies and procedures are developed in accordance with the reclassification criteria outlined in the Education Code, including: (1) assessment of English language proficiency, using an objective assessment instrument, including, but not limited to, the state test of English language development; (2) teacher evaluation, including, but not limited to, a review of the student's curriculum mastery; (3) parent opinion and consultation; and (4) comparison of student performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance in basic skills based on the performance of English proficient students of the same age.

The process for reclassification occurs annually once the ELPAC summative scores are available. Rocketship's Analytics team will generate a spreadsheet of EL students who are eligible for reclassification. This spreadsheet will include all necessary assessment data on students who met or are close to meeting the reclassification criteria.

School leaders, teachers, and any relevant support staff will collaborate to evaluate each student's overall growth and curriculum mastery. The goal of this meeting is to determine whether the EL student is able to participate in grade-level curriculum with the same level of proficiency as their native-language peers. Teachers will bring several relevant work samples (e.g., student project, writing sample) and student test scores as evidence of progress. After the conference, findings are documented in the master spreadsheet.

Teachers will also hold in-person conferences with parents to review students' language progress. If the Charter School team recommends reclassification, the teacher will discuss this with parents and explain the evidence used in making the determination. The teacher will then obtain official signed parental consent, which will be saved in the student's cumulative file.

### Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

The Charter School evaluates the effectiveness of its education program for ELs by:

- Adhering to Charter School-adopted academic benchmarks by language proficiency level and years in program to determine annual progress.
- Monitoring teacher qualifications and the use of appropriate instructional strategies based on program design.
- Monitoring student identification and placement.
- Monitoring parental program choice options.
- Monitoring availability of adequate resources.

Students who are moved from EL status to RFEP are documented in online databases including PowerSchool and CALPADs. RSK will monitor reclassified students' performance for four years after reclassification in accordance with California regulations and Title III of the ESSA.

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION**

The State Board of Education has adopted the California ELD standards as part of a national movement to ensure that students gain the necessary literacy and mathematical knowledge and skills required in 21st century higher education and workplace communities. The ELD standards describe the key knowledge, skills, and abilities in core areas of English language development that students learning English as a new language need in order to access, engage with, and achieve in grade-level academic content areas, with particular alignment to the key knowledge, skills, and abilities for college and

career-readiness as described in the CCSS for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics. The ELD standards are designed to provide challenging content in English language development for ELs to gain proficiency in a range of rigorous academic English language skills.

Our instructional materials for ELD instruction will be prepared by Rocketship's Multilingual Learner Team.

**ELD Standards.** We design our English language instruction to encompass all three parts of the ELD standards.

- Part I: We focus on meaningful interaction with the English language, both orally and in written
  texts, via three modes of communication- collaborative, interpretive, and productive. We will
  teach students how to use comprehension strategies and analytical skills to understand the
  meaning of various texts. We will also teach students how to analyze and evaluate the way
  writers and speakers utilize language to effectively convey meaning.
- Part II: We focus on learning how English works to make meaning via three broad language processes structuring cohesive texts, expanding and enriching ideas, and connecting/condensing ideas. We will teach students how to organize text as they read so they can better grasp the structure. We will also teach students how to adjust their own language choices as they speak and write. We expect students to apply their growing knowledge of language resources to create and comprehend precise and detailed texts that accurately convey meaning.
- Part III: We provide foundational skills for ELs. We will differentiate instruction based on a variety of factors including age, similarities between the student's primary language and English, and oral language proficiency in English. We will teach students the meaning of words that the students are learning to decode to emphasize the importance of meaning-making.

*Integrated and Designated Instruction.* We will utilize both integrated and designated instruction to teach the ELD standards.

Integrated instruction occurs throughout the school day in every subject area. Teachers use the ELD standards in tandem with the CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content areas to ensure that students are strengthening their ability to use the academic English that they are learning. Examples of integrated instruction include teachers routinely examining texts and instructional tasks to identify language that may be challenging for ELs; determining opportunities to highlight and discuss particular language resources (i.e. precise vocabulary, different ways of combining ideas in sentences, different ways to start a paragraph to emphasize a key ideas; observing students to determine how they are using targeted language; adjusting whole group instruction or work with small groups/individuals to provide adequate and appropriate support; and frequently engaging their ELs in discussions to develop content knowledge.)

Designated instruction is protected time during the regular school day where teachers use the ELD standards to develop critical language skills that ELs need for content learning in English. This instruction is not required or intended to be separate or isolated from the content areas, but it is a time when teachers actively engage ELs in developing the discourse practices, grammatical structures, and vocabulary necessary for successful participation in academic tasks.

During designated instruction, students are grouped so that teachers can strategically target students' language learning needs and accelerate English language and literacy development. Depending on the Charter School's population breakdown, teachers may work with students individually throughout the school day or they may break students into the expanding, emerging and bridging stages of language development, further described below:

- Emerging: Students are learning to use English for immediate needs and beginning to understand and use academic vocabulary and other features of academic language
- <u>Expanding:</u> Students are increasing English knowledge, skills, and abilities in more contexts. Students are learning to apply a greater variety of academic vocabulary, grammatical structures, and discourse practices in more sophisticated ways, appropriate to age and grade level
- <u>Bridging:</u> Students are continuing to learn and apply a range of advanced English knowledge, skills and abilities in a wide range of contexts including comprehension and production of highly complex texts. The "bridge" is the transition to full engagement in grade level academic tasks and activities without specialized instructional support.

Importantly, students will never be removed from other core content instruction to receive designated ELD instruction and also students are grouped heterogeneously throughout the rest of the school day

During designated ELD, there is a strong emphasis on oral language development as well as reading and writing tasks designed to develop awareness of how English works. For example, teachers may work with ELs at the expanding or bridging level to more closely examine the language used in a text that they have already read; teach the meanings of some of the general academic vocabulary and use the vocabulary in different ways in speaking and writing over the course of the next few weeks; and discuss the structure and type of text or engage in a debate about the text's content to reinforce language. Teachers may also write prompt sentences from a text and have students combine them into more complex sentences.

**Scaffolding.** Teachers will be trained to scaffold ELD instruction to meet the needs of individual ELs depending on their proficiency levels (emerging, expanding, or bridging). Scaffolding can be substantial, moderate, or light. ELs at the emerging level will generally require more substantial support to develop the capacity for academic tasks than students at the expanding or bridging levels. For example, ELs at the emerging level may need substantial support to explain their thinking about a literary or informational text that they read closely, such as sentence frames or graphic organizers. However, ELs at every level engage in some academic tasks that require light to no scaffolding and some that require substantial. In any case, scaffolding is intended to be temporary, and independence can be promoted and increased through gradual release of responsibility.

*Instructional Strategies.* Rocketship teachers are trained in Project Guided Language Acquisition Design ("GLAD"). GLAD focuses on vocabulary development, graphic organizers, oral language, interactive displays, and several other strategies that have been proven to be highly effective with EL students

Rocketship teachers will also employ Comprehensible Input strategies in their classrooms to help ELs understand academic language and information just above their current levels of proficiency. These strategies may include:

- Explicit Vocabulary Instruction
- Images/Visuals
- Icons/Symbols

- Total Physical Response/Gestures
- Labels
- Realia
- Language Frames
- Videos
- Graphic Organizers
- Input Chart

All Rocketship teachers will be Crosscultural Language and Academic Development ("CLAD") certified or in the process of obtaining CLAD or Bilingual, Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development ("BCLAD") certification, or other CTC-approved EL authorization.

## PARENT COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION

As described above, parents play a significant role in the reclassification process. Beyond that, however, we strive to find ways to engage and involve parents of our EL students. We are committed to communicating with parents in their primary language; as such, we will provide translations of all major documents, notices, public meetings, and workshops in Spanish and any other languages as needed.

RSK will establish an English Learner Advisory Committee ("ELAC") if the Charter School enrolls 21 or more EL students, as further described in Element D below. Parents are encouraged to participate in the ELAC as well as the School Site Council (SSC), further described in Element D below. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer in their children's classrooms and attend community meetings, parent coffees, and school events. Community meetings will often advise parents on programs and services for EL students. We will inform parents on programmatic and assessment issues that affect EL students as well as relevant programs, funds, and instructional strategies.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

We believe that our teachers are most effective when they feel invested in their school and that their school is invested in them. To this end, we have rigorous policies and procedures for teacher and leader recruitment, selection, retention, and professional development, further described below.

#### **CREDENTIALING**

Rocketship continuously strives to be a great place to work. We are committed to creating pathways to support our staff on their journey to becoming a certified teacher in California. We have a dedicated Talent Development & Credentialing team who educates and guides staff throughout the entire process.

Rocketship partners with Rivet School and Reach University, nonprofit college programs that help working adults earn an accelerated, affordable bachelor's degree and teaching credentials for California. Teachers who enroll in an Intern Credential Program are eligible to receive tuition assistance and additional support such as tutoring, paid time off for studying, etc.

Rocketship partners with the Silicon Valley New Teacher Project and covers full tuition cost for induction to support teachers in the final step of obtaining their clear credential. Our teachers receive intensive, one-on-one mentoring to strengthen their classroom practices, ensuring student academic success.

During summer training, school leaders and teachers review credentialing pathways and expectations through training. Teachers are also given ongoing updates and resources to help them stay on track with

their credentialing expectations. All of this is designed to be clear and helpful as staff get their credentials.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Summer. Each summer, Rocketship hosts an intensive three-week training for all teachers that emphasizes foundational knowledge in our culture and our instructional model for new staff and ongoing professional learning for experienced educators. This summer training allows staff to build a collaborative culture of trust while creating a strong school culture shaped around personalized learning and the Rocketship identity. We provide training in classroom management and effective unit, lesson, and yearlong planning. We also introduce foundational components of the Rocketship program, including the process for the use of data, instructional techniques, and the scope and sequence of curricula. Educators also learn strategies to effectively engage parents in this culture, including how to empower parents as key supporters of their children's education after students graduate from Rocketship and move onto middle and high school. This helps ensure that our students succeed to and through college. School leaders, including both Principals and Assistant Principals, participate in two weeks of their own summer training to become well-versed in similar topics, ensuring that they are well-prepared to be effective instructional leaders while establishing a school culture that enables student success. For teachers who join mid-year, Principals and Assistant Principals utilize a personalized onboarding plan, where newly hired teachers spend time observing various components of the school day, meeting with various school leaders, and reviewing summer learning artifacts, prior to taking on a full-day classroom teaching role.

**School Year.** In addition to summer training, Rocketship schools dedicate approximately 175 hours throughout the school year for staff professional development. We dismiss students approximately two hours early one day a week to allow for an afternoon of purposeful and customized professional development and culture building for staff. The Principals and Assistant Principals at each school facilitate and organize sessions, targeting the areas of development they see as most beneficial to the staff. Further details of staff professional development include:

- Data Days: Throughout the school year, Rocketship holds days of Professional Development and data analysis for teachers. These days serve as a time to both develop skill in data analysis and related topics, as well as action-plan in response to interim assessment data.
- Weekly Staff Development: One day a week, Rocketship holds staff development after school, focused on priority development areas for staff members. Topics have included analyzing and planning using formative assessment data, creating rigorous independent work, exploring whole brain teaching, launching literature circles, and facilitating small group instruction for struggling readers in the upper grades.
- Daily Common Planning Time: Every day, teachers have a common planning period with their grade-level team to collaborate and plan together. One to two times a week, this common planning time may be facilitated by an Assistant Principal, focused on a common need for development across the grade level.
- Personalized Coaching: In addition to group professional development, all teachers have regular one-on-ones with their coach, where they receive personalized coaching and development

tailored to their needs. Refer to the "Coaching" section below for more details on Rocketship's approach to teacher coaching.

We believe that often the most effective professional development session is peer-led. However, to develop the necessary subject expertise for our teachers as well as provide ongoing support for Assistant Principals, Rocketship partners with several outside professional development organizations and higher education institutions to conduct in-depth professional development in various content areas. Rocketship is constantly reflecting on student achievement data and teacher instructional needs in order to further develop the professional development program and coordination of resources in order to ensure that all student, teacher, and school needs are addressed in order to realize significant gains in student achievement.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTENT

Professional Development during the summer and throughout the school year is expansive and aligned to key competencies in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* (see "Teacher Performance Management and Evaluation" section). Key areas of development include:

- Instructional Preparation & Planning
  - Teachers learn to navigate curricular resources, internalize and intellectually prepare for lessons, and modify lessons based on individual student needs and context.
- Knowledge of Content & Pedagogy
  - Teachers build a deep knowledge of the disciplines they teach, with reading as a foundation for all teachers. Teachers also learn critical pedagogical approaches to make content comprehensible for all learners.
- Supporting All Learners
  - Teachers learn specific strategies for integrating supports for students with special needs and multilingual learners. Teachers also learn how to read and implement IEP requirements into their instruction.
- Fostering Respectful, Affirming & Purposeful Learning Environments
  - Teachers build a vision for a powerful, positive learning environment and practice strategies and techniques to build a strong student culture within their classrooms and throughout the school.
- Culturally Relevant Pedagogy & Cultural Competence
  - Teachers learn culturally responsive ways of interacting in the classroom and develop their own cultural competency in order to create a learning environment that honors diversity and reflects elements of students' identities.
- Engaging Students in Discourse & Learning
  - Teachers learn strategies to engage all students in learning, facilitate effective discussions, and elevate critical thinking.
- Using Assessments & Data to Inform Instruction
  - Teachers learn how to navigate and administer the assessment suite, progress monitor students effectively, interpret data, and use data analysis protocols to modify instruction to support all students.
- Engaging Families & Communities
  - Teachers build a vision for powerful family partnerships and practice strategies and techniques to build strong relationships with families and community members.
- Professionalism & Contributing to School Culture
  - Teachers build a vision for a collaborative school community, understand core

professional responsibilities and protocols, and work to build a collective school-wide culture of excellence.

Rocketship believes deeply in an approach to adult learning centered on application and practice. Our professional development sessions spend at least 50% of the session time supporting teachers in practicing and applying new skills to their context, in order to ensure their connection to the classroom.

Additionally, we know that adult learners thrive when given the same personalized learning experience as our students, and are committed to offering professional learning that both challenges and supports people where they are. Every educator has their own unique experiences, skills and needs, and we seek to develop frameworks that enable participant personalization, ownership and choice. Many of our professional development topics are multi-part series of sessions where teachers can continue to deepen their learning and craft, even after multiple years in the classroom.

### COACHING

A foundational piece of our ongoing staff development is customized, targeted one-on-one coaching that Assistant Principals and Principals provide for teachers and staff members.

The overarching principles of our coaching program are a tight feedback loop, regular opportunities for practice, the identification of root cases of problems and their accompanying solutions, weekly foci for teachers, and measurable goals for coaches to assess progress and collect data.

We implement a variety of coaching strategies and practices. Coaches observe and provide written feedback, deliver in-the-moment feedback (e.g., using pre-aligned non-verbal signals, whisper coaching to a teacher during instruction), model instruction, and engage in co-observations with the teacher (e.g., watching a video of the teacher or observing a different teacher). All teachers receive at least four hours of support per week outside the classroom, get observed at least twice a week, receive at least two hours of professional development per week, and have a weekly one-on-one meeting with their coaches.

## **NEW TEACHER RESIDENCY - PILOT**

We have recently been awarded the Teacher Residency Capacity Grant Program by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing to launch our first Teacher Residency Program in School Year 2025-26. This program will provide high-quality immersive and comprehensive training experiences for our aspiring teachers, by combining coursework with hands-on classroom experience under the guidance of mentor teachers. Research shows that residency programs have a positive impact on student outcomes. Teachers who have successfully completed residency programs are often better equipped to meet the diverse needs of their students, can differentiate instruction effectively, and create engaging and inclusive learning environments.

The Teacher Residency Program is just one example of how Rocketship is continuously striving to enhance its professional development opportunities; strengthening our talent development initiatives; ensuring Rocketship remains an attractive place to work and grow; and positioning ourselves to continually develop and retain talent.

### TEACHER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

Rocketship implements an annual performance evaluation system for teachers. We believe that performance evaluations are a vital part of helping us to achieve our mission because evaluations allow us to recognize and reward improvement and excellence and ensure that teachers receive consistent and

direct feedback that helps them improve and grow.

Teacher evaluations include multiple measures, including student growth and achievement and educator performance. The components align with teachers' role and responsibilities and Rocketship's theory of action on how we can achieve our mission. Each component was developed with the goal of promoting transparency, consistency, and communication.

Our performance evaluation system consists of three formal evaluation activities during the school year complemented by Rocketship's ongoing coaching cycles as described in the Professional Development and coaching sections above. In the fall of each school year, teachers complete a self-reflection where they self-assess themselves on Rocketship's performance rubrics to reflect on performance trends to date, areas of growth, and opportunities for improvement. Teachers also meet with their manager for the self-reflection process to align on performance expectations, debrief on the self-assessment, and discuss next steps for growth. Teachers participate in two formal evaluations during the year where they receive an overall performance score and meet with their manager to discuss next steps for development. Mid-year evaluations take place in the winter and end-of-year evaluations in the spring before the end of the school year.

**Student Impact**. Teachers are evaluated based on both student absolute achievement and growth metrics. Absolute achievement metrics evaluate the percentage of students at national norms on objective assessments such as the NWEA MAP. Growth metrics evaluate the percentage of students making growth and the average years that students grow on objective assessments, such as the MAP.

**Family Engagement.** Teachers are also evaluated on their ongoing engagement with families as well as percentage of home visits completed and the percentage of parents completing partnership hours. (For more information on parent participation at Rocketship, please see Element D below).

**Core Characteristics.** Teachers are evaluated on their ability to demonstrate the five Rocketship Core Characteristics of pursuit of excellence, innovation, authenticity, community, and tenacity.

**Teaching Performance.** The Rocketship teacher performance rubric outlines the expectations for teacher performance and is used by managers to provide feedback in evaluations. The core of Rocketship's teacher performance rubric is the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The *Framework for Teaching* is a research-based performance rubric validated to show positive correlations between the *Framework for Teaching* ratings and student outcomes.<sup>17</sup> The Rocketship performance rubric examines teaching performance in four domains: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities. (For a copy of the rubric, please see Appendix 17).

# **TEACHER RETENTION AND COMPENSATION**

Rocketship is committed to addressing and continually improving teacher retention in all of our schools. We have implemented a variety of programs, initiatives, and support systems to make teaching a more viable and desirable career that the most talented individuals in our communities pursue. We provide support and counseling for principals, especially those new to the role, on teacher retention. Our Program and Regional Teams focus on teacher curricular tools and resources to provide teachers with high quality resources and support. We have also introduced professional development funding that becomes available to teachers as they hit milestones of multiple years at Rocketship.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Measures of Effective Teaching Project, "Danielson's Framework for Teaching for Classroom Observations," 2010.

We also have developed initiatives to provide teachers with time to meet personal needs, including competitive paid time off packages and a credentialing paid time off policy for educators who need time away from school to complete credentialing requirements (e.g., test preparation, test completion, etc.). We have increased opportunities for teachers to provide upward feedback on managers via surveys (i.e., manager effectiveness, staff satisfaction). We have a Teacher Advisory Group that is focused on keeping great teachers at Rocketship and providing a teacher voice on important topics that touch all aspects of our network.

Rocketship offers competitive pay structures and incentives to attract and retain excellent teachers. Rocketship uses a performance-based pay system, which allows solid and strong teachers demonstrating strong results to quickly move up our compensation bands early in their career. The performance-based pay structure is a key lever for retaining our highest-performing teachers. Rocketship also deploys incentives and competitive benefits to create opportunities for additional growth within their profession, including a teacher professional development fund.

## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS

**Rising Leaders Program.** Rocketship's Rising Leaders program prepares teachers for the next steps in their leadership pathways through professional development in personal leadership skills, effective management frameworks, and essential mindsets. The program is ideal for educators who are interested in developing as a Grade Level Lead and/or school leader within the next several years, and who are considering other centralized network roles.

Rising Leaders engage in monthly workshops, leadership dinners, and take on a leadership project to build their skills. The program also provides opportunities for teachers to practice and build their leadership skills in their work as classroom teachers and to build strong and collaborative relationships among teacher leaders across Rocketship campuses.

We look for candidates who have a willingness to learn and reflect in group settings; a track record of high student achievement; at least two years of teaching experience; demonstrated leadership in a formal or informal role; and exhibition of the Rocketship core characteristics by focusing on commitment to and ownership of their own development and investment in the community.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Rocketship also has a comprehensive development system for its School Leaders: Principals, Assistant Principals, Business Operations Managers, and Office Managers. (Qualifications and responsibilities for these roles are further described below in Element E). These school leaders receive ongoing professional development centered on key levers aligned to their role, including data-driven instructional leadership; systems planning; coaching and observation; family and community engagement; school culture; staff culture; and (for principals) school leader team management. School leaders who manage special education teachers also receive a special strand of professional development.

To support our school leaders in team management, Rocketship provides key management development training and experiences. During our summer training, we start our training with self and team awareness development as a foundation of leadership. We also review evaluations and compensation training to ensure our leaders understand the process of setting clear expectations and compensation. Additionally, we ensure that new managers understand the foundations of employment law and performance management. During the school year, Rocketship has manager feedback and staff

satisfaction surveys to give leaders clear feedback on their management and school experience. In addition to the surveys, our Human Resource team meets with school leadership teams throughout the school year for People Partnerships meetings to debrief any management challenges, review any upcoming management strategies, or and develop leadership skills.

Our Principals all spend dedicated time each month receiving professional development from Rocketship California's regional Achievement Team. Our Assistant Principals also receive professional development directly from the Achievement Team and get regular training and support from Principals. Members of the regional Achievement Team also attend meetings between school leaders and teachers to provide feedback on meeting facilitation and coaching, as well as conduct regular school and classroom walk-throughs with the Charter School leaders. Business Operations Managers and Office Managers also receive regular development from Regional Directors of Operations and Directors of Family Engagement.

### ANNUAL GOALS AND ACTIONS IN THE STATE PRIORITIES

The Charter School has created a Local Control and Accountability Plan ("LCAP"), which contains a reasonably comprehensive description of RSK's annual goals, actions, and outcomes, in and aligned with the Eight State Priorities, schoolwide and for all numerically significant student subgroups, in accordance with Education Code Sections 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii) and 47605(c)(5)(B), which will be updated annually in accordance with applicable law and the State Board of Education's LCAP template. The LCAP is annually presented to families and the public at the Board of Directors LCAP Public Hearing and subsequently approved at the following meeting. The Charter School shall also present a report on the annual update to the LCAP for parents on or before February 28 of each year as part of a nonconsent item at a regularly scheduled Board meeting.

The LCAP is designed to align with the Eight State Priorities, as described in Section 52060(d) and listed below. Each LCAP goal and associated actions directly address a subset of the state priorities. For a reasonably comprehensive description of which LCAP goals address which state priorities, please see the LCAP attached as Appendix 18.

- State Priority 1 Basic Services
- State Priority 2 Implementation of Common Core State Standards
- State Priority 3 Parental Involvement
- State Priority 4 Student Achievement
- State Priority 5 Student Engagement
- State Priority 6 School Climate
- State Priority 7 Course Access
- State Priority 8 Other Student Outcomes

The LCAP is attached to this petition as Appendix 18 and is fully incorporated by reference in fulfillment of Education Code Sections 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii) and 47605(c)(5)(B). Notwithstanding the foregoing, the LCAP is updated annually as required by state law, and any changes thereto shall be made without need for material revision of the charter.

# **ELEMENT B: MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES AND METHODS OF ASSESSMENT**

Governing Law: The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. "Pupil outcomes," for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the charter school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the charter school's educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all pupil subgroups served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subdivision (a) of Section 52052. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served by the charter school. —Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(B).

# Goals, Actions, and Outcomes in Alignment with State Priorities

Pursuant to Education Code Sections 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii) and 47605(c)(5)(B), the RSK LCAP provides a reasonably comprehensive description of the Charter School's annual goals, actions, and measurable outcomes, both schoolwide and for numerically significant subgroups of pupils, in and aligned with the Eight State Priorities as described in Education Code Section 52060(d), as well as the mission, curriculum, and assessments of the Charter School. The Charter School maintains the same goals, actions, and outcomes for all students, both schoolwide and for all numerically significant student subgroups, except where explicitly noted within the LCAP. The Charter School maintains that all students, including all subgroups, can achieve the goals it sets. The LCAP, attached as Appendix 18, explains how the Charter School addresses the Eight State Priorities.

## **Student Outcomes/Exit Outcomes**

Rocketship Spark Academy's goals, actions, and outcomes, schoolwide and for all numerically significant subgroups, are comprehensively described in the Charter School's LCAP. To facilitate review, the following LCAP excerpts are the student outcomes in the order in which they appear in RSK's LCAP:

Metric	Year 1 Outcome	Target for Year 3 Outcome
CAASPP met or exceeded schoolwide (ELA)	52.4%	56%
CAASPP met or exceeded schoolwide (Math)	60.1%	65%
CAST met or exceeded schoolwide (Science)	29.6%	35%
Average growth years for reading (NWEA MAP), grades K-2	1.04 years	1.2 years
Average growth years for math (NWEA MAP), grades K-2	1.08 years	1.2 years
Percentage of EL students who increase at least one ELPI level or maintained the ELP criterion (Level 4)	70.1%	75%
EL reclassification rate	8.3%	10%
Percentage of students with access to their own copies of standards aligned instructional materials for use at school and at home	100%	100%

Number/Percentage of total and EL teachers credentialed & properly assigned	100%	100%
Percentage of adopted standards including ELD standards implemented	100%	100%
Percentage of facilities meeting the "good repair" standard	100%	100%
Percentage of students who feel safe on campus	79%	75%
Percentage of families who feel campus is safe	93%	85%
Percentage of students who feel connected to at least one staff member	80%	75%
Suspension rate (schoolwide)	0%	0%
Expulsion rate (schoolwide)	0%	0%
Percentage of students with access to a broad course of study	100%	100%
Average daily attendance	93.9%	94%
Chronic absenteeism rate (schoolwide)	17.9%	10%
Percentage of parents are involved	92%	90%
Percentage Home visits completed	97%	95%
Percentage of parents who are satisfied with their school	86%	90%
Percentage of parents connected	84%	85%
Portion of parents with input into decision making	100%	90%

# **ELEMENT C: METHODS OF ASSESSMENT**

<u>Governing Law</u>: The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card. —Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(C).

## **ELEMENT C: ASSESSMENT MEASURES**

RSK affirms that, to the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.

Rocketship's assessment plan includes multiple measures designed to monitor student progress over time. It includes baseline, formative, interim, and summative assessments.

Baseline assessments measure basic academic skills in English Language Arts and mathematics at the beginning of a school year or the beginning of a unit of study.

Formative assessments will be frequent and will include formal and informal performance based assessments in the context of classroom activities and daily learning. These assessments will help students and teachers to better understand students' strengths and areas in which they may be struggling. The information provided by the assessments will be used to guide instruction and to identify students who may need additional support and/or challenge.

Interim assessments fall between formative and summative assessments and provide standardized data that can be aggregated and analyzed. Interim assessments may predict student performance on an end-of-year summative assessment, they may provide evaluation information about the impact of a curriculum or a program, and they offer instruction information that helps diagnose student strengths and weaknesses.

Summative assessments will take place in English/Language Arts and Mathematics at the end of the year in the form of Smarter Balanced tests. Additional summative assessments will include end-of-year one-on-one reading assessments, which can be compared to the baseline assessments from the beginning of the year.

As further described in Element above, teachers will analyze assessment results to identify student, class, and school trends, to find specific areas of instructional strength and weakness, identify students who need additional support, and ensure children are making progress towards grade-level proficiency as measured by the CCSS. Assessments will be used to inform instruction as well as to track and monitor student growth and learning. Rocketship has a comprehensive Response to Intervention program, further described in our At-Promise Students section in Element A, for students who fail to progress and/or achieve consistent with school expectations and goals.

Rocketship's current assessments are as follows:

• <u>State-mandated Assessments (summative)</u>—Students will be expected to meet statewide standards for academic achievement. Specifically, students will take the Smarter Balanced assessments for English Language Arts and Mathematics/CAASPP as applicable each spring.

Additionally, the California Science Test for science will be administered annually in the spring to students in grade five (or a new science assessment if the state chooses one). These tests will help monitor progress on grade level content and skill development, and will be reflected in meeting state measurements. The ELPAC will be administered to English Learners annually.

- <u>Leveled Reading Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)</u>—All students in grades K-5 will be assessed three times throughout the year using the mCLASS with DIBELS Edition 8 assessment. In addition to its use as a reading assessment, mCLASS with DIBELS Edition 8 will also be used as the schools K-2 universal screener in accordance with Education Code Section 53008. The mCLASS with DIBELS Edition 8 is one of the approved universal screener of reading difficulties platforms provided in 2024 by the CDE.<sup>19</sup>
- Writing Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)—A writing sample will be collected and
  assessed for each student several times a year. Students will be instructed on how to use writing
  checklists throughout the writing process. Students will use these writing checklists for
  self-review and self-assessment on writing projects throughout the year. Teachers will also use
  these checklists to assess student writing.
- <u>Mathematics Assessments</u> (baseline, formative, summative)—Throughout the year, student progress in mathematics will be measured using formal and informal formative assessments. Ongoing assessment will take the form of teacher observations, assignments, and lesson exit tickets. At the end of each Eureka unit, student understanding and mastery will be measured through a formal assessment.
- <u>Standardized Assessments in Language Arts & Mathematics (interim)—</u>In addition to leveled reading assessments and formative math assessments, students will also take NWEA MAP Interim Assessments three times per year in Reading and Math to ensure they will be prepared for Smarter Balanced Assessments.
- <u>Science Assessments (formative, interim)</u>—We will assess student progress toward the Next Generation Science Standards using NWEA MAP Interim Assessments two times per year in Science (fall and winter). Teachers will also use a variety of formal and informal assessments such as responses to academic prompts, informal checks for understanding, and assessment of presentations or projects.
- <u>Social Studies Assessments (formative, summative)</u>—We will assess student progress toward California History–Social Science Standards using a variety of formal and informal assessments such as responses to academic prompts, informal checks for understanding, and assessment of presentations or projects.
- <u>Social Emotional Learning Assessments (formative, summative)</u>—Teachers will complete a social-emotional and behavioral screener three times a year to determine which students would benefit from additional supports, such as social skills groups, and to track social-emotional skills growth over the course of the year.

## **USE AND REPORTING OF DATA**

Rocketship will utilize its data warehouse and reporting dashboards to track and maintain student data. Rocketship teachers will be engaged in an ongoing process of data review and evaluation in connection to student learning outcomes. They will analyze individual data to review performance for students in their classrooms and work in collaborative teams to review class performance. Teachers will identify patterns of underperformance or high performance, and identify students who are not making adequate progress. Additionally, assessment data will be used to judge the effectiveness of curriculum units and teaching. This information will then be used to refine or change future units and instruction. Collaborative grade-level teams will use these opportunities to form questions that arise from the data, develop hypotheses around the questions, and pursue different strategies or actions to improve student

outcomes. Teachers will meet to review reading, writing, and math assessments after initial assessments are done in the first month of school. CAASPP test data will also be reviewed at this time.

# **REPORTING TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Rocketship places a high value on communication between parents and teachers. We plan to have regular parent/teacher conference periods and progress reports each year.

# REPORTING TO THE AUTHORIZER AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Rocketship will promptly meet all reasonable inquiries for data from the District and assure timely scheduled data reporting in compliance with the law. In accordance with Title III, Rocketship will adhere to all mandated reporting guidelines in relation to English learners, including notification to parents regarding ELPAC results and reclassification. In accordance with IDEA, Rocketship will comply with all state and federal laws regarding reporting requirements for children with IEPs.

# **ELEMENT D: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

"The governance structure of the charter school including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the charter school to ensure parental involvement."

- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(D)

In accordance with Education Code Section 47604, all Rocketship charter schools will be operated by RSED, a California non-profit public benefit corporation with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. All staff will be employees of RSED. RSED will be governed by a Board of Directors pursuant to its corporate Bylaws as adopted, and as subsequently amended from time to time, which shall be consistent with this charter. RSED's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are attached as Appendix 19 and 20, respectively.

RSED will operate independently from the District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(d), FMSD shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of RSED, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the Charter School as long as FMSD has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

RSK, operated by RSED, affirms that it shall comply with all applicable public transparency laws, including the Brown Act, CPRA, Section 1090, the PRA, and Education Code Section 47604.1.

## **GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board is ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of each Rocketship school. Board members have a responsibility to solicit input from, and opinions of, both school staff and students' parents/guardians regarding issues of significance and to weigh the input and opinions carefully before taking action.

Rocketship's Bylaws state that the Board must consist of at least three and up to 25 members. Board members serve for staggered terms of two years and until a successor director has been appointed or elected as required by the position. This staggering of terms will create a natural flow for future elections and ensure that the Board does not experience full turnover at once. Bios of our current Board members are attached as Appendix 21.

The Board will be comprised of the following individual officers, at a minimum:

- Chairman of the Board, responsible for presiding over Board meetings and performing various duties as assigned by the Board.
- Secretary, responsible for keeping account of Board minutes, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, and notice of Board and committee meetings.
- Treasurer, responsible for overseeing and validating audits, federal and state annual information return filings, and corporate filings.

The Bylaws also authorize the Board to appoint one or more Vice Presidents, one or more assistant secretaries, one or more assistant treasurers, and other officers as deemed necessary. Rocketship affirms

that FMSD shall be entitled to a single representative on the Board, consistent with Education Code Section 47604(c).

The Board will meet on a regular basis in accordance with the Bylaws. The Board may initiate and carry out any program or activity that is not in conflict with or inconsistent with any law and which is not in conflict with the purposes for which charter schools are established.

New directors will be elected as defined in the Bylaws. Qualifications of current and future board members include:

- Academic expertise, including subject and professional development knowledge in Literacy and Math
- Significant involvement in the communities served by Rocketship
- Operation of charter schools
- Real estate, legal, and financial expertise
- Fundraising ability
- Parents of current Rocketship students

### **BOARD DUTIES**

The Board will be responsible for Rocketship's operation and fiscal affairs, including but not limited to:

- Adopting policies that offer guidance and interpretation of the charter and procedures to assist the staff in facilitating the implementation of such policies.
- Setting Rocketship's enrollment and grade-level configuration;
- Approval of annual school budget, calendar, salary schedules, and fundraising plans;
- Monitor negotiation and approval of a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") or other contracts with the District;
- Approval of all financial policies that set the processes and controls for contracts, expenditures, and internal controls;
- Hiring and firing of the CEO and oversight over other personnel actions;
- Approval of bylaws, resolutions, and policies and procedures of school operation;
- Oversee material changes to the Charter School's charter;
- Participation as necessary in dispute resolution;
- Monitoring overall student performance and approval of the LCAP;
- Evaluation of Rocketship Executive Director;
- Monitoring Rocketship's performance and taking necessary action to ensure that the Charter School remains true to its mission and charter;
- Monitoring Rocketship's fiscal solvency;
- Participation in Rocketship's annual independent fiscal audit;
- Participation as necessary in student expulsion matters pursuant to Rocketship policy;
- Increasing public awareness of Rocketship.

RSED will update FMSD on any changes to the membership of the RSED Board of Directors.

The Board may execute any powers delegated to it by law and shall discharge any duty imposed on it by law. The Board may delegate to an employee of RSED any of those duties with the exception of those listed in the Bylaws. The Board, however, retains ultimate responsibility for the performance of those powers or duties so delegated. The Board may not delegate approval of the budget, approval of

independent fiscal audit, approval of Board policies, hiring or termination of the CEO, or any other duties prohibited by law. Where the Board has formally taken action to delegate authority to staff, changes must:

- Be in writing;
- Specify the entity designated;
- Describe in specific terms the authority of the Board being delegated, any conditions on the delegated authority or its exercise and the beginning and ending dates of the delegation; and
- Require an affirmative vote of a majority of present Board members.

The Board may utilize an Executive Committee and establish other committees as necessary to perform various governance functions. If utilized, the Executive Committee will be composed of no fewer than two members. Standing committees of the Board shall comply with the Brown Act and the Rocketship Conflict of Interest Code.

### **BOARD MEETINGS AND TRAININGS**

The Board will meet regularly to review and act on its responsibilities. All meetings shall be held in accordance with the Brown Act and Education Code Section 47604.1(c), and thus be held openly and easily accessible to the public. Rocketship will establish an annual calendar listing the dates of its regular meetings and provide the locations of those meetings. Rocketship will ensure that a teleconference location, which will be staffed by a Rocketship staff member, is available at all schoolsites. The notice and agenda of each meeting will provide for public comment from each physical and teleconference location.

The Board will also hold special meetings as necessary, including for time-sensitive issues that may need the Board's attention outside of the regular Board meeting schedule. All special meetings will be held in accordance with the Bylaws and the Brown Act.

RSED has adopted a Conflict of Interest Code that complies with the Political Reform Act, Government Code Section 1090, et seq., as set forth in Education Code Section 47604.1, and applicable conflict restrictions required by the Corporations Code.

The Board of Directors meetings will be headed by a Board Chairman. As long as a quorum exists as defined by the Bylaws, measures voted on by the Board may be passed with a simple majority of present members as allowable under state law.

# California Committee

We believe it is critical to form strong local partnerships to inform our growth and maximize our impact in each of the communities we serve. To this end, the Board has created a California Committee whose membership consists of a diverse group of parents and civic and business leaders committed to closing the achievement gap. The California Committee serves as an advisory board to the Board of Directors.

The primary responsibility of the California Committee is to serve as a formal structure giving voice to Rocketship student, family, and community needs. The California Committee may provide advice and counsel to Rocketship Education - California's Executive Director; provide meaningful input to the Board of Directors on topics such as plans and strategies for local growth, model improvement and operational plans, and build local partnerships to enhance the quality and sustainability of Rocketship schools.

As we continue to expand our network and reach nationwide, Rocketship has focused on building organizational capacity to maintain high-quality schools while also fueling growth. We have worked to develop and consistently apply deep functional expertise in each of the areas that comprise the complexity of school management.

The current support that RSED staff provides includes the following:

- High-quality support via centralized Schools Team and Program Team to increase student
  achievement (i.e. planning and designing instructional materials and resources; creating
  academic visions and goals; coaching of school leaders and teachers; guiding the data analysis
  process; facilitating professional development for teachers and school leaders)
- Talent management (i.e. recruitment; teacher and school leader pipeline development)
- Growth/policy (i.e. government relations; supervising community outreach and parent involvement)
- Finance (i.e. financial analysis and monitoring; budgeting; accounting, payroll, billing)
- Strategy (i.e. project management; cross-functional facilitation; devising systems for operational issues; overseeing network expansion)
- Facilities (i.e. site location, design, permitting, entitlements)
- Legal (i.e. compliance; completion of required filings; support with education and governance laws and policies)
- Human Resources (i.e. hiring, infrastructure, employment issues, benefits, compliance)
- Operations (i.e. coordinating with service providers; developing and managing systems)
- Communications (i.e. marketing and public relations)

The staff is overseen by a Senior Leadership Team ("SLT"), which is a group of department leaders with deep and diverse functional expertise. Bios of our current SLT members are attached as Appendix 22.

## **FAMILY PARTICIPATION**

Family participation has been important to Rocketship since the very beginning of the organization. We understand that a parent/family is a child's first teacher and lifelong advocate. We strive to partner with parents in a variety of ways so that they can become active participants in the Charter School and the community as they promote their children's education. As described in Element A above, our teachers and school leaders conduct home visits and conferences and regularly communicate with parents via emails, phone calls, and notes home.

We also provide numerous opportunities for parents to get involved in the operations and governance of the Charter School. Families can become involved with the School Site Council or English Learner Advisory Committee (further described below).

We also encourage, but do not require, our families to complete at least 20 partnership hours each school year. Partnership activities vary widely and can include participating in Launch in the morning, a Rocketship daily tradition to foster excitement for the day of learning ahead, reading to their child at home, assisting in classrooms or participating in any school meetings or events. We also have special processes in place to involve families in the creation of the LCAP. In addition to the regular community meetings and parent meetings, RSK holds meetings specifically designed to help parents understand the components of the LCAP and to discuss the best ways for the Charter School to use LCFF funds to serve students in alignment with the state priorities. RSK has also developed a survey, translated into English

and Spanish, to ask parents about their preferences regarding the allocation of LCFF funds for various services and resources.

### SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL

Each Rocketship school forms a School Site Council ("SSC"), the composition of which mirrors the requirements of Education Code Section 52852 and will be comprised of the following:

- The Charter School Principal;
- School personnel, at least 50% of which are classroom teachers;
- Families of students attending the Charter School, or other community members selected by families.

The number of families/family-selected community members on the SSC must be equal to the number of school personnel. The SSC will implement bylaws that describe selection and replacement procedures.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 64001(j), the SSC will be responsible for participating in the development of the Local Control and Accountability Plan ("LCAP").

The LCAP is a three-year plan that describes the goals, actions, services and expenditures to support positive student outcomes that address state and local priorities. The LCAP governs how the Charter School will spend its state LCFF funding. The LCAP is a blueprint to improve the academic performance of all students through the coordination of all educational services at the Charter School. Additionally, the LCAP Federal Addendum will address how federal funds provided to the Charter School will be used to improve the academic performance of all students.

In developing the LCAP, the SSC will conduct an analysis of root causes of student academic challenges and research-based instructional strategies that enhance student achievement. To set school goals, the SSC will carefully review Charter School priorities; qualitative and quantitative student achievement data; and other performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional program. The SSC will provide review and update the LCAP annually. All updated LCAPs must be presented at a public hearing and be approved by the Rocketship Education Board of Directors.

The SSC will seek to empower parents in the education of their children. The SSC may engage in a number of activities and initiatives, including, but not limited to:

- Engage in professional development opportunities for families (e.g., through training in data analysis, budget review, curriculum and instruction, etc.).
- Review of attendance trends and policies.
- Review of English learner achievement and reclassification data.
- Review of the Family Survey and School Needs Assessment.
- Budget and categorical funding allocation (LCFF allocation).
- Review of the instructional model and curriculum.
- Provide input on school events, school culture, and staff professional development.
- Provide input on school policies, school safety plans, and discipline procedures.
- Implement initiatives to increase family engagement.

The SSC will hold regular meetings in accordance with its Bylaws. Records of attendance and meeting minutes for each meeting will be kept at the school site.

## **ENGLISH LEARNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

RSK shall establish an English Learner Advisory Committee of which parents/guardians of EL students constitute membership in at least the same percentage as their children represent of the total number of students in the Charter School. Other members of the ELAC can be parents/guardians of non-EL students, school staff, and /or community members as long as the minimum percentage requirement for EL parents is maintained.

The Charter School shall comply with the provisions of Education Code Section 52176(b) for the establishment and operation of an ELAC.

The ELAC seeks to fulfill the following tasks:

- Review and comment on RSK's EL Master Plan, including policies, guiding the consistent implementation of EL educational programs
- Assist with an RSK-wide needs assessment.
- Review and comment on RSK's program, goals, and objectives for EL programs and services.
- Review RSK's plan to ensure compliance with applicable EL Authorization and CLAD Certificate requirements applicable to RSK's teachers and instructional aides.
- Review and comment on RSK's reclassification procedures.
- Review and comment on the written notifications required to be sent to parents and guardians.

At Rocketship, we try to have our SSC and ELAC overlap to the extent desired by the Charter School and possible under the law.

The ELAC shall be responsible for advising the Principal and staff on programs and services for English learners and the School Site Council on the development of the LCAP.

Additionally, the ELAC shall assist the Charter School in the development of:

- The Charter School's needs assessment.
- A site plan for English Learners
- Ways to make parents aware of the importance of regular school attendance.

Along with the SSC, the ELAC will also engage in the additional functions and activities listed above.

# **DETERMINING SUCCESS OF FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

Family involvement is critical to the academic success of Rocketship students and the overall success of each Rocketship campus. The Board, along with Rocketship staff and school leaders, will use dashboard metrics to measure the success of parent involvement. The key goals for successful family involvement are:

- Enlisting family leaders at each campus: These individuals will help lead various activities at school as well as be key liaisons within the community to help inform other parents about Rocketship and promote grassroots, community efforts to help Rocketship eradicate the achievement gap in the community.
- Achieving at least 75% family attendance at school community events: These events include community meetings, exhibition nights, and other school events. A high percentage of participation demonstrates a deep parent engagement and commitment to RSK.

• Engaging each RSK family to complete at least 20 volunteer hours at the school per year: As described above, RSK families will be encouraged to volunteer at the Charter School to help tighten the link between the families and the Charter School as well as assist RSK teachers and staff with various school operations. Volunteer service, however, is not a requirement for admission or continued enrollment at any Rocketship school.

# **ELEMENT E: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS**

<u>Governing Law</u>: The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the charter school. -- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(E)

Rocketship Education recruits professional, effective and qualified personnel for all administrative, instructional, instructional support, and non-instructional support capacities who believe in the instructional philosophy outlined in its vision statement. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(1), Rocketship shall be nonsectarian in its employment practices and all other operations. Rocketship shall not discriminate against any individual (employee or student) on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

All employees should possess the personal characteristics, knowledge base and/or relevant experiences in the responsibilities and qualifications identified in the posted job description as determined by Rocketship. These criteria are further described in the remainder of this section.

All Rocketship teachers will hold the CTC certificate, permit, or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment. The Charter School may use local assignment options authorized in statute and regulations for the purpose of legally assigning certificated teachers, in the same manner as a governing board of a school district. Rocketship will maintain current copies of all teacher credentials, and they will be readily available for inspection and monitoring.

RSK is a school of choice and will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding background checks, clearance of personnel, and maintenance and disclosure of employee records. All employees are subject to state and federal employment laws.

## **PRINCIPAL**

The Principal is responsible for creating a school capable of achieving the Rocketship mission and goals. This will include leading RSK in all aspects of its day to day operations and working with the RSED Board of Directors, students, parents, and community members and the other governing bodies specified by local and state law.

The Principal is the instructional, cultural, managerial, and community leader of the Charter School. The Principal sets the vision for the Charter School and ensures that the Charter School is a high-achieving college preparatory environment where all students finish the fifth grade at or above grade level. Additionally, the Principal directly manages, supports, and develops the Assistant Principal and the Office Manager. The Principal may serve as the manager and coach of all educators, which includes conducting observation cycles, modeling lessons, and providing support and resources aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness and leadership. The Principal is also responsible for engaging and empowering parents to become lifelong advocates for their children's education.

## **Qualifications:**

Possession of a valid teaching credential.

- 2+ years of experience teaching in an urban city classroom and realizing significant gains
- Strong leadership skills and personal drive
- Relentless pursuit of high expectations
- Strong organizational skills
- Passion for urban children and their families
- Ability to build partnerships with community organizations
- Strategic planning experience
- Ability to engage and empower parents and families
- Strong communication skills
- An entrepreneurial spirit and a proven track record
- Experience in building and maintaining outstanding school culture
- Results-oriented and data-driven
- Ability to develop others
- Adaptable and able to thrive in a dynamic, fast-paced environment
- Background check, tuberculosis ("TB") test and fingerprinting
- BA from accredited university

### ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

RSK will have at least two Assistant Principals, focused full-time on the implementation of RSK's academic systems and mentoring teachers to improve their effectiveness.

Reporting directly to the Principal, the Assistant Principal plays a critical role in driving academic achievement for students. The Assistant Principal ensures academic excellence by working closely with the Principal to lead and implement the instructional vision for the Charter School. The Assistant Principal leads two primary streams of work: teacher coaching and professional development. The Assistant Principal directly coaches a number of educators, which includes conducting observation cycles, modeling lessons, co-planning lessons, real-time coaching, and providing support and resources aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness and leadership. The Assistant Principal also leads the design and implementation of group teacher professional development and collaborative planning time. This individual provides staff with the appropriate resources and support to ensure that each Rocketship school's Rocketeers realize over a year's worth of progress annually.

# **Qualifications:**

- Possession of a valid teaching credential.
- Have achieved significant gains with their students for at least the past year or years;
- Espouse RSK's culture of caring, showing concern not just for the academic, but for the emotional welfare of their students;
- Demonstrated the desire and ability to mentor young teachers. Teaching adults is different from teaching children. Mentoring requires a commitment on the part of an Assistant Principal to their Teachers and an ability to demonstrate and explain verbally their own practices;
- Ability to be a strong team player, helping to make the faculty cohesive in our goals of creating both a safe and supportive environment, and one in which students will make significant academic progress.
- 2+ years' experience teaching in an urban city classroom
- Strong time management and organizational skills
- Result-oriented and data-driven
- Relentless pursuit of high expectations

- Ability to inspire and motivate others
- Adaptable and able to thrive in a dynamic, fast-paced environment
- Ability to develop others
- Passion for urban children and their families
- Strategic planning and project management experience
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Deep knowledge of elementary literacy and/or math instruction
- Experience with or interest in the use of technology in promoting teacher development a plus
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting
- BA from accredited university

## **TEACHERS**

RSK shall comply with Education Code Section 47605(I), which states:

Teachers in charter schools shall be required to hold the Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment. These documents shall be maintained on file at the charter school and shall be subject to periodic inspection by chartering authority.

All teachers will have or be working toward CLAD certification or a CTC recognized equivalent.

Each year, teachers will be evaluated based on their ability to make significant gains. It is expected that some teachers will be able to make significant gains in a single year; others may take two or three, and still others may not be capable. In addition to significant gains, teachers must show a strong ability to work with and mentor their peers in order to be prepared to take on the role of Assistant Principal.

# **Qualifications:**

- Demonstrated mastery of classroom skills including classroom management, planning, assessment and instructional practice;
- Hold the CTC certificate, permit or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment;
- Demonstrate the potential to make significant gains for students.
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

Teachers receive competitive, performance-based salaries to support retention and recognize them for their impact in our schools.

Teachers assigned to a TK classroom shall additionally have at least one of the following:

- At least 24 units in early childhood education, or child development, or both;
- As determined by the local education agency employing the teacher, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool-age children that is comparable to the 24 units of education described above;
- A child development permit issued by the CTC.

#### **EDUCATION SPECIALIST**

The Education Specialist is a full-time position that reports to the Charter School Principal. The Education Specialist will be responsible for managing the IEP caseload for Rocketship students who require special education services as outlined in their IEPs. The role of the Education Specialist is to improve students' success in the basic academics (reading, language and/or math, etc.) through implementing Rocketship approved curriculum; documenting teaching and student progress/activities/ outcomes; modeling the necessary skills to perform assignments; providing a safe and optimal learning environment and providing feedback to students, classroom teachers, parents and administration regarding student progress, expectations, goals, etc.

# **Qualifications**

- Embrace the mission of Rocketship Education
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Knowledge of curriculum, education code and special education law/policies
- Skills in appropriate special subject matter
- Ability to navigate school setting to support students in multiple spaces
- Skills in organization and planning in order to plan excellent instruction for students
- Thrive in an inclusive school setting, as well as an interest in participating in co-teaching and collaboration with other staff members
- Willingness to participate in ongoing PD over the course of the school year to develop one's practice and skills
- Ability to stand and walk for prolonged periods
- Perform a variety of specialized and responsible tasks: maintain records, establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with students, parents, other school personnel, meet schedule and compliance deadlines
- Possession of a valid California driver's license: willingness to provide own transportation in conduct of work assignments.
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required
- Valid Education Specialist Credential or enrolled in an accredited teacher preparation program working towards a credential
- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree optional

#### **INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING SPECIALISTS**

Individualized Learning Specialists serve as tutors, working closely with a team of teachers to meet the needs of all students at that grade level.

## **Qualifications**

- Commitment to Rocketship's mission, vision, and goals
- Passion for working with children; ability to motivate and support children in reaching high levels of academic success
- Previous experience managing and/or teaching groups of elementary age students is strongly preferred
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Basic computer skills including troubleshooting and an ability to communicate about technical difficulties

- Ability to efficiently interpret, manage, and utilize multiple sets of data in order to best support students' progress
- Ability to learn laws, rules, practices and procedures related to public education and specific to Rocketship and RSK
- Fluency in English
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

## **PARAPROFESSIONAL**

The Paraprofessional will be responsible for providing individual and small group instruction for students with both special and typical learning needs in the general education environment including, but not limited to: the classroom, recess, and lunch area. The Paraprofessional will work under the supervision of a certificated Education Specialist who will provide weekly oversight, training and direction.

## **Qualifications**

- A team player who is detail-oriented, resourceful and able to manage his/her responsibility with confidence and discretion
- Comfort in a start-up environment with flexibility
- Interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy
- Passion for working with young children
- At least 2 years of college or passing score on Rocketship's Paraprofessional Assessment required
- Experience working with students with disabilities desired

### **OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST**

The Occupational Therapist is a school-based position that provides both direct and indirect supports to students.

# Responsibilities:

- Lead specialized assessment related to sensory-motor development; write quality, compliant assessment methods
- Attend IEP meetings; present findings to team
- Develop IEP goals and objectives, as well as treatment plans
- Assist in the implementation of assessment as needed
- Work with parents to build knowledge of disability and inclusive supports
- Assist in providing in-service training to parents, teachers, administrators, and other professionals and paraprofessionals
- Assist in providing consultation and advisement to administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the general and special education programs as appropriate
- Assist in coordinating and seeking consultation with community agencies as appropriate
- Provide support and guidance to the organization as a member of the ISE Network Support Team
- Maintain a compliant practice
- Perform other duties as assigned or requested by the program administrator

# **Qualifications:**

- Must possess a Bachelor's or Master's in occupational therapy from an accredited four year college or university and have a valid license of proficiency in occupational therapy services issued by the California Board of Occupational Therapy
- Experience working with elementary-aged students (preferred)
- Experience working with students with a range of disabilities (learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, autism, etc.)
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Embrace the Rocketship mission
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Ability to be adaptive and flexible in a work environment that is still evolving
- Perform a variety of specialized and responsible tasks; maintain records; establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with students, parents, other school personnel; meet schedule and compliance deadlines
- Possession of a valid driver's license; willingness to provide own transportation in conduct of work assignments

## SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

The School Psychologist is an exempt position that will work under the direction and supervision of the Associate Director of Social Emotional Learning and will work with elementary school students. Rocketship School Psychologists are responsible for providing both direct and indirect support to students, families, and staff members in order to ensure high quality programming for students with disabilities.

### Responsibilities:

- Lead psycho-educational and formal behavior assessments; write quality, compliant assessment reports
- Attend IEP meetings; present assessment findings to the team
- Assist in the implementation of assessment recommendations as needed
- Participate in the pre-referral process and provide guidance to school teams regarding supports for struggling students
- Provide direct counseling or behavioral services to students as needed
- Work with parents to build knowledge of disability and inclusive support for students with disabilities
- Assist in providing in-service training in learning, child development and child management to parents, teachers, administrators and other professionals and paraprofessionals
- Assist in providing consultation and advisement to administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the general and special educational programs as appropriate
- Assist in coordinating, communicating and seeking consultation with community agencies as appropriate
- Provide support and guidance to the organization as a member of the Special Education Leadership Team.
- Maintain a compliant practice
- Perform other duties as assigned or requested by the appropriate administrator

### Qualifications:

• Valid California Pupil Personnel Services credential in School Psychology;

- Master's degree or Ph.D in School Psychology Bilingual, Spanish (preferred)
- Experience working in Response to Intervention models (strongly preferred)
- Experience working with elementary-age students (preferred)
- Experience working with students with a range of disabilities (learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, autism, etc.)
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Embrace the mission of Rocketship
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Ability to be flexible and adaptive in a work environment that is still evolving.
- Perform a variety of specialized and responsible tasks: maintain records, establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with students, parents, other school personnel, meet schedule and compliance deadlines.
- Possession of a valid California driver's license: willingness to provide own transportation in conduct of work assignments

# **SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST**

The Speech-Language Pathologist will work with elementary school students in screening, evaluating, diagnosing, and treating disorders of communication. This is a school-based position.

## Responsibilities:

- Address child's speech production, vocal production, and language needs through speech therapy
- Deliver direct services via pre-referral interventions; monitor student progress
- Document and collect data on all consultation sessions and provide regular assessments
- Conduct student screenings and/or assessments of language, voice, fluency, articulation, or hearing
- Develop and implement high quality, legally compliant IEPs
- Maintain compliance with all special education laws and policies
- Maintain client files and treatment logs in an organized manner
- Communicate with program manager in regard to any change of status, problems, or intent to change the educational program
- Attend and participate in meetings as required
- Develop instructional materials and evaluate commercially available material for treatment
- Keep current on latest developments in the field of speech therapy by attending professional seminars, reading literature, and participating in professional organizations as assigned
- Provide professional development support to school staff and families
- Manage time efficiently

## Qualifications

- Valid Clinical Clear Rehabilitative Services Credential; Master's Degree required
- Bilingual in English and Spanish (or Vietnamese) (strongly preferred)
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Commitment and passion for Rocketship's mission and goals
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Ability to demonstrate skills necessary for fulfilling the job responsibilities of this role

## OFFICE MANAGER

The Office Manager will be responsible for daily operations at RSK. The Office Manager will report to the Principal.

## **Qualifications:**

- Spanish/English bilingual fluency required, with excellent written and oral communication skills
- Knowledge and cultural competence of the local student and parent community
- Highly developed interpersonal skills using tact, patience, and courtesy
- Effectively prioritize and juggle multiple concurrent projects
- Comfort in a start-up environment and ability to work independently with minimal direction
- Ability to use a variety of software programs and quickly learn new ones
- Managerial skills preferred

#### **BUSINESS OPERATIONS MANAGER**

The primary purpose of the Business Operations Manager role is to ensure the Charter School is safe, compliant, efficient, and financially sound. The BOM provides direct services to the Charter School that enables instructional staff to better serve students and families. Ideal candidates will be self-motivated, flexible, and adept at managing change.

# **Qualifications**

- Minimum 5 years of relevant experience, with school-based experience strongly preferred. Many
  of our most successful BOMs have previously been teachers and/or School Leaders in other
  roles.
- Managerial experience is strongly preferred. Leadership and/or coaching roles among other adults can potentially substitute for this.
- Experience in a fast-paced, highly analytical, entrepreneurial environment. Ability to proactively
  manage multiple critical deadlines and quickly and confidently adapt to changing school needs,
  independently prioritizing and following through on completion of tasks and responsibilities.
   Demonstrated ability to be detail-oriented, organized, and resourceful.
- Team-player attitude and strong customer-service orientation. Skill at communicating respectfully and empathetically with students' families. Spanish language proficiency is preferred in many of our communities, but not required.
- Skilled at building strong and trusting working relationships with people in both senior- and junior-level roles, both within and beyond Rocketship. Ability to treat sensitive issues with respect and empathy, and maintain strict confidentiality where required.
- Strong PC-based computer skills, including the ability to use spreadsheets and the Google Suite, and ability to quickly become proficient in new software programs.
- Passion for Rocketship's mission, and the belief that all students can achieve high levels of academic success.

# **ENRICHMENT CENTER COORDINATOR**

The Enrichment Center Coordinator provides students with the opportunity to engage in athletics, art, and various other enrichment activities. The Enrichment Center Coordinator plays a critical role in

strengthening school culture. The Enrichment Center Coordinator oversees the effectiveness of the Enrichment Center and interacts with all students on a daily basis.

## **Qualifications**

- Commitment to Rocketship's mission, vision, and goals
- Passion for working with children; ability to motivate and support children in reaching high levels of academic success
- Belief in the value of enrichment, art, gardening, and physical education for all children
- Previous experience or training building teams with youth
- Previous experience managing and/or teaching groups of elementary-age students is strongly preferred
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Ability to learn laws, rules, practices and procedures related to public education and specific to Rocketship Education
- Fluency in English
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn
- At least 2 years of college or passing score on Rocketship's Paraprofessional Assessment required
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

## **OPERATIONS TEAM MEMBER**

This position is responsible for ensuring that the day-to-day operations of lunch, recess, and arrival/dismissal at the school site run safely and smoothly. Furthermore, support staff members are also responsible for ensuring that students maintain appropriate behavior in all operational activities.

## **Qualifications**

- Commitment to Rocketship's mission, vision, and goals
- Passion for working with children
- Previous experience managing and/or teaching groups of elementary-age students is strongly preferred
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Ability to learn laws, rules, practices and procedures related to public education and specific to Rocketship Education
- Basic fluency in English
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

### CALIFORNIA REGIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

All of Rocketship's charter schools in California, including RSK, are overseen by a regional leadership team. Descriptions of the responsibilities and qualifications for those roles are attached as Appendix23.

# **ELEMENT F: HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES**

"The procedures that the charter school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall require all of the following:

- (i) That each employee of the charter school furnish the charter school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237.
- (ii) For all schools, the development of a school safety plan, which shall include the safety topics listed in subparagraphs (A) to (M), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 32282.
- (iii) That the school safety plan be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the charter school.

- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(F)

Rocketship maintains and regularly reviews and updates Board-approved policies and procedures designed to ensure the health and safety of its students and staff members including policies incorporated into the following handbooks and plans:

- Rocketship Education Employee Handbook, attached as Appendix 24
- Rocketship Education School Safety Plan, attached as Appendix 25
- Rocketship Public Schools Student/Parent Handbook, attached as Appendix 26

To ensure ongoing compliance with relevant federal and state laws and regulations, the above-referenced handbooks and plans are reviewed, updated, and presented to the Board each year for approval. The policy versions attached as appendices here are presented as examples of the policies and procedures that demonstrate a reasonably comprehensive description for Element F regarding Health and Safety.

# **PERSONNEL**

In accordance with Education Code 47605(c)(5)(F)(i), employees and contractors of the Charter School will be required to submit to a criminal background check and to furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1. Applicants for employment must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Charter School shall not hire any person, in either a certificated or classified position, who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony except as otherwise provided by law, pursuant to Education Code Sections 44830.1 and 45122.1. The Charter School shall monitor compliance with this policy on a regular basis. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee. (See also Employee Handbook, p.10., attached as Appendix 24)

The Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code Section 39875(c), if applicable, relating to background checks and testing for individuals providing transportation services for students.

Rocketship also has a number of other personnel policies and procedures in place designed to ensure health and safety of both staff members and students, all contained in its Employee Handbook. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Additional conditions for employment, including reference checks and tuberculosis screening,
   pp. 9-10
- Prohibitions on harassment, discrimination, and retaliation, p. 14
- Prohibitions on sexual harassment, pp. 17-20
- Lactation accommodation, p. 37
- Campus access and security protocols, p. 39
- Accident and incident reporting, p.40
- OSHA compliance, p. 44
- Workplace violence, p. 45
- First aid and CPR requirements, p.44
- Mandated reporter obligations, p.87

### SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

In accordance with Education Code 47605(c)(5)(F)(ii), the Charter School has a school safety plan ("SSP") that contains the safety topics listed in Education Code Section 32282(a)(2)(A)-(M), as further detailed below.

- Section 32282(a)(2)(A) Child abuse reporting procedures consistent with Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 11164) of Chapter 2 of Title 1 of Part 4 of the Penal Code. See SSP, pp. 81-87. Please note that the policy included in the SSP is also contained in the Employee Handbook that is attached as Appendix 24. The Employee Handbook is approved by the Board during a meeting that falls subsequent to the SSP. To the extent that any of the policies contained in the Employee Handbook differ from those contained in the SSP, the latter version governs Rocketship's operations and the SSP will be updated accordingly the following year.
- Section 32282(a)(2)(B) Disaster procedures, routine (see SSP, p. 14) and emergency (see SSP, pp. 8-14; 15-41), including adaptations for pupils with disabilities in accordance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.) (see SSP, p. 15). The disaster procedures shall also include, but not be limited to, both of the following:
  - (i) Establishing an earthquake emergency procedure system in every public school building having an occupant capacity of 50 or more pupils or more than one classroom.
     See SSP, pp. 19-22; 40
  - (ii) Establishing a procedure to allow a public agency, including the American Red Cross, to use school buildings, grounds, and equipment for mass care and welfare shelters during disasters or other emergencies affecting the public health and welfare.
     See SSP, p.14
- Section 32282(a)(2)(C) Policies pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 48915 for pupils who committed an act listed in subdivision (c) of Section 48915 and other school-designated serious acts that would lead to suspension, expulsion, or mandatory expulsion recommendations pursuant to Article 1 (commencing with Section 48900) of Chapter 6 of Part 27 of Division 4 of Title 2. See SSP, pp. 92-109.
- Section 32282(a)(2)(D) Procedures to notify teachers of dangerous pupils pursuant to Section 49079. See SSP, p.101
- Section 32282(a)(2)(E) A discrimination and harassment policy consistent with the prohibition against discrimination contained in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 200) of Part 1. See SSP, pp. 120-124.

- Section 32282(a)(2)(F) The provisions of any school wide dress code, pursuant to Section 35183, that prohibits pupils from wearing "gang-related apparel," if the school has adopted that type of a dress code. See SSP, p.97
- Section 32282(a)(2)(G) Procedures for safe ingress and egress of pupils, parents, and school employees to and from school. See SSP, p.7
- Section 32282(a)(2)(H) A safe and orderly environment conducive to learning at the school. See SSP, p.5
- Section 32282(a)(2)(I) The rules and procedures on school discipline adopted pursuant to Sections 35291, 35291.5, and 47605. See SSP, p.73.
- Section 32282(a)(2)(J)-(K) Procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents, including procedures related to individuals with guns on school campuses and at school-related functions. The procedures to prepare for active shooters or other armed assailants shall be based on the specific needs and context of each school and community. See SSP, pp. 24-28.
- Section 32282(a)(2)(L) Procedures to assess and respond to reports of any dangerous, violent, or unlawful activity that is being conducted or threatened to be conducted at the school, at an activity sponsored by the school, or on a schoolbus serving the school. See SSP, p.24
- Section 32282(a)(2)(M) Procedures to respond to incidents involving an individual experiencing
  a sudden cardiac arrest or a similar life-threatening medical emergency while on school
  grounds. See SSP, p.42

In accordance with Education Code 47605(c)(5)(F)(iii), the SSP shall be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the Charter School.

The SSP shall be drafted specifically to the needs of the facility in conjunction with law enforcement and the Fire Marshal. Staff shall receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.

Disaster procedures included in the SSP shall address and include adaptations for students with disabilities. To the extent an employee, parent/guardian, educational rights holder, or student brings concerns regarding the procedures to the Principal and, if there is merit to the concern, the Principal shall direct the School Safety Plan to be modified accordingly.

The Charter School shall develop an instructional continuity plan, consistent with Education Code Section 32282(a)(3), to establish communication with students and their families and provide instruction to students when in-person instruction is disrupted due to an emergency pursuant to Education Code Sections 41422 or 46392(a).

### OTHER HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY SUMMARIES

The assurances below are included as further examples of Rocketship's commitment to student and staff health and safety and ensuring compliance with all statutory requirements pertaining thereto.

### <u>IMMUNIZATIONS</u>

All students enrolled and staff will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075.

### **MEDICATION IN SCHOOL**

Rocketship will adhere to Education Code Sections 49423 and 49414 regarding administration of medication in school.

In accordance with Education Code Section 49414, the Charter School will stock emergency epinephrine auto-injectors to be used by the school nurse or trained personnel on persons suffering or reasonably believed to be suffering from an anaphylactic reaction. A school nurse or, if the Charter School does not have a nurse, a volunteer trained in accordance with applicable law, may administer an epinephrine auto-injector to a person exhibiting potentially life-threatening symptoms or anaphylaxis at school or at a school activity when a physician is not immediately available.

The Charter School will store the epinephrine auto-injectors in a secure but accessible, well-marked, unlocked location. Per AB 1651 (2023), the Charter School shall include that location in annual notices required by law. To the extent the Charter School maintains a stock of albuterol inhalers to respond to respiratory distress in students, the Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code Section 49414.7, including with respect to training, notices, and the stocking of albuterol inhalers.

### VISION/HEARING/SCOLIOSIS

Students will be screened for vision, hearing, and scoliosis. Rocketship shall adhere to Education Code Section 49450 *et seq*. as applicable to the grade levels served.

### **DIABETES**

The Charter School shall make type 1 diabetes informational materials accessible to the parent or guardian of a pupil when the pupil is first enrolled in elementary school.

### **SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY**

The Charter School shall maintain a policy on student suicide prevention in accordance with Education Code Section 215. The Charter School shall review, at minimum every fifth year, its policy on pupil suicide prevention and, if necessary, update its policy. Pursuant to AB 58 (2021-22), the Charter School will also review and update its suicide prevention policy to incorporate best practices identified by the California Department of Education's model policy, as revised.

### **MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS**

The Charter School shall stock the Charter School's restrooms at all times with an adequate supply of menstrual products, available and accessible, free of cost, in all women's restrooms and all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men's restroom. The Charter School shall post a notice regarding the requirements of Education Code Section 35292.6 in a prominent and conspicuous location in every restroom required to stock menstrual products, available and accessible, free of cost, as specified. This notice shall include the text of this section and contact information, including an email address and telephone number, for a designated individual responsible for maintaining the requisite supply of menstrual products.

## **ALL GENDER RESTROOMS**

On or before July 1, 2026, the Charter School shall provide and maintain at least one all-gender restroom for voluntary student use at each of its schoolsites that has more than one female restroom and more than one male restroom designated exclusively for student use. The restroom shall have signage identifying the bathroom as being open to all genders, it shall remain unlocked, unobstructed, and easily accessible by any student, and be available during school hours and school functions when students are

present. The Charter School shall designate a staff member to serve as a point of contact and to post a notice regarding these requirements.

### **SCHOOL MEALS**

The Charter School shall provide breakfast and lunch free of charge during each school day to any pupil who requests a meal without consideration of the pupil's eligibility for a federally funded free or reduced-price meal, with a maximum of one free meal for each meal service period. The meals provided under this paragraph shall be nutritionally adequate meals that qualify for federal reimbursement.

The Charter School shall provide each student adequate time to eat as determined by the Charter School in consideration of available guidance.

### **RECESS**

Except where a field trip or other educational program is taking place, if the Charter School provides recess, to the extent required by Education Code Section 49056, the Charter School shall provide supervised and unstructured recess, distinct from physical education courses and mealtimes, of at least 30 minutes on regular instructional days and at least 15 minutes on early release days. The Charter School shall not restrict a student's recess unless there is an immediate threat to the physical safety of the student or one or more of their peers.

### WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PLAN

The Charter School shall establish, implement, and maintain, at all times in all work areas, an effective workplace violence prevention plan consistent with the requirements of Labor Code Section 6401.9.

### **BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS**

Rocketship shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace. The Board has established a written "Bloodborne Pathogens" policy designed to protect employees from possible infection due to contact with bloodborne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV") and hepatitis B virus ("HBV").

Whenever exposed to blood or other body fluids through injury or accident, students and staff should follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

### DRUG-FREE/SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Rocketship shall maintain a drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free environment.

### **FACILITY**

All facilities utilized by Rocketship must be in compliance with either the Field Act or the California Building Standards Code in accordance with Education Code 47610. All Rocketship facilities will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act access requirements. Rocketship will maintain accessible records documenting all such compliances. RSK has received a Certificate of Occupancy prior to the start of school.

Rocketship complies with the requirement contained in Education Code Section 47610 by utilizing private facilities that are compliant with the California Building Standards Code. However, Rocketship reserves the right to build a facility in compliance with the Field Act or to request Field Act compliant facilities from the local school district in the future under Proposition 39 and its implementing regulations. Rocketship agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its

facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. Rocketship shall conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001.

### **BULLYING PREVENTION**

The Charter School shall adopt procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying. The Charter School shall annually make available the online training module developed by the CDE pursuant to Education Code Section 32283.5(a) to certificated schoolsite employees and all other schoolsite employees who have regular interaction with children.

### **GUN SAFETY NOTICE**

At the beginning of the first semester, the Charter School shall distribute a notice to the parents/guardians of each student addressing California's child gun access prevention laws and laws related to firearm safety utilizing the most updated model language published by the California Department of Education.

## **SAFETY Act**

Pursuant to AB 1955 (2024), employees of the Charter School shall not be required to disclose any information related to a pupil's LGBTQ+ identity to any other person without the pupil's consent unless otherwise required by state or federal law. This provision shall not limit a parent's ability to request school records on behalf of their child.

## EXTREME WEATHER POLICY

On or before July 1, 2026, the Charter School will develop, adopt, and implement a weather policy that includes protocols for extreme weather conditions, and incorporate the standardized guidelines developed by the CDE.

## **ELEMENT G: MEANS TO ACHIEVE STUDENT POPULATION BALANCE**

<u>Governing Law</u>: The means by which the charter school will achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils, as defined by the evaluation rubrics in Section 52064.5, that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted. – Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(G)

Rocketship shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of any of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220, including immigration status. Furthermore, RSK shall strive, through recruitment and admissions practices, to achieve a balance of racial and ethnic students, special education students, and English learner students, including redesignated fluent English proficient students, among its students that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the District.

Specifically, the means by which Rocketship will strive to achieve these balances are described below. This list is not meant to be exhaustive. Any such strategies will comport with all applicable federal and state laws and Rocketship policies prohibiting discrimination in admission.

- Printing and distributing materials in English, Spanish, and any other languages reflecting the needs of the community.
- Cultivating strategic partnerships with community organizations that serve diverse constituencies.
- Recruiting and retaining a diverse, highly-qualified recruitment and community engagement staff
  that is primarily composed of individuals who reside in the local community.
- Holding focus groups with parents and community organizations in the local community.
- Employing an enrollment process that is well-publicized, scheduled, and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based application process.
- Developing and distributing promotional and informational material that reaches out to all of the various racial and ethnic, ability, and linguistic groups represented in the territorial jurisdiction of the District.
- Developing and distributing promotional and informational material that reaches out to families of students with special needs.
- Conducting continuous outreach activities throughout the community. These activities will be held at a wide range of times and locations to ensure that community members and Rocketship families have sufficient opportunities to attend.
- Conducting ongoing data-based research into the demographics of the District.

Rocketship shall analyze the success and/or weakness of its outreach initiatives. Rocketship shall utilize the data from the programmatic audit to make any necessary revisions to the outreach initiatives in order to correct student population imbalances.

# **ELEMENT H: ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

"Admission policies and procedures, consistent with [Education Code Section 47605] subdivision (e)."

- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(H)

RSK shall strive to achieve a student population that understands and values Rocketship's mission and vision statements and is committed to our instructional and operational philosophy.

RSK shall be an open enrollment and tuition-free public charter school and shall admit all pupils who wish to attend. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into RSK. RSK will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. Admission, except in the case of a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or their parent or legal guardian within the state.

In accordance with Education Code Sections 49011 and 47605(e)(2)(B)(iv), admission preferences shall not require mandatory parental volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A), the Charter School shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the charter school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii), including pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Similarly, in accordance with Section 47605(e)(4)(C), the Charter School shall not encourage a pupil currently attending the Charter School to disenroll from the Charter School or transfer to another school for any reason, including, but not limited to the academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii), as listed above.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(D), the Charter School shall post a notice developed by the CDE on the Charter School website, outlining the requirements of Section 47605(e)(4), and make this notice available to parents.

The Charter School's recruitment and enrollment processes shall be as described herein. The Charter School shall maintain on its website instructions for applying and information on the public random drawing and enrollment processes, including all pertinent dates and deadlines, and hardcopies of all such instructions and information shall be provided upon request. Any procedures used to verify student residency must comply with state and federal law, and must not discriminate against students or prospective students based on disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or any other characteristic protected by law, or association with persons with any of these characteristics.

## **APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION PROCESS**

The application process begins with the completion of a student interest form, which includes basic student and family identification information for the purposes of entry into public random drawing. Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open application period each year for

enrollment in the following school year. RSK shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, subject only to capacity. In the event that this occurs, RSK will hold a public random drawing, further described below, to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students, who are guaranteed enrollment in the following school year.

In order for students to be included in the public random drawing for admission to the Charter School (if a public random drawing is necessary), families must submit an application that includes only the student's name, grade, birthdate, and contact information for the family, including address, the current school that the student may attend, and whether a sibling attends the Charter School or other information in order to establish whether the student is entitled to admission preference. The admission application submitted prior to any public random drawing and before a student is offered a space at the Charter School shall specifically be limited only to the above-listed general information and in no event shall any application/registration/enrollment materials that are requested or required prior to the student being offered a place at the Charter School include any information concerning any protected characteristic of the student or their parent/guardian, including, but not limited to, mental or physical disability or current or prior eligibility for services pursuant to the IDEA or Section 504.

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

- Student enrollment form which contains student name, address, and other identifying and demographic information;
- Proof of immunization;
- Home Language Survey;
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form;
- Proof of minimum age requirements;
- Release of records<sup>18</sup>

## **LOTTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

As described above, RSK will implement a public random drawing in the event that applications for enrollment exceed capacity. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B), enrollment preferences in the case of a public random drawing shall be allowed in the following order of preference:

- 1. Siblings of students currently admitted to or attending RSK
- 2. Children of employees of RSK (not to exceed 10% of total enrollment)
- 3. Students who qualify for free or reduced price meals
- 4. Residents of the Franklin-McKinley School District
- 5. Other California residents

Public random drawing rules, deadlines, dates and times will be communicated on Rocketship's website. Public notice for the date and time of the public random drawing will also be posted once the application deadline has passed. RSK will also inform parents of all applicants and all interested parties of the rules to be followed during the public random drawing process via mail or email at least two weeks prior to the lottery date.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(B), the Charter School shall not request a pupil's records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit the pupil's records to the Charter School before enrollment.

Each year, open enrollment occurs from the first Friday in November through the first Friday of March. The lottery is held on the Thursday of the second week in March. After that Thursday, the application opens again.

The Board of Directors will take all necessary efforts to ensure lottery procedures are fairly executed. Lottery spaces are pulled in order of grade level by the designated lottery official. Separate lotteries shall be conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than students interested in attending. Enrollment preferences are handled sequentially. All lotteries shall take place on the same day. Separate lotteries shall be conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than pupils interested in attending. All lotteries shall take place on the same day in a single location. Lotteries will be conducted in ascending order beginning with the lowest applicable grade level. There is no weighted priority assigned to the preference categories; rather, within each grade level, students will be drawn from pools beginning with all applicants who qualify for the first preference category, and shall continue with that preference category until all vacancies within that grade level have been filled. If there are more students in a preference category than there are spaces available, a random drawing will be held from within that preference category until all available spaces are filled. If all students from the preference category have been selected and there are remaining spaces available in that grade level, students from the second preference category will be drawn in the lottery, and the drawing shall continue until all spaces are filled and preference categories are exhausted in the order provided above.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a wait list in the order of 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. Students may also apply to RSK after the open application period and their applications will be held in abeyance for a subsequent lottery, as needed.

In no circumstance will a wait list carry over to the following school year. Rocketship will notify all wait list families when the next year's application becomes available. Students who remain on the wait list at the end of a given school year will have to submit a new application for the next school year.

Parents will be notified on application and enrollment forms and annually in the handbook that volunteerism is not required for acceptance to or continued enrollment at the Charter School.

# **ELEMENT I: FINANCIAL AUDIT**

<u>Governing Law</u>: The manner in which annual, independent, financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.-- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(I)

The RSED Board will appoint an Audit Committee, which will select an independent financial auditor and oversee audit requirements.

An annual audit of Rocketship's books and records will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(c)(5)(I) and 47605(m). Rocketship's books and records will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law. The audit will employ generally accepted accounting procedures. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller's K-12 Audit Guide.

The Audit Committee will select an independent auditor through a request for proposal format. The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and will be approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider. To the extent required under applicable federal law.

The annual audit will be completed and forwarded to the District, County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The Audit Committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Business Committee of the Board with recommendations on how to resolve them. The RSED Business Committee will then approve the audit. As soon as reasonably practicable, the Board will submit a report to the District describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved along with an anticipated timeline for the same. The Board and Executive Director of Rocketship Education - California will work with the District to ensure all audit exceptions and deficiencies are resolved to the satisfaction of the District. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel ("EAAP") in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit is public record to be provided to the public upon request.

The auditor will verify the accuracy of the Charter School's financial statements, attendance and enrollment, accounting practices, revenue-related data collection and reporting practices and will review the Charter School's internal controls. The audit will include a review of ADA as reported by the Charter School. Moreover, the audits will address whether the Charter School's money is being handled responsibly (in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles such as GAAP, LAO, GAGAS, and GAO) and that its financial statements conform to generally accepted accounting principles. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel ("EAAP") in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit of the Charter School is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

# **ELEMENT J: STUDENT SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

<u>Governing Law</u>: The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled from the charter school for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed from the charter school for any reason....

Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J)

Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy is maintained in RSK's Board-approved Student/Parent Handbook which, as discussed above in Element F, is attached and fully incorporated by reference as Appendix 26.

Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy is compliant with the federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements listed in Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J), as further detailed below. Moreover, Rocketship will comply with the requirement under Assembly Bill 2711 that, effective July 1, 2026, no Rocketship student shall be suspended or recommended for expulsion solely on the basis of (a) unlawfully possessing, using, or being under the influence of a controlled substance, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, or (b) having possessed or used tobacco, or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel.

- (i) For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, provide oral or written notice of the charges against the pupil and, if the pupil denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the pupil to present the pupil's side of the story. See Student/Parent Handbook, p. 59
- (ii) For suspensions of 10 days or more and all other expulsions for disciplinary reasons, both of the following:
  - (I) Provide timely, written notice of the charges against the pupil and an explanation of the pupil's basic rights. See Student/Parent Handbook, p. 61
  - (II) Provide a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer within a reasonable number of days at which the pupil has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the pupil has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate. See Student/Parent Handbook, pp. 61-70
- (iii) Contain a clear statement that no pupil shall be involuntarily removed by the charter school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than five school days before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil's parent or quardian, or, if the pupil is a homeless child or youth, or a foster child or youth, in the native language of the homeless or foster child's educational rights holder. In the case of a foster child or youth, the written notice shall also be provided to the foster child's attorney and county social worker. If the pupil is an Indian child, as defined in Section 224.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the written notice shall also be provided to the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker. The written notice shall inform the pupil, the pupil's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker of the right to initiate the procedures specified in clause (ii) before the effective date of the action. If the pupil's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, or county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker or, if applicable, county social worker initiates the procedures specified in clause (ii), the pupil shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For

purposes of this clause, "involuntarily removed" includes disenvolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions specified in clauses (i) and (ii). See Student/Parent Handbook, p. 68.

Rocketship also maintains an Attendance and Truancy Policy in the Student/Parent Handbook that is attached as Appendix 26. The Attendance and Truancy Policy contains additional requirements pertaining to involuntary removals, which can be found on pp. 14-15 of the Student/Parent Handbook.

(iv) A foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker and an Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker shall have the same rights a parent or guardian of a child has to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, and other documents and related information. See Student/Parent Handbook, p. 68.

The full Suspension and Expulsion Policy is found on pages 52-70 of the 2025-26 Student/Parent Handbook attached as Appendix 26. In addition to the above requirements, the Suspension and Expulsion Policy also contains:

- Procedures for in-school suspensions
- Homework assignments during suspension, in accordance with Education Code Section 47606.2
- Grounds for suspensions and expulsions
- Full suspension procedures and student rights during suspension
- Full expulsion procedures
- Special procedures for expulsion hearings involving sexual assault or battery offenses
- Special procedures for suspension or expulsion of students with disabilities
- Procedures for students not yet eligible for special education services
- Disciplinary records

# **ELEMENT K: STAFF RETIREMENT SYSTEMS**

<u>Governing Law</u>: The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, the Public Employees' Retirement System, or federal social security. -- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(K)

All full-time employees of Rocketship will participate in a qualified retirement plan. All full-time employees will be offered a 403(b) program with a 3% match from RSED. Full-time, eligible, certificated employees shall participate in the State Teachers' Retirement System ("STRS"), and all part-time employees and full-time non-certificated employees will participate in the federal social security system. The Charter School shall inform all applicants for positions within that Charter School of the retirement system options for employees of the Charter School. Rocketship employees may have access to additional Rocketship-sponsored retirement plans according to policies developed by the Board and adopted as Rocketship employee policies. Rocketship Education's Human Resources team, in conjunction with the Principal, ensures that appropriate arrangements for coverage have been.

Rocketship employees also have the option of participating in the Charter School's medical, dental and vision insurance plan. All employees and applicants are notified of their benefits options.

For more details on benefits offered to Rocketship employees, please see the Employee Handbook, attached as Appendix 24.

# **ELEMENT L: PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES**

<u>Governing Law:</u> The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the district who choose not to attend charter school. -- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(L)

No student may be required to attend RSK. Students who reside within the Franklin-McKinley School District who choose not to attend the Charter School may attend other district schools or pursue an intra- or inter-district transfer in accordance with existing district enrollment and transfer policies.

Parents and guardians of each student enrolled in RSK will be informed on admission forms that the students have no right to admission in a particular school of any local education agency as a consequence of enrollment in the Charter School, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the local education agency.

## **ELEMENT M: EMPLOYEE RETURN RIGHTS**

<u>Governing Law:</u> The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the district who choose not to attend charter school. -- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(L)

No public school district employee shall be required to work at Rocketship. Employees of a school district who choose to leave the employment of the school district to work at Rocketship will have no automatic rights of return to that district after employment by Rocketship unless specifically granted by the sending district through a leave of absence or other agreement. Rocketship employees who leave a school district to work at Rocketship shall have the return rights that the sending school district specifies, and any other rights upon return to the school district that the sending school district determines to be reasonable and not in conflict with any law.

Sick and vacation leave, and/or years of service credit, from any school district shall not be transferred to Rocketship Education. Employment by Rocketship Education provides no rights of employment at any other entity.

The Charter School acknowledges that employees are not required to engage in collective bargaining but they have that right if they choose to do so. The Charter School further acknowledges that only the school district has the authority to determine whether a collective bargaining agreement is controlling. Charter School staff shall not continue to earn service credit in a school district while employed at the Charter School.

Further, in the case of closure of RSK, RSK employees shall have no rights of employment/transfer to any other Rocketship school or entity, any school district, or any other employer.

For more details on employee rights at Rocketship, please see the Employee Handbook, attached as Appendix 24.

# **ELEMENT N: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS**

<u>Governing Law:</u> The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the chartering authority to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter."

- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(N)

### **Disputes Between FMSD and the Charter School**

The Charter School and FMSD will always attempt to resolve any disputes between them amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures. All timelines and procedures in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of authorized representatives of FMSD and the Charter School.

If either the Charter School or FMSD determines that a violation of the Charter or any other applicable law may have occurred or a problem has arisen related to the operation of the Charter School and/or FMSD's oversight obligations, or a dispute otherwise arises between FMSD and the Charter School, the following procedures shall be followed to resolve the dispute:

- (1) Should either party determine in writing that the violation or issue in question constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils, it shall not be bound by any portion of this dispute resolution process and FMSD may commence revocation proceedings immediately in accordance with Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing regulations, or take action as it deems necessary.
- (2) In the event that FMSD believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the Charter under Education Code Section 46707, participation in the dispute resolution procedures outlined herein shall not be interpreted to impede or act as a prerequisite to FMSD's ability to proceed with revocation in accordance with Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing regulations. Rather, FMSD may choose, in its sole discretion, to proceed directly with the revocation procedures as set forth in Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing regulations or may choose to participate in all or part of the dispute resolution procedures set forth below.
- (3) If the violation or issue in question does not constitute a severe and imminent threat and FMSD has not decided to commence revocation procedures without following this dispute resolution procedure, either party will provide written notification of the violation or issue ("the Dispute Statement") and refer the issue to the FMSD Superintendent and Charter School Executive Director, or their respective designees. The date that this written notice is provided or sent shall be the "Notice Date." Upon issuance of the Dispute Statement, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss and possibly resolve the dispute. Both parties must have representatives present at this meeting and the meeting shall be held within ten (10) calendar days after the Notice Date, or as mutually agreed upon by both parties. The FMSD representative at the meeting will be the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee, and the Charter School representative will be the Charter School's Executive Director or Executive Director's designee. If the dispute is not resolved at this meeting, or in strict accordance with any plan for resolution agreed upon at this meeting, the parties may proceed to step 4 or take any other action they deem appropriate in response to the dispute.
- (4) If the dispute is not resolved in accordance with the procedures through Step 3, either Party will have been deemed to have exhausted the administrative remedies within the Charter and may pursue any alternative legal options for resolution, including, FMSD may commence

revocation of the Charter and/or other appropriate action in accordance with Education Code Section 47607 or applicable law.

The Charter School Board will adopt policies and processes for airing and resolving disputes, other than those between FMSD and the Charter School which are covered above. Parents,, students, Board members, volunteers and staff at the Charter School will be provided with a copy of the Charter School's policies and internal disputes process.

FMSD will refer all disputes or complaints it receives not related to a possible violation of the Charter or law, or to the operation of the Charter School or FMSD's oversight obligations to the Charter School's Executive Director for resolution according to the Charter School's internal dispute resolution process. FMSD may choose to submit disputes it receives that are related to possible violations of the Charter or the law or to the operation of the Charter School or FMSD's oversight obligations to the Charter School's Executive Director for resolution according to the Charter School's internal dispute resolution process. Should FMSD receive a complaint regarding the Charter School that is referred to the Charter School for investigation and/or resolution, the Charter School shall provide FMSD with updates regarding the Charter School's investigation and resolution of the matter upon request from FMSD and upon resolution of the complaint or issue. In the event that the Charter School's adopted policies and processes fail to resolve the dispute, FMSD agrees not to intervene in the dispute without the consent of the Charter School's Board unless the matter relates to a possible violation of the Charter or law or to the operation of the Charter School or FMSD's oversight obligations.

### **Notice of Violation and Opportunity to Remedy**

For any material violation of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the Charter or the terms of the Agreement, FMSD shall provide notice of violation, opportunity to remedy, and revoke the Charter as set forth in Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing Regulations.

# **Internal Disputes**

All internal Rocketship disputes will be handled internally and will be governed by RSED's adopted policies. Rocketship maintains a Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures and Title IX complaint procedures as required by state and federal law, respectively. Parents, students, Board members, volunteers, and staff at Rocketship shall be provided with a copy of the Charter School's policies and internal dispute resolution process. FMSD will promptly refer all disputes not related to a possible violation of the charter or law to Rocketship.

# **ELEMENT O: CLOSURE PROCEDURES**

Governing Law: The procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the charter school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of public records. --Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(O)

The Charter School shall comply with the applicable elements of California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Sections 11962 and 11962.1 and any other applicable legal requirements for closure of a charter school and the following requirements. The closure procedures set forth herein shall be collectively referred to as the "Closure Protocol." The official action by the Charter School's Board documenting the closure of the school for any reason will be referred to as the "Closure Action."

- A. Charter School shall identify an entity and person(s) responsible for closure- related activities and each notice required below shall include information on the responsible person and entity and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure.
- B. The Charter School Board shall provide written notification to FMSD and the Santa Clara County of Education of the determination of the Closure Action and of the effective date of the closure, and the contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure as a charter school within 72 hours of the Closure Action.
- C. Charter School shall provide written notification to the home districts of the list of returning students within 10 calendar days.
- D. Charter School shall provide written notification of the Closure Action and the effective date of closure of Charter School to the California Department of Education, the Charter School's SELPA, and the retirement systems in which Charter School's employees participate by registered mail within 10 calendar days.
- E. On closure, Charter School shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the Charter School.
- F. This notice to the parents and students will be provided within 10 calendar days of the Closure Action. The written notification shall include information on assistance in transferring each student to another appropriate school, and a process for the transfer of all student records. Parents/guardians will also be provided with student information that includes grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, and specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.
- G. Charter School will provide parents, students and the receiving school districts with copies of all appropriate student records. All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with FERPA. As permitted by each student's district of residence, the Charter School shall transfer all appropriate student records to the district of residence, or the district to which the student is transferring if requested by the parent/guardian. Charter

School will ask FMSD to store original records of Charter School students for which the district of residence/district of attendance is not known or will not accept the records. If RMSD will not or cannot do so, Charter School will ask the Santa Clara County Office of Education to determine a suitable alternative location for storage. All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred and maintained in accordance with applicable law.

- H. As soon as is reasonably practical, but no later than 90 days after the latter of the Closure Action or the effective date of the closure, Charter School shall prepare final financial records. The Charter School's independent audit completed by an independent auditor who meets the qualifications to perform Charter School's annual audits, as soon as is reasonably practical, but in no case later than six months after closure, and provide the audit report to FMSD promptly upon completion. The auditor and audit shall comply with all of the requirements for Charter School's annual audit as set forth in the Charter. Any costs for the audit incurred by FMSD shall remain a liability of Charter School until repaid in full. The final audit will delineate the disposition of all assets and liabilities. Any liability or debt incurred by Charter School shall be the responsibility of Charter School and not FMSD. Charter School understands and acknowledges that Charter School will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Charter School. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source.
- I. For six calendar months from the latter of the Closure Action or the effective date of the closure, sufficient staff as deemed appropriate by the Charter School Board will maintain employment to take care of all necessary tasks and procedures required for smooth closing of the Charter School and student transfers.
- J. In addition to the final audit, Charter School shall also submit any required year- end financial reports to the California Department of Education and FMSD in the form and timeframe required.
- K. If Rocketship Education does not operate any other charter school other than the Charter School, the corporation may be dissolved according to its Articles of Incorporation.

The Charter School will utilize the reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.

As RSK is operated by a nonprofit public benefit corporation, should the corporation dissolve with the closure of the Charter School, the Board will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a nonprofit public benefit corporation and file all necessary filings with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

# **BUSINESS OPERATIONS**

<u>Governing Law:</u> The petitioner or petitioners also shall be required to provide financial statements that include a proposed first year operational budget, including startup costs, and cash flow and financial projections for the first three years of operation. -- Education Code Section 47605(h)

#### **BUDGETS AND CASH FLOW**

The following documents are attached as Appendix 3:

- A projected multi-year budget;
- Cash flow and financial projections;
- A narrative describing the above.

These documents are based upon the best data available to the Petitioners at this time. The Franklin-McKinley Elementary School District shall remit in-lieu property tax payments to the Charter School pursuant to Education Code Section 47635, which provides, in relevant part:

- (b) The sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer funding in lieu of property taxes to the charter school in monthly installments, by no later than the 15th of each month.
  - (1) For the months of August to February, inclusive, a charter school's funding in lieu of property taxes shall be computed based on the amount of property taxes received by the sponsoring local educational agency during the preceding fiscal year, as reported to the Superintendent for purposes of the second principal apportionment. A sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer to the charter school the charter school's estimated annual entitlement to funding in lieu of property taxes as follows:
    - (A) Six percent in August.
    - (B) Twelve percent in September.
    - (C) Eight percent each month in October, November, December, January, and February.
  - (2) For the months of March to June, inclusive, a charter school's funding in lieu of property taxes shall be computed based on the amount of property taxes estimated to be received by the sponsoring local educational agency during the fiscal year, as reported to the Superintendent for purposes of the first principal apportionment. A sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer to each of its charter schools an amount equal to one-sixth of the difference between the school's estimated annual entitlement to funding in lieu of property taxes and the amounts provided pursuant to paragraph (1). An additional one-sixth of this difference shall be included in the amount transferred in the month of March.
  - (3) For the month of July, a charter school's funding in lieu of property taxes shall be computed based on the amount of property taxes estimated to be received by the sponsoring local educational agency during the prior fiscal year, as reported to the Superintendent for purposes of the second principal apportionment. A sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer to each of its charter schools an amount equal to the remaining difference between the school's estimated annual entitlement to funding in lieu of property taxes and the amounts provided pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (2).
  - (4) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) of Section 14002, final adjustments to the amount of funding in lieu of property taxes allocated to a charter school shall be made in June, in conjunction with the third recertification of annual apportionments to schools.

(5) Subdivision (a) and paragraphs (1) to (4), inclusive, do not apply for pupils who reside in, and are otherwise eligible to attend a school in, a basic aid school district, but who attend a charter school in a non-basic aid school district. With regard to these pupils, the sponsoring basic aid school district shall transfer to the charter school an amount of funds equivalent to the local control funding formula grant pursuant to Section 42238.02, as implemented by Section 42238.03, earned through average daily attendance by the charter school for each pupil's attendance, not to exceed the average property tax share per unit of average daily attendance for pupils residing and attending in the basic aid school district. The transfer of funds shall be made in not fewer than two installments at the request of the charter school, the first occurring not later than February 1 and the second not later than June 1 of each school year. Payments shall reflect the average daily attendance certified for the time periods of the first and second principal apportionments, respectively. The Superintendent may not apportion any funds for the attendance of pupils described in this subdivision unless the amount transferred by the basic aid school district is less than the local control funding formula grant pursuant to Section 42238.02, as implemented by Section 42238.03, earned by the charter school, in which event the Superintendent shall apportion the difference to the charter school from state funds.

The attached budget assumes that these payments will be made timely by the District as required by Education Code Sections 47635 and 42238.02. The program outlined in the petition is predicated, among other things, on the District meeting its obligation to provide in-lieu property tax payments in a timely fashion and the State of California maintaining at least the funding rates per pupil contained in the 2025-26 fiscal year budget.

### FINANCIAL REPORTING

Rocketship shall provide reports as required by Education Code Section 47604.33 as follows, and shall provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the District:

- By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year.
- By July 1, an LCAP and an annual update to the LCAP required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5.
- By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the Charter School's annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the County Office of Education, State Controller, and State Department of Education.
- By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
- By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the
  District shall include an annual statement of all the Charter School's receipts and expenditures
  for the preceding fiscal year.

The Charter School shall provide reporting to the District as required by law and as requested by the District including, but not limited to, the following: California Basic Educational Data System, actual Average Daily Attendance reports, all financial reports required by Education Code Sections 47604.33 and 47605(m), the School Accountability Report Card, and the LCAP.

The Charter School agrees to and submits to the right of the District to make random visits and inspections in order to carry out its statutorily required oversight in accordance with Education Code Sections 47604.32 and 47607.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604.3, the Charter School shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries including, but not limited to, inquiries regarding its financial records from the District.

### **INSURANCE**

Rocketship shall acquire and finance general liability, workers compensation, and other necessary insurance of the types and in the amounts required for an enterprise of similar purpose and circumstance. FMSD shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of the Charter School.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

<u>Governing Law</u>: The manner in which administrative services of the charter school are to be provided. -- Education Code Section 47605(h)

Administrative services will be managed in-house and contracted with appropriately qualified and/or credentialed (as necessary) outside providers to address all administrative services. Please see above Element D for the role of Rocketship Education as the primary provider of administrative services. The Charter School does not anticipate purchasing any services from the District, but reserves the opportunity to include a review of District services and pricing as the Charter School deems appropriate.

Selection of contractors includes a rigorous screening process. In the case where a contractor is paid for by federal funds, the Charter School shall follow applicable federal guidelines.

### **FACILITIES**

Governing Law: The governing board shall require that the petitioner or petitioners provide information regarding...the facilities to be used by the charter school. The description of the facilities to be used by the charter school shall specify where the charter school intends to locate. – Education Code Section 47605(h).

RSK is located at 683 Sylvandale Ave, San Jose, CA 95111. The Charter School plans to remain located at this site through the term of this renewal. The facility was originally built for RSK's specific program and has been carefully maintained and updated throughout RSK's occupancy.

<u>Governing Law</u>: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the charter school and upon the school district -- Education Code Section 47605(h).

RSK is operated by RSED, a California non-profit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701(d). The specific purposes for which the corporation is organized are for the operation of public charter schools for educational services in accordance with the Education Code Section 47600, et seq.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(d), an entity that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit public benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by the Charter School if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

The Rocketship Education Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are attached as Appendix 19 and Appendix 20, respectively. Rocketship Education shall work diligently to assist the District in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other requested protocol to ensure the District shall not be liable for the operation of RSK.

Further, RSED and the District may enter into a memorandum of understanding or contract which shall provide for indemnification of the District by RSED. Insurance amounts will be determined by recommendation of the insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and type of program. The District shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of RSK.

The corporate bylaws of Rocketship Education and each of its schools shall provide for indemnification of the Rocketship Education and Rocketship Education Board of Directors, officers, agents, and employees, and Rocketship Education and Rocketship Board will purchase general liability insurance, Directors and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

Rocketship Education and the Rocketship Education Board of Directors will institute appropriate risk management practices, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, staff, and participating families, and procedures governing financial transactions and dispute resolution.

# **CONCLUSION**

By approving the renewal of this charter, the Franklin-McKinley School District Board of Education will be fulfilling the intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 to improve student learning; increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning opportunities for all students who are identified as academically low-achieving; create new professional opportunities for teachers; provide parents and students with expanded choices in education; and be following the directive of law to encourage the creation of Charter Schools. The Petitioners are eager to work independently but cooperatively with the District to set the gold standard for charter schools. To this end, the Petitioners pledge to work cooperatively with the District to answer any concerns over this document and to present the District with the strongest possible proposal for establishment of a charter for a five-year term to begin July 1, 2026. In order to comply with rigorous District charter approval requirements, the Petitioners have attached a comprehensive series of detailed appendices. With the exception of Appendices 1, 18, 24, 25, and 26, these appendices are not intended to be incorporated by reference into the petition, but are provided to ensure that the District has a full and accurate understanding of the scope of the charter proposal and the means by which the Petitioners intend to achieve the academic results outlined in the charter.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(c) the chartering authority shall be guided by the intent of the legislature that: "...charter schools are and should become an integral part of the California educational system and that the establishment of charter schools should be encouraged. The governing board of the school district shall grant a charter for the operation of the school if it is satisfied the granting of the charter is consistent with sound educational practice and with the interests of the community in which the school is proposing to locate."

4865-9474-0406, v. 8



Executive Summary Rocketship Education Board of Directors September 10, 2025

Agenda Item: 5(B)		OPEN/ACTION	
		INFORMATION	
Subject: Approve Artificial Intelligence for Instructional and Assignment Purposes Policy		CONSENT	

# Recommendation(s):

Staff members recommend that the Rocketship Education ("RSED") Board ("RSED-Board") approve the Artificial Intelligence for Instructional and Assignment Purposes Policy.

## **Background:**

This policy provides clear guidelines for the appropriate use of artificial intelligence ("AI") by students, teachers, and staff in instructional and assignment-related settings. It is designed to promote responsible, ethical, and educationally sound use of AI tools within the learning environment.

The policy is structured to allow for updates as AI technology continues to evolve. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects current best practices and continues to support effective teaching and learning.

# **Summary of Previous Board Action by Board:**

None

**Fiscal Impact:** 

None

Submitted by:

Abigail Gifford, Senior Legal Counsel



# **Artificial Intelligence for Instructional and Assignment Purposes**

Region(s): National

This Policy governs the use of AI by students, teachers, and staff for instructional and assignment purposes.

Rocketship is committed to ensuring that staff and students utilize AI effectively, securely, ethically, and in furtherance of our educational mission.

The successful integration of Al-based technologies depends on the collective efforts and collaboration of our entire organization. Therefore, we encourage all personnel to actively engage with this Policy, provide feedback, report concerns, share ideas, and contribute to our continuous improvement efforts, as we work together to harness the potential of Al in a responsible and ethical manner.

This Policy supplements (and does not contradict, limit, or replace) other Rocketship policies, requirements, prohibitions, and obligations. Any use of AI technologies must comply with all relevant policies and applicable laws. This Policy is not intended to restrict communications or actions protected or required by applicable law.

All personnel must comply with this Policy, and violations may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

For more information on technology and AI related policies, please refer to the Rocketship Employee Handbook and the Rocketship Student and Parent Handbook.

## **Guiding Principles**

Rocketship will adhere to the following guiding principles with respect to the use of AI:

- **Purposeful and Responsible Innovation**: Our goal is to help every student succeed, and we will get to this goal by using AI to make learning stronger and smoother.
- Al as a Partner, Not a Replacement: Our teachers, students, and families are at the center of learning. We use Al to support not replace the human connections that matter most.
- Data-Informed, People-Led Decisions: With equity and students at the center, we use Al to spot patterns and ask better questions, but people always make the final decisions.
- Empowering Adults for an Al-Driven Future: We use Al to help adults personalize learning and spend more time with each student, while also making sure our students learn to use Al responsibly, creatively, and with confidence to lead in an evolving world.

- **Empowering Students for an Al-Driven Future:** Every student deserves safe, age-appropriate, and fair access to Al.
- Community Collaboration & Transparency: We believe in shared ownership of AI use among teachers, leaders, and families. Families deserve transparency and a voice in decisions, as our collective efforts benefit everyone.

## **Definitions**

The following definitions apply to this Policy:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI): Computer software and systems capable of tasks typically requiring human intelligence, such as understanding natural language, recognizing patterns, learning from experience, and making predictions, recommendations, or decisions. Al includes any machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations, or decisions influencing real or virtual environments and that is capable of using machine and human-based inputs to perceive real and virtual environments, abstract such perceptions into models through analysis in an automated manner, and use model inference to formulate options for information or action.
- Generative AI (Gen AI): An AI system or tool that, in response to prompts from users, generates text, images, video, and other content or media based on the data and information on which it was trained.
- Artificial General Intelligence (AGI): Al that matches or surpasses human cognitive capabilities across a wide range of cognitive tasks. AGI would possess the ability to perform any intellectual task that a human can do, demonstrating flexibility, learning from experience, and applying knowledge across different domains without being limited to narrow tasks.

## Use of AI by Students

Teachers may allow students to use approved AI tools for instructional purposes. Any use of AI tools shall align with approved instructional standards and curriculum. Students may only use AI for instructional purposes when approved by the applicable teacher.

Students shall disclose their use of any AI tool on assignments. The use of AI to circumvent the learning process, including for submission as authentic student work where the use of AI is not permitted or where the use of AI is not specifically disclosed, is a violation of this policy and could lead to disciplinary consequences under the Rocketship Behavioral Expectations and Discipline Policy. As part of the disclosure, students may choose to cite their use of an AI system using an approved methodology for the course.

This Policy supplements (and does not contradict, limit, or replace) other Rocketship policies, requirements, prohibitions, and obligations regarding academic integrity.

# Use of AI by Staff

Personnel may use approved AI tools in the completion of their work consistent with the Rocketship Artificial Intelligence (AI) Acceptable Use Policy.

Personnel shall not place personally identifiable information, financial information, intellectual property, or other confidential information into an Al system.

Outputs from AI shall be reviewed and verified, including for accuracy, relevance, and quality, prior to use in order to reduce the risk of errors and inaccuracies.

## **Approved AI Tools and Use Cases**

Al technologies may only be used in compliance with other Rocketship policies regarding the use of technology. Students may only use Al where directed by their teacher. Only approved Al tools may be utilized and only for approved purposes.

The lists of approved AI tools and use cases will be reviewed at least annually. Rocketship expressly reserves the right to change, modify, or delete the technologies in this list without prior notice.

# **Review and Selection of Approved AI Tools**

The Rocketship AI Champion Working Group is responsible for reviewing and approving AI tools.

In addition to annual review, the lists of approved AI tools and use cases will be updated by the Rocketship AI Champion Working Group from time to time when additional AI technologies or use cases are approved by Rocketship or if approval of an AI technology or use case is revoked.

All requests to procure, develop, or otherwise obtain or access any Al must be directed to the Rocketship Al Champion Working Group.

Personnel should report any concerns, inaccuracies, or issues related to AI usage to the Rocketship AI Champion Working Group AI Champion Working Group.

## Confidentiality & Data Security

Rocketship data may only be disclosed to an approved Al tool.

When entering formal contracts with any AI technology, Rocketship will, where applicable, take steps to ensure compliance with all applicable data protection laws and regulations. Unless otherwise authorized by the Rocketship AI Champion Working Group, Rocketship will limit (via contract or otherwise) a vendor's ability to utilize Rocketship's information for purposes other than provision of the applicable services to Rocketship.

Rocketship will, where applicable for a particular AI technology:

- establish and maintain data retention periods based on the type of data, legal/regulatory requirements, and technical limitations; and
- take steps to ensure data is securely deleted and/or destroyed at the end of its retention period.

## **Monitoring and Enforcement**

Rocketship may implement technical and administrative controls and processes to monitor compliance with this Policy. Rocketship may, when appropriate and in accordance with its audit policies and practices, conduct periodic audits and assessments of Al usage and related processes, including with respect to accuracy, data use, effectiveness, and data protection. Rocketship may periodically collect and analyze feedback from personnel to identify areas for improvement in Al usage, training, and support.

Personnel should report suspected violations of this Policy to Rocketship AI Champion Working Group. Rocketship will promptly investigate reported violations and take appropriate corrective action, which may include additional training, disciplinary measures (up to and including suspension or termination), or process improvements, depending on the nature and severity of the violation.

Rocketship will periodically review and update this Policy as needed, including (i) evaluating the Policy's effectiveness in promoting responsible and secure Al usage; (ii) identifying any areas for improvement; (iii) incorporating feedback from personnel; and (iv) updating this Policy to reflect changes in technology, legal requirements, and best practices.

# **State Specific Reporting Requirements**

### Tennessee

Each year, by July 1, Rocketship will report to the Tennessee Department of Education regarding its compliance with Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-118. The report will include a copy of this Policy and describe how Rocketship will enforce this Policy in the upcoming school year.



Executive Summary Rocketship Education Board of Directors September 10, 2025

Agenda Item: 5(C)	Х	OPEN/ACTION
		INFORMATION
Subject: Approve Section 504 Policy		CONSENT

# Recommendation(s):

Staff members recommend that the Rocketship Education ("**RSED**") Board ("**RSED-Board**") approve the Section 504 Policy.

# **Background:**

The RSED Section 504 Policy has been reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local laws, and to reflect updates in school operations.

The primary content changes to the Section 504 Policy include:

- Revised language throughout the policy for greater clarity, accessibility, and ease of use by all school stakeholders, including families and staff.
- Improved clarity and organization of the Procedural Safeguards section, including easier-to-understand descriptions of parent/guardian rights, hearing procedures, dispute resolution options, and timelines.
- Updated policy language to reflect current Rocketship operational practices and organizational structure.

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None

# Fiscal Impact:

None

# Submitted by:

Abigail Gifford, Senior Legal Counsel



# **Section 504 Policy**

Region(s): National

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504") is a federal civil rights law which protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination for reasons related to their disabilities – it is broader than IDEA in that it prohibits discrimination within any federally-funded agency (not just schools).

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States...shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance... 29 USC 794(a).

As applied to public schools the Section 504 prohibits the denial of public education participation or enjoyment of the benefits offered by public school programs because of a child's disability. Section 504 provides a broad spectrum of protections against discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, all qualified students who meet the definition of an individual with a disability under Section 504 are entitled to receive regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet their individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of students without disabilities are met.

Section 504 also requires, among other things, that a student with a disability receive an equal opportunity to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities, and to be free from bullying and harassment based on disability.

Rocketship Education acknowledges its responsibility under Section 504 not to discriminate in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability shall be permitted in any program or practices in the school.

## **Child Find**

Section 504 contains a Child Find requirement that requires Rocketship Education to locate, identify, evaluate and place individuals who are, or are believed to be, in need of special services due to a physical or mental impairment. As such, Rocketship Education must conduct an evaluation of students who, because of a disability, need or are believed to need special education and/or related services.

The parent/guardian, teacher, or any other school employee with knowledge of the student may initiate a referral for a 504 evaluation. For a student for whom a need for special education services is suspected, the student will follow the referral process outlined for suspected disabilities under IDEA.

## Free and Appropriate Education ("FAPE")

An "appropriate education" is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet the student's individual needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students are met. An appropriate education must also be designed in accordance

with the procedures that satisfy Section 504's identification, evaluation, placement and due process requirements.

#### 504 Team

All decisions regarding a student's eligibility, 504 Plan, and placement will be made by the 504 Team. The 504 Team will be composed of persons knowledgeable about the student, the student's school history, the student's individual needs, the meaning of evaluation data, the placement options. Parents/guardians are necessary members of the 504 Team and will be encouraged to present information relevant to consideration of the 504 Team.

### **Identification and Referral**

A referral is a written or oral request for services made by the parent/guardian, teacher or any other school employee with knowledge of the student.

Circumstances that may merit a Section 504 referral include, but are not limited to:

- history of physical or mental impairment or disorder
- poor behavior with an impact on learning or academic performance
- poor academic performance
- excessive absenteeism including truancy
- serious health conditions
- returning to school after a serious injury or illness
- documented medical diagnosis by an outside agency or service provider
- increasing disciplinary infractions or suspensions which are excessive or repetitive
- finding by an IEP Team, after evaluation, that the student does not qualify for services
- failure to respond effectively to RTI intervention implemented with fidelity
- any other issues that may interfere with student's ability to participate in and benefit from the education program

### **Evaluation Process**

To determine whether formal assessments are necessary the 504 Team must review and consider the data already available to it. The 504 Team will convene to review the student's records including medical, academic and behavioral records to determine whether an evaluation is warranted. The term "evaluation" under Section 504 means to review information from a variety of sources and, if needed, obtain any additional information. An evaluation will review information from a variety of sources and, if needed, obtain any additional information. An evaluation may be broad (for example- including aptitude, psychological and achievement assessments, medical reports, social and cultural information, etc.) or narrow (for example- a single medical report). Formal assessments are not always required during an evaluation but may be in some instances.

The evaluation of the student must be sufficient for the 504 Team to accurately and completely describe:

- 1. the nature and extent of the disabilities,
- 2. the student's special needs,
- 3. the impact upon the student's education, and
- 4. what regular or special education and/or related aids and services are appropriate to ensure that the student receives a free and appropriate public education.

If a formal assessment or medical information is required to determine eligibility, Rocketship Education will either conduct the assessment at no cost to the parent/guardian or notify the parent/guardian that Rocketship Education will reimburse them for the cost of an outside assessment.

Assessment and information considered part of an evaluation includes (but not limited to):

Educational Records	Vision Screening/Assessment(s)
Classroom Observation	Academic Achievement Assessment(s)
Cognitive Assessment(s)	Speech-Language Assessment(s)
Hearing Screening/Assessment(s)	Occupational Therapy Assessment(s)
Physical Therapy Assessment(s)	Medical Records*

If the 504 Team determines that an evaluation is warranted, Rocketship Education will inform the parent/guardian of this decision and request consent to evaluate the student using the **Notice to Parent of 504 Referral and Evaluation Consent** form. The parent/guardian will also be provided with a copy of the **Notice of Parental Rights**. Consent for evaluation is voluntary and can be revoked at any time.

The evaluation must be conducted in a reasonable period of time. Although there is no specific requirement, Rocketship Education will aim to complete the evaluation within 45-60 days from the date of referral.

If formal instruments are used as part of the 504 evaluation, procedures used to administer assessments and other instruments must comply with the requirements of Section 504 regarding test validity, proper method of administration and appropriate test selection.

In general, the 504 evaluations should:

- 1. Include materials, tests, or evaluation procedures, as necessary, that are:
  - Validated for the specific purpose for which they are used;
  - Administered by trained personnel in conformance with the instructions provided by their producer;
  - Tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient;
  - Selected and administered so as best to 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 other
    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).
- 2. Be based on information from a variety of sources, i.e. teachers, other school staff members, parent/guardian, physician, nurse, and any other knowledgeable professionals;

- 3. Document and consider all available pertinent information, i.e. records, assessment data or medical reports related to the suspected physical or mental impairment, which may be substantially limiting a major life activity; and
- 4. Be conducted by a group of people, including those who are knowledgeable about the child, the suspected disabling condition, evaluative procedures, the meaning of evaluative data, and accommodation/placement options.

If the 504 Team determines a formal assessment or medical diagnosis is required to determine eligibility, Rocketship Education will conduct the assessment at no cost to the guardian or notify the guardian in advance that Rocketship Education will reimburse them for the cost of obtaining the specific outside assessment or medical diagnosis. Reimbursement is only available when the evaluation is both required and specifically requested by the Section 504 team.

Parent/guardian consent is required to evaluate under Section 504. When a parent/guardian refuses to consent, Rocketship Education cannot be held liable for failing to provide the student FAPE under Section 504.

## **Eligibility Criteria**

To qualify as a student eligible for FAPE under Section 504, a student must be determined to: (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity; or (2) have a record of such an impairment; or (3) be regarded as having such an impairment. The determination of whether a student has a disability must be made on an individual basis.

Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are automatically covered by Section 504; therefore, it is not necessary to identify students with disabilities who have a current IEP as eligible for accommodations under Section 504. The 504 eligibility process is intended to capture data for those students who are eligible for accommodations who are not receiving services under a current IEP.

# What is a Physical or Mental Impairment?

Section 504 defines physical or mental impairment as:

- Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the body systems – neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitor-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin and endocrine.
  - This definition includes such diseases and conditions as orthopedic, visual, speech and hearing impediments, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, attention deficit disorder (ADD), acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), and human immune deficiency virus (HIV+)
- Any mental or psychological disorder such as but not limited to mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.

Section 504 does not provide an exhaustive list of specific diseases or categories that may constitute physical or mental impairments.

Simply having a condition or impairment does not automatically mean a student is eligible under

# What is the meaning of Substantial Limitation?

The term "substantially limits" is not explicitly defined by Section 504. However, the following should be considered when determining if a student is substantially limited in performing a major life activity:

- In order to meet this standard, the student must be unable to perform a major life activity that the student's average peers can perform OR, the student must be restricted to a substantial degree as to the condition, manner, or duration under which the major life activity is performed by the student's average peers.
- An impairment need not prevent or severely or significantly limit a major life activity to be considered "substantially limiting." Nonetheless, not every impairment will be substantially limiting.
- The term "substantially limits" should be construed broadly and determination of substantial limitation should not require an extensive analysis.
- The determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity requires an individualized assessment.

# What if the Impairment is Episodic or in Remission?

An impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability that would substantially limit a major life activity when active. Impairments that are episodic (for example- seasonal allergies or asthma, migraines, rheumatoid arthritis) or in remission (for example- cancer that is in remission) should be considered for their impact over time. Students should not be denied eligibility because the disability is not limiting a major life activity at the time of evaluation, especially if it is known to have been substantially limiting in the past.

## What are Mitigating Measures?

The "substantially limits" determination must be made without regard to any ameliorative effects of mitigating measures. The 504 Team must make a Section 504 eligibility determination based upon the student's disability as it presents itself without the mitigating measures.

Mitigating measures include but are not limited to:

- medication, medical supplies, equipment, or appliances, low-vision devices (which do not include ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses), prosthetics including limbs and devices, hearing aids and cochlear implants or other implantable hearing devices, mobility devices, or oxygen therapy equipment and supplies;
- use of assistive technology;
- reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids or services; or
- learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications.

## What are Major Life Activities?

Major life activities include, but are not limited to, activities 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.

Major life activities may also include the operation of a major bodily function, including, but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

# **Eligibility Determination**

If the 504 Team determines that the student is a student with a disability under Section 504, then the 504 Team must determine whether services are required in order to educate the student as adequately as their nondisabled peers.

If services are deemed necessary, the 504 Team must develop a formalized 504 plan to reflect the services necessary to ensure FAPE under Section 504.

### **504 Accommodation Plans**

If a student is determined to be eligible for FAPE under Section 504, the 504 Team must develop a 504 Accommodation Plan and determine placement for the student.

Although there is no specific requirement, Rocketship Education aims to finalize Plans within (30) days from the date of eligibility. The initial 504 Plan may be developed at the time the disability determination is made during the eligibility meeting, or at a subsequent meeting if appropriate.

There are no set regulations on what is included within a 504 Plan. Rocketship Education requires that all 504 Plans are documented in writing and describe the specific accommodations and/or services the student needs to participate in and benefit from their educational environment, and who is responsible for ensuring that all the components of the 504 Plan are implemented.

### <u>Placement</u>

All students will be educated with those who are not disabled to the maximum extent appropriate based on their individual needs. A disabled student shall be placed in the general education environment unless it is demonstrated by Rocketship Education that education of the student in the general education environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

In providing or arranging for the provision of nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, including meals, recess periods, counseling services, physical recreational athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by Rocketship Education, referrals to agencies which provide assistance to persons with disabilities, and employment of students, including both employment by Rocketship Education and assistance in making available outside employment, Rocketship Education shall ensure that disabled students participate with nondisabled students in such activities and services to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the disabled student in question.

## <u>Supplemental Aids and Services</u>

The 504 Team will determine what individualized services are required to ensure appropriate services designed to meet the individual need of the student to the same extent as the needs of

students without a mental or physical impairment.

The 504 Team should consider aids, services and other supports that are provided in the classroom, other education-related settings, and in extracurricular and nonacademic settings. Such services could include, but are not limited to:

- accommodation/modification to the educational environment
- accommodation/modification to the academic curriculum and lesson presentation
- accommodation/modification in assignment and grading requirements
- classroom and State-wide testing accommodations
- specialized equipment and supplies
- physical accessibility including navigation within the building
- level of staff supported need
- transportation to and from school
- self-care and adaptive supports
- assistive technology and auxiliary aids
- social-emotional and behavioral supports
- functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and/or behavior intervention plan (BIP)
- related services

If related services are provided to the student as part of their 504 Plan, Rocketship Education providers will document their services in a 504 service log that will be kept in the student's hard copy 504 student file.

### **Implementation**

All relevant staff must be notified and provided a copy of the 504 Plan. A copy of the plan shall be kept in the student's file in a manner that permits access to staff involved in the 504 process and/or the provision of the student's 504 Plan.

### **Annual Reviews and Reevaluations**

The 504 Team will monitor the progress of the disabled student and the effectiveness of the student's educational plan at least annually, or sooner if necessary or requested, to determine whether the plan is appropriate and necessary and that the disabled student's needs are being met as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students.

Similar to the initial evaluation for eligibility, the team will use *various sources* in determining whether the student continues to demonstrate significant impairment with a major life activity that is the result of a handicapping condition or disability. If it is determined that the student continues to require a 504 Plan, the team may need to modify the previous plan to fit the student's current needs.

Under Section 504, reevaluations are required to be conducted periodically. Rocketship Education recommends that the 504 Team conducted a reevaluation at least every three years, or sooner if necessary or requested. Reevaluations must also occur prior to any significant change in placement whether for disciplinary reasons or otherwise.

Sometimes, a student may no longer require a 504 Plan to access their education and will exit the 504 Plan process. In these cases, the team will fully assess the student's needs prior to exiting a student from a 504 Plan.

# **Procedural Safeguards**

A parent/guardian will be provided with written notice of their rights and procedural safeguards (*Notice of Parental Rights*) at any time they are notified of decisions regarding the identification, evaluation or educational placement of the student.

These safeguards include the right to receive notice, the opportunity to examine relevant educational records, the right to an impartial due process hearing with participation by the parent/guardian and representation by counsel, and access to a review procedure following the hearing decision.

# Right to Due Process

A parent/guardian or guardian who disagrees with the identification, evaluation, contents, or implementation of a Section 504 plan shall have the right to request a hearing on the issue. The process for students covered under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) is driven by state and federal statutes

# Requesting a Due Process Hearing

The Section 504 hearing process is a two-step procedure. The first step involves a school-level review by the school's Section 504 coordinator (in consultation with the superintendent) of the issues raised by the student's parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian remains dissatisfied after the school-level review, s/he can request a hearing before an independent hearing officer.

**Step 1**: Rocketship General Complaint Process: Parents/guardians who have concerns or complaints regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student under Section 504 must first follow the **Rocketship Education General Complaint Process** to seek resolution at the school level.

**Step 2**: Independent Hearing: If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the outcome of the General Complaint Process, they may submit a written request for an independent hearing to the Regional Executive Director within five (5) business days. 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.

Rocketship Education will appoint a hearing officer who is not an employee of the school to preside over the hearing and issue a decision. The hearing officer shall be familiar with the requirements of Section 504. Rocketship Education is responsible for the compensation of the hearing officer. Rocketship Education is not responsible for the cost of parent/guardian's legal counsel or any other parent/guardian representatives or parent/guardian -secured witness.

The hearing officer shall attempt to schedule the hearing within 45 days of the parent/guardian's written request for hearing. This timeline may be extended for good cause or by mutual agreement of the parent/guardian and the regional Executive Director or their designee.

The hearing shall not exceed two (2) days in duration, and each party shall have a maximum of three (3) hours to present their case including presentation, direct examination, cross-examination, and argument. Both the parent/guardian and the school may be accompanied by legal counsel or individuals with special knowledge of the student. The party seeking relief bears the burden of persuasion and the burden of proof.

The hearing officer shall issue a written decision within ten (10) calendar days of the hearing. The hearing officer must confine their orders and rulings to those matters that involve identification, evaluation, or placement of children under Section 504 and to the provisions of the regulations implementing Section 504. A hearing officer may not award attorneys' fees, other monetary relief, or reimbursement as a part of relief granted to a parent/guardian. The decision of the hearing officer is binding on all parties.

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.

If a parent/guardian files a complaint or requests a hearing and then later withdraws it, they cannot raise the same issues again if those issues are more than 30 days old at the time of a new request for review.

At any time, the Rocketship Education may offer the parent/guardian an optional alternative resolution process. An alternative resolution process can only change the timeline for an independent hearing through mutual written agreement between the parent/guardian and the school.

Rocketship Education shall not retaliate in any way against parents/guardians or students who exercise any rights under the procedural safeguards and/or Section 504.

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

A student who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is subject to the same grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to general education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. Rocketship Education will follow Section 504 and all applicable federal and state laws when disciplining any student who has a disability, is suspected of having a disability, or is eligible for protections under these laws.

In instances of student conduct that require discipline, Rocketship Education shall follow the Rocketship Education Behavioral Expectations and Discipline Policy.

### **Section 504 vs Special Education**

Eligibility for protections and services under Section 504 is not the same as eligibility under IDEA. Section 504 has a broader definition of a disability. Section 504 provides protection from discrimination for students with disabilities in a general education setting who do not need specially designed instruction.

Students covered under IDEA with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) do not need a separate Section 504 plan, as provisions covered under Section 504 are covered under IDEA. Therefore, students who are covered under IDEA must have an IEP that addresses both the special education needs and any accommodations that would be provided under Section 504. Rocketship Education has no flexibility or discretion to provide services and accommodations under Section 504 when a student is IDEA-eligible.



Executive Summary Rocketship Education Board of Directors September 10, 2025

Agenda Item: 6(B)	Х	OPEN/ACTION
		INFORMATION
Subject: Review and Approve Revised Rocketship Fiscal Policies		CONSENT

# Recommendation(s):

Staff members recommend that the Rocketship Education ("**RSED**") Board of Directors ("**RSED-Board**") approve the Revised Rocketship Public Schools Fiscal Policies ("**Fiscal Policies**").

# Background:

As part of our annual cycle of policy revisions, staff members are recommending a number of smaller technical revisions to the Fiscal Policies, as well as several more substantive changes. The changes include:

- 1. Enhanced Conflict of Interest, Procurement, and Payroll policy language.
- 2. Updates throughout the policies to reflect regions outside California.
- 3. Clarifications and enhancements around purchasing thresholds and rules to capture Ramp capabilities.

# **Summary of Previous Board Action by Board:**

On June 11, 2025 the RSED-Board approved the Revised Rocketship Fiscal Policies.

### Fiscal Impact:

None

# Submitted by:

Ben Carson, Chief Financial Officer

# **Rocketship Public Schools**

# Fiscal Policies Revised and Approved September 2025



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# Introduction

The Governing Board of Rocketship Education (also referred to as Rocketship Public Schools and hereinafter the "RPS Board") has formally reviewed and adopted the following fiscal policies to promote the effective stewardship of RPS resources in support of its mission. These policies are intended to ensure that all funds are responsibly budgeted, accurately accounted for, prudently expended, and properly safeguarded in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and best practices.

# **Purpose of the Policies**

As stewards of both public and private funds dedicated to advancing students' education and achievement, all RPS personnel are expected to fully comply with and uphold the fiscal policies set forth in this document.

These fiscal policies serve as the formal framework for the Organization's financial operations. Their primary purpose is to ensure that assets are properly safeguarded, financial statements are prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and all financial activities are conducted with the highest standards of accountability, integrity, and responsible stewardship

# **Amending the Policies**

This document contains the essential fiscal policies of RPS. From time to time, as additional matters require, or as changes to the policies are appropriate, management of RPS will propose amendments to the policies for review and approval by the RPS Board. The Board must approve any changes to the fiscal policies.



# 1.0 Accounting Standards

# 1.1 Basis of Accounting

# **Generally Accepted Accounting Principles**

The accounting procedures used by the organization shall conform to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (<u>GAAP</u>) to ensure accuracy of information and compliance with external standards.

# **Basis of Accounting**

The organization will maintain financial reports throughout the fiscal year on an accrual-basis of accounting.

# **Fiscal Year**

The RPS fiscal year is July 1-June 30.

# **1.2 Accounting Processes**

### 1.21 Bank Reconciliations

Bank reconciliation and approval will occur on a monthly basis.

# 1.22 Stale Check Policy

Outstanding checks not cashed within 180 days are canceled and payees are notified in compliance with state law.

Payees are encouraged to deposit or cash checks within 90 days of the issuance date. Payees will be contacted for any checks that have not yet been cashed after 90 days after the issuance date. Checks will be voided on or before 180 days after the issuance date.



# 1.23 Payroll Access & Management

Rocketship Public Schools (RPS) is committed to maintaining accurate, timely, and secure payroll processing and access controls. This policy applies to all RPS employees, managers, payroll staff, and any third-party service providers with authorized access to RPS payroll and timekeeping systems.

# **Audit Reports**

RPS shall utilize Workday's audit reporting features to generate routine reports that monitor and flag any changes to employee data, including pay rates, job classifications, direct deposit details, and tax elections. These audit reports are part of the Payroll period checklist and shall be reviewed regularly by the Payroll Department to detect and resolve discrepancies promptly.

### **New Hire and Termination Notifications**

The Payroll Department shall receive automated notifications for all new hires, terminations, and employee status changes entered into Workday. This ensures timely updates to payroll records and prevents inaccurate or unauthorized payments.

# **Standardized Timekeeping**

RPS shall require all hourly employees to use a standardized timekeeping system for accurate recording and approval of hours worked. Managers are responsible for reviewing and certifying time entries each pay period to confirm that hours worked are complete, accurate, and compliant with applicable labor laws and organizational policies.

# 1.24 Monthly Close

The Accounting team seeks to close all RPS books no later than 15 business days after the end of the month.

### 1.25 Retirement Savings Plan Policy

Rocketship Education Inc is the plan administrator for a 403(b) retirement account. The purpose of this plan is to provide all eligible employees with a compliant, secure, and transparent retirement savings plan. All contribution reconciliations, supporting documentation, and true-up reports shall be retained in compliance with RPS's Records Retention Policy and applicable ERISA requirements.

# 1.26 Financial Reporting

The Finance and Accounting teams prepare financial reports for the purpose of monitoring RPS's financial health, performance against budget, and adherence to fiscal policies. Financial statements and performance against budget reports will be reviewed by the CFO and CEO on a monthly basis. They will be reviewed by the Business Committee of the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis.

# **1.27 Audit**

The RPS Board will contract with a qualified independent certified public accounting firm to conduct an audit of the organization's financial statements in accordance with auditing standards



generally accepted in the United States of America, Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and, if applicable, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in the applicable sections of the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200) and related OMB requirements. The selected audit firm must be familiar with these standards and the state charter school audit requirements where RPS operates schools in order to properly conduct the audit engagement. Further, the auditor must be selected from the State Controller's list of approved auditors for Local Education Agencies.

The RPS Board will approve and appoint the independent auditor each year and from time to time will solicit proposals from interested firms prior to appointing an audit firm.

### **Audit Committee**

The RPS Board shall appoint an Audit Committee composed of one or more individuals. Members of the Audit Committee shall not include any employees of the organization, including the President or CEO, Treasurer, or CFO. Additionally, no individual with expenditure authorization or responsibility for recording financial transactions within the organization may serve on the Committee.

The Audit Committee shall be responsible for reviewing the results of the annual independent audit and for developing a corrective action plan to address any material weaknesses or deficiencies identified by the auditor. The Committee shall also evaluate the performance of the external auditor and make recommendations to the Board regarding the selection, retention, or replacement of the auditor as appropriate.

The RPS Board shall review and approve the final audited financial statements no later than December 15 of each year.

# 1.28 Tax Compliance

### **Exempt Organization Returns**

The RPS Board shall engage an independent external firm to conduct the annual financial audit and to prepare the annual Federal Form 990 and required state tax returns. These tax filings shall be submitted no later than May 15 of each year, unless an extension has been formally obtained. The Board acknowledges that, under certain circumstances, the filing deadline may be extended beyond May 15 in accordance with applicable regulations.

# 2.0 Internal Controls

The Finance and Accounting teams are entrusted with safeguarding RPS's assets, implementing and upholding management's internal policies, and ensuring full compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations. All financial activities are conducted in strict accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (US GAAP) to ensure the production of timely, accurate, and reliable financial information. Furthermore, as a publicly supported organization, RPS recognizes its heightened responsibility to maintain the public's trust and to



uphold the highest standards of transparency and integrity in all financial operations, thereby reinforcing confidence in the mission and activities of our schools.

# 2.1 Conflict of Interest

The Rocketship Conflict-of-Interest Policy (COI) is intended to safeguard the organization's interests when considering any transaction or arrangement that could result in a personal benefit to any officer or Director of the Corporation. This policy is designed to supplement, and not supersede, any applicable state or federal laws governing conflicts of interest for nonprofit and charitable organizations. It is intended to promote transparency, accountability, reputation, and adherence to the highest ethical standards in all decision-making processes.

# **Central Registry of Flagged Vendors/Personnel**

RPS shall establish and maintain a centralized registry of any vendors, contractors, or personnel flagged for actual or potential conflicts of interest, ethical concerns, or policy violations.

# **Strengthened COI Clauses in Vendor Agreements**

All RPS vendor contracts and procurement agreements shall include robust COI clauses requiring full disclosure of any actual or potential conflicts. These agreements shall outline RPS's right to terminate the contract if undisclosed conflicts are discovered. Vendors must comply with this policy and fully cooperate with any related review or investigation.

# **Disclosure and Review Process**

Any RPS director, officer, employee, or vendor must promptly disclose any potential conflict of interest in writing to the Executive Director or Compliance Officer. The Board of Directors or its designated committee shall review all disclosures and determine appropriate steps to mitigate or eliminate any conflict, including but not limited to recusal from decision-making, reassignment of responsibilities, or discontinuation of vendor relationships.

### **Compliance and Enforcement**

Failure to disclose a conflict of interest or violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or contracts. RPS reserves the right to take any action necessary to protect the organization's integrity and to ensure full compliance with this policy and applicable laws.

# 2.2 Lines of Authority

# **Board of Directors Authority**

The board of directors shall have the sole authority to:

- Approve the fiscal policies and delegate administration of the policies to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- Approve the opening and closing of bank accounts and the list of authorized signers and the organization address on record.
- Approve all third-party loans.
- Approve the annual budget.
- Review annual and quarterly financial statements, and budget-to-actual variance analysis.



- Conduct a review of the CEO's performance annually and establish their salary.
- Commission the annual financial audit by an independent third party auditor approved in Rocketship's operating locations.
- Approve the annual financial audit by December 15.
- Designate another officer to perform the duties of the CEO in the case of absence.

# **Financial Responsibilities and Accountability Summary:**

Role	Responsibilities	Accountability
Governing Board	<ul> <li>Approve annual budget submitted by CFO</li> <li>Review financials on a quarterly basis</li> <li>Contract for audit annually</li> <li>Approves intercompany and intracompany grants and loans, including management fee deferrals</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Hold CEO/CFO         accountable for financial         management and for         staying within budget</li> <li>Review CEO performance         and set compensation</li> </ul>
CEO/CFO	<ul> <li>Create annual organizational budget</li> <li>Monitor to stay within approved budget</li> <li>Fiscal management, training and oversight</li> </ul>	Hold budget owners     accountable for staying     within budget and for     execution of fiscal policies
CFO	<ul> <li>Responsible for all oversight of RPS's financial management and planning for its ongoing sustainability</li> <li>Develop the annual budget</li> <li>Oversee the Business Team and responsibility for all functions that fall within the department.</li> <li>Ensure adequate internal control and segregation of duties</li> <li>Cash flow management</li> <li>Structure and negotiate loans/bonds</li> </ul>	Oversees the adherence to all internal controls.
National Leadership Team	<ul> <li>Create departmental budgets</li> <li>Monitor to stay within approved budget</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Hold team accountable for staying within budget, and for execution of fiscal policies</li> </ul>



Role	Responsibilities	Accountability
EDs	<ul> <li>Create regional budgets</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Hold principals         accountable for staying         within budget, and for         execution of fiscal policies</li> </ul>
Principals	<ul> <li>Create school budget</li> <li>Monitor to stay within approved campus budget</li> <li>Fiscal management and oversight at a school level</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Hold team accountable for staying within budget, and for execution of fiscal policies</li> </ul>

# 2.2 Segregation of Duties

To safeguard the organization's financial assets and uphold the highest standards of integrity, financial responsibilities shall be systematically and appropriately segregated among multiple individuals. This segregation of duties is a critical internal control designed to mitigate the risks of fraud, misappropriation, and errors while ensuring operational efficiency and accountability.

# **Key Principles**

- No single individual shall have control over all critical stages of any financial transaction.
- Responsibilities related to authorization, processing, recording, and reconciliation shall be distributed to prevent conflicts of interest and reduce risk.
- The segregation of duties shall be reviewed periodically to adapt to organizational changes and evolving risk profiles.

### **Invoice Processing and Approval**

- Invoice receipt, verification, and approval must be handled by different individuals.
- Approval authority should be commensurate with predefined financial thresholds aligned with the organization's delegation of authority policy.

### **Payment Authorization**

- Payment preparation and authorization shall be separated.
- Personnel responsible for payment approval must not be involved in the payment execution process.

### **Check Signing and Payment Execution**

• The authority to sign checks or authorize electronic payments shall be limited to designated personnel, with dual signatures or approvals required for amounts exceeding established thresholds.

# **Contracting Authority**

- Contract negotiation, approval, and execution must be conducted by separate individuals or departments according to defined delegation limits.
- Contracts involving financial commitments beyond certain thresholds shall require additional executive or board-level approval.



# **Reconciliation and Monitoring**

- Periodic independent reconciliations of accounts and financial records shall be conducted by personnel not involved in transaction initiation or approval.
- Exception reports and irregularities shall be promptly escalated for review and investigation.

### **Threshold Governance**

- All financial activities, including invoice approvals, payment authorizations, check signing, and contracting, shall adhere to established monetary thresholds that trigger varying levels of review and approval.
- These thresholds will be documented, communicated, and regularly reviewed to ensure appropriateness.

To properly segregate duties, invoice approval, payment, check signing, and contracting authority is subject to the following thresholds:



Contracting Authority requirement	Value	Regional Contracts, purchase orders, or other pre-authorizations * (entered into by regional entities)	National Contracts, purchase orders, or other pre-authorizations
	up to 5K	Associate Director	Associate Director
	up to 10K	Director, Schools or AD/Director of Operations	Director
Contract's price or reasonable value			
	10K < 25K	Senior Director/VP	Senior Director/VP
	25K <50K	Executive Director	Chief-level Officer (e.g. Chief People Officer) Launchpad Executive Director
	50K < 100K	CEO or CFO	CEO or CFO
	100K<500K	CEO and CFO	CEO and CFO
	500K<1M	CEO or CFO AND	CEO or CFO AND Board Chair or Chair of Finance Committee
	>\$1M	Board of Directors or Business Committee	Board of Directors or Business Committee or Executive Committee
All Real Estate Leases 3+ years	Regardless of value	CEO or CFO with board approval	CEO or CFO with board approval

<sup>\*</sup>Regional boards grant authority to the CEO and CFO for approvals.



Invoice/Payment Approval	Value	Regional Invoices/Payments/Transfers/Wires (entered into by regional entities)*	National Invoice/Payments/Transfers/Wires
	up to 5K	Principal or AD	AD
	up to 10K	Director, Schools or AD/Director of Operations	Director
	10K < 25K	ED	Senior Director/VP
	25K <50K	ED	Chief or General Counsel Launchpad Executive Director
	50K < 100K	CEO or CFO	CEO or CFO
	100K<500K	CEO <u>and</u> CFO	CEO <u>and</u> CFO
	500K<1M	CEO or CFO AND Board Chair or Chair of Finance Committee	CEO or CFO AND Board Chair or Chair of Finance Committee
	>\$1M	Board of Directors or Business Committee	Board of Directors or Business Committee or Executive Committee

<sup>\*</sup>Regional boards grant authority to the CEO and CFO for approvals.

Approval authority can be delegated to another member of the RPS Leadership Team in the event that one of the approvers is out of the office. In the event that the CEO or CFO is not available, the Board Chair or Chair of the Business Committee may approve in their place.

# 2.3 Record Keeping

Financial records will be retained for a minimum of seven years or as outlined in tables below. This policy is designed to ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations, to eliminate inadvertent destruction of records and to facilitate RPS's operations.

# **Document Retention Schedule**

The following types of documents will be retained for the following periods of time. At least one copy of each document will be retained according to the following schedule. Electronic copies suffice unless a hard copy is required by law.



# **Corporate Records**

Article of Incorporation to apply for corporate status	Permanent
IRS Form 1023 (in the USA) to file for tax- exempt and/or charitable status:	Permanent
Bylaws	Permanent
State Application for Tax Exempt Status (Form 3500)	Permanent
Letter of Determination (for example, from the IRS in the USA or the state) granting tax exempt and/or charitable status	Permanent
Board Policies	Permanent
Resolutions	Permanent
Board and Committee Meeting agendas and minutes	Permanent
Sales Tax Exemption Documents	Permanent
Tax or employee ID Number Designation	Permanent
Annual Corporate Filings	Permanent

# **Financial Records**

	,
Chart of Accounts	Permanent
Fiscal Policies	Permanent
Audits	Permanent
Financial Statements	Permanent
General Ledger	Permanent
Check Registers/Books	7 years
Business Expenses Docs	7 years
Bank Deposit Slips (or equivalent retained by financial institutions)	7 years
Cancelled Checks (or equivalent retained by financial institutions)	7 years
Invoices	7 years
Investment Records (deposit, earning, withdrawals)	7 years



Property/asset inventories	7 years
Petty cash receipts /documents	7 years
Credit card receipts	7 years

# **Tax Records**

Annual Tax Filing for the organization (IRS Form 990 in the USA)	Permanent
FTB Annual Form 199	Permanent
Payroll Registers	Permanent
Filings of fees paid to professionals (IRS Form 1099 in the USA)	7 years
Payroll tax withholdings	7 years
Earnings records	7 years
Payroll tax returns	7 years
W-2 statements	7 years

# **Personnel Records**

ersonnei Records		
Document	Time Period	
Recruitment, Hiring and Job Placement Records	3 years after separation, or for	
Job applications	the duration of any claim or	
Resumes	litigation regarding hiring	
Letters of recommendation	practices	
Other job inquiries sent to the Charter School		
<ul> <li>Job advertisements/postings</li> </ul>		
Results of non-medical pre-employment tests		
Offers of employment		
Employment agreements		
<ul> <li>Signed pre-employment disclosures (employee handbook</li> </ul>		
acknowledgment, complaint procedures, etc.)		
Employee training (harassment prevention, mandated)		
reporting, etc.)		
Employee certificates, credentials, licenses, and other		
evidence of qualifications		
Evidence of criminal background check		
Employee Performance and Other Personnel Records	3 years after separation	
Job descriptions		
Training and testing		
Performance goals		



<ul> <li>Performance evaluations</li> <li>Written feedback and commendations</li> <li>Promotions and demotions</li> <li>Letters of reprimand and discipline</li> <li>Performance Improvement Plans</li> <li>Termination, resignation, lay-offs, etc.</li> <li>Notices and letters</li> </ul>	
Employee Medical Leave Records (PDL, FMLA, CFRA, etc.) *  Requests for leave Health care provider notes Leave calculations Records of disputes regarding leave Employee benefits related to leave Leave policies	3 years after separation  * Records that contain employee confidential medical information should be retained in a separate, secure file.
<ul> <li>Employee Wage Records</li> <li>Employment agreements</li> <li>Wage rates and calculations</li> <li>Shift schedules (hours and days)</li> <li>Time cards</li> <li>Individual calculations for absences, sick days, vacation days, etc.</li> <li>Itemized wage statements/pay stubs</li> </ul>	3 years after separation  Note: If a record is both a wage record and a payroll record, follow the longer retention period.
<ul> <li>Employee Payroll Records</li> <li>Employee name, address, age, and occupation</li> <li>Individual wage records</li> <li>Regularly hourly rate</li> <li>Hours worked (daily/weekly)</li> <li>Weekly overtime earnings</li> <li>Daily and weekly straight time earnings</li> <li>Deductions from or additions to wages</li> <li>Wages paid each pay period</li> <li>Pay dates and pay periods</li> <li>Unemployment Insurance Records</li> </ul>	4 years, generally
Employment Eligibility (I-9 Forms)	The later of (a) 1 year after separation, or (b) 3 years from date of hire.
Employee Health Records*  • First-aid records  • Job injuries (causing loss of work time)  • Drug and alcohol test records	5 years after separation  * Records that contain employee confidential medical



	information should be retained in a separate, secure file.
<ul> <li>Employee Workers' Compensation Records</li> <li>Copies of claim forms</li> <li>Reports of occupational injury or illness</li> <li>Letters of denial of benefits</li> <li>Reports to the Division of Workers' Compensation</li> <li>Benefits paid</li> <li>Estimates of future benefits</li> <li>Applications to the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board</li> <li>Orders and Awards of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board</li> </ul>	5 years after date of injury and 2 years after claim has been closed.  * Records that contain employee confidential medical information should be retained in a separate, secure file.
<ul> <li>Employee Benefit Records</li> <li>Benefits elections</li> <li>Beneficiary designations</li> <li>Eligibility determinations</li> <li>COBRA notices</li> <li>Summary plan descriptions</li> <li>Other welfare benefit plan information (life, health, disability, long-term care, post-retirement medical)</li> </ul>	6 years after separation, but not less than 1 year following a plan termination.  * Records required to determine retirement benefits, including 401(k) and similar plans, must be kept indefinitely.

Note: For simplicity, RPS may choose to keep the majority of an employee's personnel file and other records for the duration of employment plus seven (7) years. This time period covers nearly every law, with the exception of three (3) types of records, as outlined above, that must be removed from a file before it is disposed of and retained for a longer duration:

Pension and welfare plan information (6 years)

First aid records of job injuries causing loss of work time (5 years)

Safety and toxic or chemical exposure records, including safety data sheets (30 years)

# **Insurance Records**

Property Insurance Policy	Permanent
Directors and Officers Insurance Policy	Permanent
Workers' Compensation Insurance Policy	Permanent
General Liability Insurance Policy	Permanent
Insurance Claims Applications	Permanent



Insurance Disbursements/ Denials	Permanent
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# **Contracts**

All insurance Contracts	Permanent
Employee Contracts	7 years after termination
Construction Contracts	Permanent
Legal Correspondence	Permanent
Loan/mortgage and Real Estate Documents	Permanent
Leases/Deeds	Permanent
Vendor Contracts	7 years from completion or conclusion of service
General and all other Contracts	7 years from completion or conclusion of service

# **Donations / Funder Records**

Grant Dispersal Contract and any related documents	Permanent
Donor Lists	7 years
Grant Applications	7 years
Donor Tax Letters	7 years

**Management Plans and Procedures** 

Strategic Plan	7 years
Staffing, programs, marketing, finance, fundraising and evaluation plans	7 years
Vendor Contracts	7 years
Disaster Recovery Plan	7 years

# 2.4 Gift Acceptance

# **Purpose**



As a not-for-profit organization exempt as a public charity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, RPS encourages the solicitation and acceptance of gifts for purposes that will assist RPS to further and fulfill its mission.

The purpose of this Policy is to govern the acceptance of gifts by RPS and to provide guidance to the Board, the CEO, and prospective donors when making gifts to RPS. The provisions of this Policy shall apply to all gifts received by RPS for any of its schools, programs or services, and to the acceptance of gifts made to RPS or for the benefit of any of its schools or programs.

### **Restrictions on Gifts**

RPS will accept unrestricted gifts, and gifts for specific schools, programs and purposes, provided that such gifts are consistent with RPS' mission, purposes, and priorities. RPS will not accept gifts that are too restrictive in purpose. Gifts that are too restrictive are those that violate the charitable and educational trust of RPS, or that are accompanied by an improper economic benefit to the donor or vest the donor with inappropriate control or influence. When practicable, restricted monetary or other gifts should be accepted with formal caveat acknowledged by donor that it may be converted to unrestricted if the donor's intended restriction cannot be met or is no longer in best interest of RPS.

### **Use of Legal Counsel and Other Professional Assistance**

RPS shall seek the advice of legal counsel or other professional advisors (such as an accountant, financial advisor or professional money manager) when appropriate and as recommended in this Policy relating to the acceptance of certain types of gifts. Generally, RPS shall seek the advice of legal counsel in all matters pertaining to the acceptance of any gift which may have adverse legal, ethical (including a potential conflict of interest), or other consequence of concern to RPS.

All prospective donors shall be urged and encouraged by RPS to seek and secure the assistance of independent legal, tax and financial advisors in matters relating to their gifts and the resulting tax and estate planning implications. RPS shall not pay the legal fees or any professional fees of the donor in connection with a gift to RPS. RPS shall not provide any opinion, statement or recommendation to the donor as to the tax deductibility of the gift or as to any tax consequences or tax implications of the gift that may affect the donor.

It shall be the responsibility of the donor to secure an appraisal of property where required by RPS. The donor shall pay any fees associated with securing such appraisal.

# **Types of Gifts**

The following types of gifts are generally acceptable:

- 1. Cash Donations
- 2. Testamentary Bequests
- 3. Charitable Remainder Trusts
- 4. Charitable Lead Trusts
- 5. Tangible Personal Property
- 6. Life Insurance/Life Insurance Beneficiary Designations
- 7. Retirement Plan Beneficiary Designations



- 8. Securities
- 9. Real Estate

The following types of gifts are generally not acceptable:

- 1. Charitable gift annuities
- 2. Pooled income funds

### **Valuation of Gifts**

RPS shall record a gift received by RPS at its valuation for gift purposes on the date of gift and in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (<u>GAAP</u>).

# IRS Filing Upon Sale of Gift

RPS is responsible for filing IRS Form 8282 upon the sale or disposition of any non-cash donated property sold by RPS within three years of receipt where the charitable deduction value of the item was \$5,000.00 or greater. RPS must file such form within IRS-required timelines. The Chief Financial Officer shall be responsible for the recordation and filing of this form to the IRS.

# **Written Acknowledgment of Gifts and Contributions**

RPS will provide written acknowledgement of all gifts in compliance with the current IRS requirements. The Chief Financial Officer shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with IRS requirements regarding acknowledgments. Under no circumstance shall RPS accept a donation of any real property interest without advice of legal counsel and RPS Board approval. The RPS Board recognizes the risks associated with acceptance of real estate.

# **Management Fee Applicability**

In consideration for all Management Services, RPS shall receive a monthly Management Fee equal to 15% of "Applicable Revenue." Management Fees shall be used consistent with RSPS's exempt purpose.

Applicable Revenue is defined as local, state and federal revenues of all such Charter Schools, including GP Entitlement Funds and CBG Funds, paid or accrued with regard to a particular year (without regard to the date funds are actually received). Applicable Revenue shall exclude:

- 1. Lunch reimbursement
- 2. Uniform reimbursement
- 3. After school program reimbursement
- 4. Title V startup funds
- 5. Private grants, unless otherwise authorized
- 6. Local fundraising revenues, unless otherwise authorized



# 3.0 Financial Management

# 3.1 Budgeting Process

The CFO will prepare an annual budget and multi-year forecast each year for presentation to the national board of directors and regional boards of directors. The preliminary annual budget is to be reviewed and approved by the RPS Board prior to the start of each fiscal year. During the first quarter of the fiscal year, the CFO will prepare updates to the budget based on the latest information on enrollment, funding sources, staffing, and operational costs. The RPS National Board and regional boards will review and approve this updated budget, which will be used for reporting purposes (e.g., tracking actual vs. budgeted CINA) for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The CFO will work together with national and regional leadership to ensure that the annual budget is an accurate reflection of RPS's strategic priorities, programmatic and infrastructure goals for the coming year. The CFO's budget proposal will include any significant capital expenditure projects (significant is defined as over \$500K), as well as any proposed intercompany or intracompany grants or loans, including management fee deferrals.

As part of the budget, the CFO will propose a target change in net assets ("CINA") for the national office and each region to meet strategic goals and/or comply with existing loan covenants.

# 3.2 Borrowing and Loaning Funds

The assumption of debt, including lines of credit or loans from banks and other financial lenders, shall be approved by the Board of Directors. Board authorization for a line of credit provides management with the discretion to draw on the line as needed. Management may establish lines of credit with suppliers as needed, without board approval, within the purchasing and contract approval thresholds detailed above.

The extension of credit by Rocketship Education to any of its affiliates shall be approved by the Board of Directors. Rocketship Education shall not extend loans or credit to any organization that is not an affiliate or subsidiary.

# 3.3 Operating Cash Reserves

The organization will ensure adequate cash balances to meet annual cash flow needs. The CFO will monitor the organization's cash balance and will report the cash balance to the CEO on a monthly basis and to the Business Committee of the Board on a quarterly basis.

It is the responsibility of the CEO and the Governing Board to understand the organization's cash situation and it is the responsibility of the CFO to prioritize payments as necessary to manage cash flow.

The RPS Board may restrict a portion of the operating cash reserve fund for strategic goals.



The RPS Board may develop an additional Operating Cash Reserve Policy to specify use of the Operating Cash Reserves.

### 3.4 Insurance

The organization will maintain adequate insurance with high quality insurers at all times for:

- General Liability
- Property
- Workers' Compensation
- Employment Practices
- Professional Liability
- Directors' and Officers' Coverage
- Other coverages required by charter authorizers
- Umbrella and student accident policies are considered prudent add-ons.

# 4.0 Revenue & Accounts Receivable

RPS receives revenue from multiple sources, including but not limited to federal and state agencies, private grants, and other contributions. Many of these funding sources impose specific restrictions on how funds may be obligated, expended, recorded, and reported. It is the policy of RPS to ensure that all revenues, particularly restricted funds, are managed in full compliance with the terms and conditions specified by the granting authority and applicable laws and regulations.

### **Restricted Funds**

Restricted funds are awarded to RPS pursuant to unique grant agreements or awards issued by federal, state, or other funding entities. These funds must be utilized solely for their intended purposes as defined by the awarding agency or donor. RPS staff shall ensure that all expenditures of restricted funds strictly adhere to the allowable uses, cost principles, and reporting requirements outlined in each specific grant or award agreement.

### **Staff Responsibilities:**

All staff responsible for budgeting, spending, or reporting restricted funds shall review and understand the applicable award documents and related compliance requirements prior to obligating or expending any restricted funds.

Grant managers, program directors, and finance staff shall collaborate to ensure expenditures are properly authorized, adequately documented, and appropriately recorded in the financial system according to fund restrictions.

### **Accounts Receivable**

All receivables shall be recorded timely and accurately in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and applicable grantor requirements. The Finance Department shall establish procedures to monitor outstanding receivables, follow up on overdue balances, and ensure prompt collection.

RPS shall maintain accurate records to demonstrate compliance with all applicable grant and funding requirements. All required financial reports and supporting documentation shall be



prepared, reviewed, and submitted to granting authorities in accordance with established deadlines.

The Finance Department, in coordination with program managers and grant administrators, shall periodically review revenue and accounts receivable practices to ensure compliance with this policy, grant conditions, and applicable regulations. Any identified discrepancies shall be addressed promptly, and appropriate corrective actions shall be implemented as necessary.

# 4.1 Cash Receipts

Cash receipts (including check or cash payments received via mail or in person and deposits received via Electronic Fund Transfer) shall be recorded completely and accurately to prevent the misappropriation of assets. Further, cash collection, reconciliation, and deposit duties should be segregated to provide proper financial controls. No one person will participate in all actions associated with cash receipts.

RPS schools regularly collect cash for meal bills, fundraisers, field trips, uniforms, and other purposes.

Cash collected at the school site is considered school revenue and must be accounted for accordingly. Cash may not be used as "petty cash" or otherwise spent before being reconciled and deposited.

Reconciliations and deposits must be completed per the instructions provided by the RPS Finance & Accounting Department.

Only Rocketship staff are permitted to handle cash and checks collected at a school site. Cash and checks must be kept at all times in a designated, secure, locked cabinet or safe. Only authorized school staff should have access to the locked cabinet or safe.

Schools must deposit cash and checks weekly. If no cash or checks have been collected that week, the school should submit a deposit form indicating that no cash/checks were collected. If for some reason a school cannot submit a weekly deposit, the school must inform the Regional Director of Operations.

Under no circumstances should cash remain at a school site for more than 10 school days. In TN, cash cannot remain at the school for more than 3 days.

# **5.0 Expenses & Accounts Payable**

# **5.1 Purchases & Procurement Policy**

RPS shall procure only those goods and services that are necessary to fulfill its mission and meet bona fide operational needs. All purchasing decisions shall be guided by the principles of price,



quality, and dependability. Vendors may be selected based on any one or a combination of these factors. RPS shall also take affirmative steps to ensure that minority-owned businesses and women's business enterprises are included whenever possible and practical. The overriding goal shall always be to maintain and support high-quality schools and programs.

When engaging in procurement activities, RPS staff shall:

- Remain impartial in the selection process, focusing solely on the merits of supplier or contractor proposals and applicable factors such as delivery, quantity, and specifications.
- Make all purchases in the best interests of RPS and its funding sources.
- Obtain quality supplies and services needed at the time and place required.
- Procure goods and services only from responsible, reputable, and dependable sources.
- Ensure best value for all expenditures.
- Deal fairly and impartially with all vendors.
- Demonstrate conduct that is above reproach, avoiding any conflict of interest, related party transaction, or the appearance of impropriety in all school-supplier relationships.
- Follow strong internal control principles to minimize risk of fraud, including proper segregation of duties and compliance with all policies governing authorization of financial commitments.

### **Related Parties**

All employees participating in the making of a contract and Board members must disclose relationships with known proposed or current vendors to determine whether the relationship should be considered a related party transaction. RPS applies the definition of "related party" used by the IRS regulation section 267(b), which includes immediate family members of and legal entities owned or controlled by the employee or board member. The CEO must review any potential related party transactions and has the right to request additional information (e.g., fair market value assessments) to determine whether the transaction is in the best interest of RPS. The CEO must disclose any related party transaction over \$10,000 to the Board of Directors for review. If the related party transaction involves the CEO, the Board shall perform all pertinent review.

### **Contracts for Goods and Services**

Where feasible, RPS shall enter into contracts for goods and services that clearly define scope, deliverables, exclusions, delivery schedules, payment terms, and standard legal protections. Contracts should allow for monthly payments with at least 30 days from the date of invoice. Contracts shall be negotiated by a member of the Network Executive Team or an authorized designee, consistent with established contracting thresholds.

All new vendors must complete Form W-9 (except local, state, or federal government entities) prior to payment initiation.

### **Competitive Contract Selection**

When a product or service is to be purchased that is valued or priced at, or reasonably estimated to be more than \$25,000, the authorized decision maker shall make every reasonable effort to secure quotes and product specifications from at least two providers of the service or product or similar product or make other acceptable efforts to ensure that RPS is receiving the best value



for the purchase. The authorized decision maker shall select from among these quotes and maintain evidence of the quotes and/or other information that informed the purchasing decision. Professional service contracts such as special education contracts are excluded from the requirement to seek multiple bids or proposals; however, nothing shall preclude RPS from seeking such multiple bids or proposals for these contracts. Additionally, furniture purchases may be excluded from the requirement to seek multiple bids when it is determined that a particular vendor offers a unique product that meets the quality and design specifications of RPS and the product price is judged to be reasonable based on comparisons of similar furniture from other vendors. In the event that bids are not obtained, the purchaser must provide a sole source justification. Notwithstanding the foregoing, adherence to local agency "piggyback" contract prices and procedures for goods contracts meets these requirements.

All procurement involving federal funds will be conducted in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34 (Education), Section 74, which states in part: "All procurement transactions shall be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition", or other law applicable to the funding source. RPS shall be alert to organizational conflicts of interest as well as noncompetitive practices among contractors that may restrict or eliminate competition or otherwise restrain trade. For federally funded purchases, in order to ensure objective contractor performance and eliminate unfair competitive advantage, contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, invitations for bids or requests for proposals shall be excluded from competing for procurements. Awards must be made to the bidder or offeror whose bid or offer is responsive to the solicitation and is the best value to RPS, price, quality and other factors considered. Solicitations shall clearly establish all requirements that the bidder or offeror shall fulfill in order for the bid or offer to be evaluated by RPS. Any and all bids or offers may be rejected when it is in RPS interest to do so.

# Furthermore, RPS shall:

- Avoid purchasing unnecessary items
- Avoid making purchases categorized as "equipment" or other items that would be considered durable assets with federal funds;
- Where appropriate, analyze lease and purchase alternatives to determine which would be the most economical and practical procurement;
- Solicit for goods and services providing for all of the following, where applicable:
  - A clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product, or service to be procured. In competitive procurements, a description shall not contain features which unduly restrict competition
  - Requirements which the bidder/offeror must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals
  - A description, whenever practicable, of technical requirements in terms of functions to be performed or performance required, including the range of acceptable characteristics or minimum acceptable standards
  - The specific features of brand name or equal descriptions that bidders are required to meet when these items are included in the solicitation
  - Make positive efforts to utilize small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's



business enterprises, whenever possible.

# **Purchases Using Federal Funds**

Purchases made using federal grants will follow procurement methods stated in Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.320, where applicable, unless RPS's Policy is more restrictive. When using federal funds in this regard, RPS will to the extent applicable to the particular purchase:

- Maintain oversight to ensure contractors perform in accordance with terms/conditions/specifications of contracts
- Avoid acquisition of unnecessary or duplicative items
- Award contracts only to responsible contractors
- Maintain records to sufficiently detail the history of procurement
- Conduct transactions in a manner providing full and open competition
- Not preclude potential bidders from qualifying during the solicitation period
- Conduct procurements in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed state, local, or tribal geographical preferences, except in cases where federal statutes mandate or encourage it
- Prepare solicitations that incorporate a clear and accurate description of technical requirements for the material, product, or service, and identify all requirements which the offerors must fulfill, and all other factors used in evaluating bids or proposals
- Ensure that all prequalified lists of persons, firms, or products which are used are current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition
- Take necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible
- Perform cost or price analysis in connection with every procurement action in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold, including contract modifications



Methodology & Threshold	Requirement
Micro-purchase	No bid or quote required if price is considered to be reasonable.
\$0-\$10,000	Reasonableness could be determined by comparing the price to past
	purchases or other published prices and/or requesting prices from more
	than one vendor.
	<ul> <li>Distributed equitably among a range of qualified vendors when practical</li> </ul>
Small Purchase \$10,001-\$250,000	<ul> <li>Price or rate quotes must be obtained from adequate number of sources (at least two)</li> </ul>
+==,=== +===,===	<ul> <li>Can be informal, e.g., phone call or web search</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>All quotes, including phone calls, web searches, etc., must be documented and kept on file</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Price does not need to be deciding factor, but all quotes need to be kept in procurement records</li> </ul>
Sealed Bid \$250,000 and greater	<ul> <li>Bids must be solicited from an adequate number of known suppliers, providing sufficient response time</li> </ul>
Price is principal basis for	<ul> <li>Local and tribal governments must publicly advertise bids</li> </ul>
selection	<ul> <li>Invitation for bids must define the items or services in order for bidders to properly respond</li> </ul>
	• All bids will be opened at time and place prescribed in invitation. Local and
	tribal governments must be opened publicly.
	<ul> <li>Firm fixed price contract made in writing to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder</li> </ul>
	Any or all bids may be rejected if there is a sound documented reason
Competitive Proposal	Must be publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative
\$250,000 and greater	importance
Selection is based on what is	Must be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources
most advantageous with price	<ul> <li>Must have a written method for conducting technical evaluations of the</li> </ul>
and other factors considered	proposals and selecting recipients
	• Contracts must be awarded to the responsible firm whose proposal is most
	advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered
Noncompetitive Proposal	May be used only when the item is available only from a single source, the
(sole source)	public exigency or emergency will not permit a delay resulting from
	competitive solicitation, federal awarding agency or pass-through entity
	expressly authorizes its use in response to a written request, or after
	solicitation of a number of sources competition is determined inadequate
	by the CEO
	Justification of the use of noncompetitive proposal must be documented
	<ul> <li>Any research on availability from multiple sources must be documented</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Documentation of authorization must be retained</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Any initial solicitations from multiple sources which are concluded to be</li> </ul>
	inadequate, and such reasoning, must be documented

# **Purchase and Contract Approval Authority**

All purchases at Rocketship are pre-approved according to the thresholds and requirements outlined in Section 2.2. Pre-approval may be given via a limited, specific contract, a purchase order or work order, or an approval in Ramp to make a specific, time-bound purchase or set of



purchases (eg a work-related trip need only be pre-approved once, allowing purchases of airfare, hotel, and meals subject to a total cost approval and other policies).

Approval requirements for contracts, POs, pre-approvals, and payments are outlined in Section 2.2. Once a contract is approved, no further approval is required for recurring or project-related expenditures covered by that contract (e.g., Board-approved construction budgets).

Approval authority may be delegated to another RPS Leadership Team member if an approver is unavailable.

# **Invoice Payment**

All invoices shall be paid promptly to avoid late fees and maintain vendor relationships.

# **Oversight**

The Finance Department shall conduct periodic reviews of procurement activities to verify compliance with this policy and related federal and state requirements. Non-compliance shall be addressed through corrective action, training, and updated procedures as needed.

# **5.2** Employee and Volunteer Expense Reimbursements

RPS recognizes that employees and authorized volunteers may incur necessary and reasonable business expenses in the course of carrying out duties in support of RPS's mission. This policy outlines clear guidelines to ensure that all expenses are appropriate, properly documented, pre-approved, and reimbursed in compliance with RPS's fiduciary responsibilities and applicable federal, state, and funding agency requirements.

### Eligibility

All RPS employees are eligible for expense reimbursement, provided the expenses:

- Align with this policy and RPS's mission;
- Are pre-approved by the employee's manager when required;
- Are reasonable and necessary;
- Are properly documented with original, itemized receipts; and
- Comply with IRS, state, and grantor/funder requirements.

### **Reimbursement Requirements**

Employees must submit expense reimbursement requests promptly by completing an accurate expense report and attaching required documentation. Expense reports should be submitted within 30 days of incurring the expense and no later than 30 days after the end of the quarter in which the expense was incurred. Original, itemized receipts are mandatory for all expenditures except mileage. If a receipt is lost, supporting documentation such as a credit card statement may be submitted on an exception basis only. Credit card statements are not an acceptable substitute for receipts.



### **Approval Requirements**

Supervisors must review and approve all expense reports. Approval certifies that:

- Expenses are reasonable, necessary, and directly related to the employee's duties;
- Original, itemized receipts are attached;
- Expenses are accurately coded to appropriate accounts; and
- The expense complies with this policy and any relevant funding restrictions.

# **Credit Card Management and Controls**

To strengthen internal controls and ensure fiscal accountability, RPS shall implement the following practices:

- Require pre-approval for all expense/card use.
- Use Ramp (if available/possible) for travel bookings and shop with preferred vendors.
- Enforce itemized receipts for any expenses.
- Limit credit card thresholds to encourage compliance.

# **Guidelines for Specific Reimbursable Expenses**

Cell Phone: Eligible full-time employees may receive up to \$50 per month for work-related cell phone expenses.

Air Travel: Air travel should be booked in advance to secure the lowest reasonable fares. Only coach class is reimbursable unless pre-approved. Frequent flyer miles remain employee property. Baggage fees for two or more nights are reimbursable; seat upgrades are not.

Hotels: Reasonably priced, standard business-class accommodations only. Detailed hotel bills must be submitted.

Car Rentals: Use only when cost-effective. Rent economy-class vehicles. Decline additional insurance. Refuel before return.

Private Vehicle Mileage: Reimbursed at the IRS standard rate; excludes commuting mileage.

Other Transportation: Reasonable costs for taxis, rideshares, and public transit are reimbursable when necessary.

Meals: Reasonable meals reimbursed within GSA per diem; maximum \$75/day. Alcohol is not reimbursed.

Parking & Tolls: Business-related parking and tolls are reimbursable.

Entertainment: Requires pre-approval.

Non-Reimbursable: Movies, clothing, fines, personal expenses.

### **Travel Advances**

In specific cases, travel advances may be issued. Advances must be reconciled with actual expenses within two weeks of trip completion.



# **5.3 Governing Board Expenses**

Board members must complete expense reports with original receipts for all authorized expenses. The CEO and/or another Board member must review and approve Board expense reports.

# 6.0 Asset Management

# **6.1** Fixed Assets Capitalization

All assets with a useful life of greater than one year and costing more than \$5,000 will be capitalized and will be recorded in the fixed asset records. Any asset that does not meet these criteria will be expensed in the current period.

The cost basis of furniture and equipment assets will include all charges relating to the purchase of the assets including the purchase price, freight charges, and installation if applicable.

Leases within the capitalization thresholds will be accounted for in accordance with ASC 842 – lease accounting.

Leasehold improvements are to be capitalized if they relate to the renovation or improvement of an existing building. Expenditures incurred in connection with maintaining the existing building in good working order shall be expensed as a repair.

### Depreciation

Depreciation methods/lives for assets shall be selected for consistent financial reporting purposes. The following depreciation methods and useful lives shall be used for the following asset classifications for financial reporting purposes.

Asset Class	Useful Life	Method
Computers	Three Years	Straight Line
Furniture and	Seven Years	Straight Line
Equipment		
Leasehold Improvements	Remaining Life of	Straight Line
	Lease	

# 6.2 Inventory

RPS will maintain a detailed listing of each capital asset item with purchase price greater than \$5,000 along with depreciation records which will include the description, date acquired, vendor, cost basis, assigned department or location, depreciation method/life, accumulated depreciation, and net book value. A physical inventory of property and equipment will be performed annually and compared to the detailed fixed asset listing. Any variances will be investigated and corrected or adjusted in financial statements as



necessary. RPS has security cameras at its schools to safeguard its assets. RPS also hires a security company to help monitor some of its higher-risk areas.

Computer equipment, office equipment and furniture are tagged and logged into our tracking system. This tracking system categorizes by school, type of equipment and whether Federal Funds were used. Any disposition of equipment with remaining useful life will require approval from director of operations and best effort to obtain market value of the asset is required.

Assets purchased with federal grants will follow the Office of Management and Budget's Uniform Guidance, Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations ("2 CFR") §200.310 to §200.316.

#### 7.0 Investment Policy

The RPS CFO will oversee the investment of cash balances, subject to oversight of the RPS Board and following guidelines that have been established by the RPS Board. The core objective of this investment policy is the protection of the principal amount while achieving modest yield. The strategy is rooted in an unwavering commitment to capital preservation and minimal risk exposure. Investments consistent with this approach include, government backed securities, cash and cash equivalents, money market funds, government bonds, certificates of deposit and others.

#### 8.0 Time and Effort Policies and Procedures

#### Overview:

All employees who are paid in full or in part with federal funds must keep specific documents to demonstrate the amount of time they spent on grant activities.

Charges to federal awards for salaries and wages must be based on records that accurately reflect the work performed. These records must:

- Be supported by a system of internal controls which provides reasonable assurance that the charges are accurate, allowable, and properly allocated;
- This includes verification through (electronic) signatures and documentation from individuals with first-hand knowledge incorporated into official records;
- Be incorporated into official records;
- Reasonably reflect total activity for which the employee is compensated, not exceeding 100% of compensated activities;
  - Budgeted estimates do not qualify but may be used for interim accounting purposes if the estimates are reasonable, identified to related work in a timely manner, and after-the-fact review procedures are in place
- Encompass both federally assisted and all other activities compensated by Rocketship;
- Comply with Rocketship's established accounting policies and practices; and



 Support the distribution of the employee's salary or wages among specific activities or cost objectives.

#### **Time and Effort Procedures**

To meet the above requirements, all employees who must complete time and effort forms must submit either a semi-annual certification or a personnel activity report (PAR) as required below.

The type of form depends on the number of cost objectives that an employee works on. A cost objective is a program, function, activity, award, organizational subdivision, contract, or work unit of which cost data are desired and for which provision is made to accumulate and measure the cost of processes, products, jobs, capital projects, etc.

#### Semi-annual certification - applies to employees who do one of the following:

- Work 100% of their time on a single grant program and/or single cost objective.
- Work 100% of their time in administering one program such as a Federal Programs Director who administers only one program.
- Work 100% of their time under a single cost objective funded from eligible multiple funding sources.

The semi-annual certification must be:

- Completed twice a year;
- Be signed by the employee or the supervisor with direct knowledge of the work being performed;
- Reflect an after-the-fact distribution of the actual activity; and
- Account for the total activity for which each employee is compensated.
- The semi-annual certifications will be maintained by the business department grants office.

#### PAR - applies to employees who do one of the following:

- Do not work 100% of their time on a single grant program and/or single cost objective
- Work under multiple grant programs or multiple cost objectives

The PAR provides a written record of an employee's work activities used to document that employee's time to grants or projects. It must be completed monthly and supported by a daily calendar of activities.

All employees who work on multiple cost objectives must complete PARs that support the distribution of their salaries /wages that meet the following standards:

- Reflect an after-the-fact distribution of the actual activity, not a budget estimate;
- Account for the total work activity for which each employee is compensated;
- Be prepared at least monthly (a separate PAR for each month) and coincide with one (1) or more pay periods; and
- Be signed by the employee.



#### **Reconciliation Procedures**

It is critical for payroll charges to match the actual distribution of time recorded on the monthly certification documents. Budget estimates or other distribution percentages determined before the services are performed do not qualify as support for charges to federal awards, but may be used for interim accounting purposes provided that the system for establishing the estimates produces reasonable approximations of the activity actually performed.

In order to reconcile actual costs to budgeted distributions, the business team grants office will conduct quarterly reconciliations of payroll changes to the actual time and effort reflected in employees' time and effort records. This will include review of form ratios versus budgeted distributions after each review.

All the time and effort certifications are collected by the business team grants office, reviewed for accuracy, appropriate signatures, dates and copied to the Grants Accounting Office.



#### ROCKETSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Semi-annual	Certification
Name:	

Job Title: School:

July 20XX - December 20XX

Actual Work Activity									
FUNDING SOURCE	PERCENTAGE OF TIME	DESCRIPTION OF FUNCTIONS							

#### **EMPLOYEE AND SUPERVISOR SIGNATURES**

EMPLOYEE NAME	EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE	DATE SIGNED
SUPERVISOR NAME	SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE	DATE SIGNED



#### **ROCKETSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

<b>Personnel Activity Report</b>	
Monthly	
Name:	
Job Title:	
School:	

Actual Work Activity										
FUNDING SOURCE	SOURCE PERCENTAGE OF TIME DESCRIPTION OF FUNCTIONS									
Title I	75%	Providing target support to students requiring								

#### **EMPLOYEE AND SUPERVISOR SIGNATURES**

EMPLOYEE NAME	EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE	DATE SIGNED
SUPERVISOR NAME	SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE	DATE SIGNED



#### 9.0 Comparability Policy

#### **Overview**

It is the policy of Rocketship Public Schools to provide services that are substantially comparable to Title I and non-Title I schools within the grade span

- State and local funds will not replace federal funds
- Title I receiving schools will not receive less state or local funds because they receive federal funds

#### **Methods of Determining Comparability**

In order to achieve comparability, Rocketship Public Schools relies on the following: LEA Salary Schedule, Staffing Equivalence, and Centralized Procurement.

- LEA Salary Schedule: All Rocketship schools use a common regional salary schedule, ensuring that teachers, principals, and other staff are paid the same (adjusted for experience and performance) from school to school, regardless of Title I funding status.
- Staffing Equivalence: Rocketship follows a common staffing model across all of its schools. While staffing headcounts will vary as enrollment and school needs dictate, the staffing model (the number of teachers per classroom, the number of administrative staff) is consistent from school to school with equivalent total enrollment. This consistent staffing model ensures that each student, regardless of if they are in a Title I or non-Title I school, receives a substantially comparable level of staffing support.
- Centralized Procurement: Rocketship deploys a common national curriculum, technology program, furniture plan, and facilities management plan. These universal, centrally-managed functions, ensure that students at each Rocketship school, regardless of if they are in a Title I or non-Title I school, receive an equivalent provision of supplies, technology, curriculum, facilities, and other non-personnel services.

Supporting documentation must be kept as a record to show implementation and demonstrate that equivalence was achieved.

In accordance with Federal regulations, the determination of the comparability of services may exclude: state and local funds spent on compensatory education programs, bilingual education programs, and programs for educationally- disabled students. The determination of comparability will not take into account unpredictable changes in student enrollments or personnel assignments.



Executive Summary Rocketship Education Board of Directors September 10, 2025

Agenda Item: 7(A)	Х	OPEN/ACTION
		INFORMATION
Subject: Approve Resolution #2025-06 Rocketship Tennessee Bond Financing		CONSENT

#### Recommendation:

Staff members recommend that the Rocketship Education ("**RSED**") Board of Directors ("**RSED-Board**") approve Resolution #2025-06 Rocketship Tennessee Bond Financing ("**resolution**").

The resolution will provide approvals at the national level required to facilitate the purchase by Launchpad Develop Corporation of the Rocketship Dream Community Prep ("RDCP") facility in Nashville from Turner-Impact.

#### **Background:**

In 2022, RDCP opened in a facility built by and leased from Turner-Impact Development. We are now at the end of the allowed purchase window within the Turner lease and need to buy the building or commit to twenty seven more years of escalating rent.

The building's price is \$14.9mm. Launchpad will finance the purchase through a tax-exempt bond transaction, repaid via lease with Rocketship Education Tennessee ("RSED-TN"). Rent is estimated at \$1.235mm per year, slightly more than current rent with Turner, but less than the <u>average</u> rent of \$1.472mm over the next twenty seven years of the current lease.

The RSED-Board is being asked to approve an omnibus resolution authorizing several things:

- The reaffirmation of an existing agreement providing for the subordination of our network service fee rights in favor of the lenders, meaning that in the event RSED-TN is unable to make both lease payments and payments to RSED, the lease payments would take precedence.
- 2. The execution and delivery of other ancillary documents, including tax certificates and similar documents necessary to proceed with the bond sale for this transaction.
- 3. The execution of documents reaffirming or certifying commitments made under prior documents.

#### Summary of Previous Board Action by Board:

None

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

Management fee subordination for RSED-TN in favor of this bond sale would have a maximum fiscal impact of the amount of the bond payment, up to \$1.235mm per year estimated.

#### Submitted by:

Ben Carson, Chief Financial Officer



## RESOLUTION #2025-06 OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ROCKETSHIP EDUCATION

## ROCKETSHIP EDUCATION SUBORDINATION AGREEMENT IN REFERENCE TO ROCKETSHIP EDUCATION TENNESSEE BOND FINANCING

WHEREAS, Rocketship Education is a nonprofit, public benefit corporation organized under the California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law ("RSED"), organized and operated exclusively for educational and charitable purposes as an operator of a charter school network.

**WHEREAS**, RSED is the sole member of Rocketship Education Tennessee, a Tennessee nonprofit corporation ("**RSED-TN**"), and RSED-TN furthers the educational and charitable purposes of Rocketship as an operator of public charter schools in Tennessee, pursuant to the RSED program and mission.

WHEREAS, RSED provides educational program, management, financial and operational services to RSED-TN's charter schools and receives certain fees as compensation ("Management Fees").

WHEREAS, on February 22, 2017, The Health and Educational Facilities Board of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee issued its \$7,740,000 Charter School Revenue Bonds (Rocketship Education – Obligated Group) Series 2017E (the "Prior Bonds") and loaned the proceeds to Launchpad Development Company ("Launchpad"), a California nonprofit public benefit corporation, to finance certain charter school educational facilities to be leased to RSED, for use and occupancy by Rocketship Nashville Northeast Elementary ("RNNE") in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee.

WHEREAS, on or about May 31, 2019, Launchpad Development Two Nashville, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (as Borrower), and Charter Impact Fund, Inc., a Delaware nonstock nonprofit corporation (as Lender), entered that certain Loan Agreement dated as of May 31, 2019, referencing that certain \$7,282,964.14 Loan (the "Prior Loan") to finance certain charter school educational facilities to be leased to RSED, for use and occupancy by Rocketship United Academy ("RUA") in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the Public Finance Authority intends to issue certain Charter School Revenue Bonds (Rocketship Tennessee Obligated Group – Issue No. 1) Series 2025A and Charter School Revenue Bonds (Rocketship Tennessee Obligated Group – Issue No. 1), Series 2025B (Taxable) (collectively, the "Bonds") to (i) finance and/or refinance the acquisition, construction, expansion, remodeling, renovation, improvement, furnishing and/or equipping of certain charter school



facilities of RSED-TN; (ii) fund any reserve funds which may be required; and (iii) pay the costs of the issuance of the Bonds.

WHEREAS, to facilitate the issuance and sale of the Bonds, RSED has been asked to subordinate its rights to receive compensation under the Management Agreement to the rent payments made by RSED-TN that support payment of debt service on the Bonds.

**WHEREAS**, the transactions contemplated by the foregoing are reasonably expected to benefit RSED and RSED-TN.

**NOW**, **THEREFORE**, the Board of Directors of RSED (the "**Board**") hereby resolves as follows:

<u>Section 1</u>. The Management Fees Subordination Agreement (the "**Subordination Agreement**"), as circulated to the Board, including its provisions subordinating RSED's rights to receive management fees, are hereby approved. The Chairperson of the Board, the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, any Vice President or any other officer of RSED (each an "**Authorized Officer**") are each hereby individually authorized and directed, in the name and on behalf of RSED to negotiate the terms of and to execute in the name and on behalf of RSED and deliver the Subordination Agreement, such execution by such officer to be conclusive evidence that such officer deems all of the terms and provisions thereof to be proper.

<u>Section 2</u>. Any and all documents necessary in connection with the issuance of the Bonds (the "**Bond Documents**") are hereby approved. Each Authorized Officer is hereby individually authorized and directed, in the name and on behalf of RSED to negotiate the terms of and to execute in the name and on behalf of RSED and deliver the Bond Documents, such execution by such officer to be conclusive evidence that such officer deems all of the terms and provisions thereof to be proper.

Section 3. Any and all documents necessary in connection with the tender, exchange and/or repurchase of the Prior Bonds (the "**Prior Bonds Documents**") are hereby approved. Each Authorized Officer is hereby individually authorized and directed, in the name and on behalf of RSED to negotiate the terms of and to execute in the name and on behalf of RSED and deliver the Prior Bonds Documents, such execution by such officer to be conclusive evidence that such officer deems all of the terms and provisions thereof to be proper.

<u>Section 4</u>. Any and all documents necessary in connection with amendments to the Prior Loan (the "**Prior Loan Documents**") are hereby approved. Each Authorized Officer is hereby individually authorized and directed, in the name and on behalf of RSED to negotiate the terms of and to execute in the name and on behalf of RSED and deliver the Prior Loan Documents, such



execution by such officer to be conclusive evidence that such officer deems all of the terms and provisions thereof to be proper.

Section 5. Each Authorized Officer is hereby authorized, empowered, and directed, in the name and on behalf of RSED, to take such actions and to execute, deliver, and, if applicable, file or record, or cause to be filed or recorded, in any appropriate public offices, all such other certificates, instruments, notices, agreements and other documents as may be required or as such officer may, in his or her discretion, deem necessary, convenient, advisable or proper in order to carry out and perform the obligations of RSED under the intent of these Resolutions, under the Subordination Agreement, in furtherance of the issuance of the Bonds, or in furtherance of the tender, exchange and/or repurchase of the Prior Bonds. The performance or execution thereof by such Authorized Officer to be conclusive evidence of the approval thereof by such officer and by this Board.

<u>Section 6.</u> All actions and deeds heretofore done or taken by any Authorized Officer, on behalf of RSED, in their capacity as such Authorized Officer, and all things done by their authority in entering into, executing, acknowledging or attesting any arrangements, agreements, instruments or documents in carrying out the terms and intentions of the foregoing recitals and resolutions and with respect to the Subordination Agreement are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed in all respects. These Resolutions shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption and the authorizations herein set forth shall remain in full force and effect for the term of the Subordination Agreement and all amendments, supplements and renewal terms thereof. These Resolutions may be delivered by means of portable document format (PDF).

\* \* \*

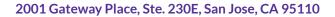
#### **GENERAL AUTHORIZATION**

**RESOLVED FURTHER**, that any of the RSED officers may execute, verify, and file any and all documents, and may take any and all such actions, as are proper and necessary to effectuate the purposes of these resolutions.

#### **SECRETARY'S CERTIFICATE**

The undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution #2025-06 Rocketship Education Subordination Agreement in Reference to Rocketship Education Tennessee Bond Financing that was duly adopted by the Board of Directors of Rocketship Education, at a meeting thereof duly called, noticed and held on September 10, 2025 and at which







meeting a quorum of the Board was present, and that these resolutions were adopted by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

WITNESS my hand this \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Greg Stanger, Secretary of the Board Rocketship Education



## Q1 Rocketship Public Schools Board of Directors Meeting

September 10, 2025



## Agenda

#### 1. Opening Items

- A. Call to Order
- **B.** Public comment on off-agenda items

#### 2. Consent Items

- **A.** Approve minutes from the July 1, 2025 Special Meeting of the Rocketship Board of Directors
- **B.** Ratify appointment of Patrick McGovern to the Rocketship Wisconsin Board of Trustees and Wisconsin Business Committee for a two-year term through September 2027
- **C.** Ratify appointment of Andrew Haag to the Rocketship Wisconsin Board of Trustees for a two-year term through September 2027

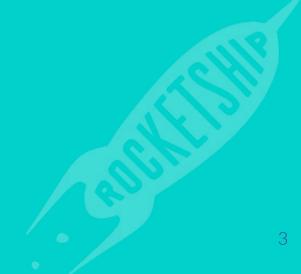
#### 3. Information Items

- A. Board Updates
- 4. Action Items: Agreements Review and Approval
  - **A.** Approve Master Services Agreement with EdTheory LLC
  - ${\bf B}_{\star}$  Approve Professional Services Agreement with Welldom, Inc NPA

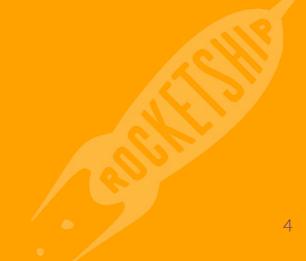
### 5. Action Items: Operations - Review and Approval A. Approve Rocketship Spark Academy and Rocketship Delta Prep Charter Renewal Petitions **B.** Approve Artificial Intelligence for Instructional and Assignment Purposes Policy C. Approve Section 504 Policy 6. Action Items: Finance - Review and Approval A. 2024-25 End of Year Review and Approval of Revised 2025-26 Budget, including all School Level Budgets **B.** Review and Approve Revised Rocketship Fiscal Policies 7. Action Items: National CMO Decision -Resolution - Review and Approval A. Approve Resolution #2025-06 Rocketship Tennessee Bond Financing 8. Break 9. Information Items A. 2024-25 Achievement Recap and 2025-26 Response B. DC Charter Review and Regional Support Plan C. Growth Updates

10. Adjourn

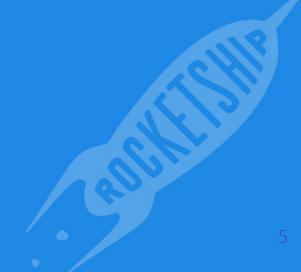
## **Public Comment**



## Consent Items



## Board Updates



# Action Items: Agreements - Review and Approval

- 4. Action Items: Agreements Review and Approval
  - A. Approve Master Services Agreement with EdTheory LLC
  - **B.** Approve Professional Services Agreement with Welldom, Inc NPA

# Action Items: Operations - Review and Approval

- 5. Action Items: Operations Review and Approval
  - A. Approve Rocketship Spark Academy and Rocketship Delta Prep Charter Renewal Petitions
  - **B.** Approve Artificial Intelligence for Instructional and Assignment Purposes Policy
  - C. Approve Section 504 Policy

2024-25 End of Year Review and Approval of Revised 2025-26 Budget, including all School Level Budgets

## 2024-25 End of Year Review



### FY25 Year-End Themes

The FY25 budgets were anchored in two "bets", neither of which paid off:

- 1. Enrollment up: We intended to fill the schools to offset lost federal stimulus revenue
  - a. State and federal revenues were about \$2mm under budget
  - b. Our creative use of restricted public grants was critical to minimizing the damage: The network enrollment miss was about 5% of overall target.
  - c. Every region was below budgeted enrollment, limiting our ability to hit our bottom line goals no matter how much spending we were willing to cut.
- 2. Non-comp down: We intended to reduce supplies and services costs to enable us to preserve staffing
  - a. While compensation expenses were right at budget, materials across the network were 8% over budget and contract services were 18% over.
  - b. This is a combination of excessive spending <u>and</u> too aggressive budget targets without adequate support materials spending was down 14% year over year and contracts spending was up just 1.5% year over year.

While RSED as a whole still had a \$3.3mm Positive CINA last year, it was less than half of the \$7.3mm in the August budget and heavily reliant on philanthropy, which was \$3mm higher than budgeted.



## FY25 Year End Income Statement - RSED by Entity

				FY25 A	ctuals				FY25 Budget	
	CA Schools DC Schools TN Schools WI Schools Schools Total NeST Total Elim RSED Total		RSED Total	<u>Var</u>						
Revenues										
Federal Income	11,855,400	3,010,644	2,385,878	1,998,195	19,250,117	-		19,250,117	16,104,655	3,145,462
State Revenue Sources	124,408,370	35,124,614	22,544,265	8,683,644	190,760,893	496,623	-	191,257,515	197,717,430	(6,459,914)
Other Local Revenues	102,035	779,982	72,832	87,914	1,042,762	2,576,603	-	3,619,365	1,888,738	1,730,627
Internal Transfers	-	2,375,991	_	-	2,375,991	28,412,495	(30,788,486)	-	-	-
Grants and Fundraising	169,579	71,429	172,845	8,124	421,977	7,583,682	-	8,005,660	5,425,000	2,580,660
Total Revenues	136,535,384	41,362,659	25,175,820	10,777,877	213,851,740	39,069,403	(30,788,486)	222,132,657	221,135,823	996,834
Expense										
Personnel & Benefits	64,188,276	12,401,006	13,328,681	6,141,628	96,059,590	24,655,647		120,715,237	121,594,945	879,708
Books and Supplies	5,630,715	1,385,966	1,302,087	614,070	8,932,838	1,337,365	-	10,270,202	9,460,206	(809,997)
Food Services	4,238,448	1,046,112	1,338,391	494,906	7,117,857	186,809	// <del>=</del> /	7,304,666	7,919,145	614,479
Services and Other Operating Expenses	23,716,470	12,916,035	4,318,308	1,043,698	41,994,511	7,137,800	-	49,132,312	41,688,162	(7,444,149)
Travel & Conferences	430,118	82,498	123,216	86,576	722,409	1,733,958	-	2,456,367	2,197,432	(258,935)
Dues and Insurance	844,701	175,623	168,696	96,639	1,285,660	1,030,936		2,316,596	1,758,274	(558,322)
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	11,838,091	7,753,890	3,100,850	940,804	23,633,635	1,439,022	-	25,072,656	24,381,300	(691,356)
Network Support Fee	19,086,404	4,279,474	3,553,846	1,492,771	28,412,495	-	(28,412,495)	=	.=:	1137
Capital Outlay	284,761	13,009	45,846	60,934	404,550	434,523	-	839,073	524,943	(314,130)
Interest Expense	-	1,793	20	60,000	61,793	26,156	120	87,949	110,388	22,439
Miscellaneous Expense	2	1	993	0	996	3,202,579	(2,375,991)	827,584	4,524,043	3,696,459
Total Expense	130,257,988	40,055,407	27,280,913	11,032,026	208,626,334	41,184,796	(30,788,486)	219,022,644	214,158,840	(4,863,804)
CINA	6,277,395	1,307,252	(2,105,093)	(254,149)	5,225,405	(2,115,393)		3,110,013	7,612,389	(4,502,376)
Net assets	68,165,570	(975,423)	5,872,979	(4,660,082)	68,403,044	11,437,931	-	79,840,975		

- Across the organization as a whole, CINA was less than half of what was budgeted.
- Revenue was a roughly equal trade, with \$3mm less public revenue than budget being offset by \$4mm more in philanthropy and interest income.
- Expenses were substantially over budget. Compensation was right on budget but books and supplies were 8% over and services were 18% over.



## FY25 Year End Balance Sheet: RSED Consolidated vs One Year Ago

	FY25	FY25	FY25	FY25	FY25	FY25	FY25	FY24	Difference
	Natl+Nest(s)	CA	DC & Elim	WI	TN	ELIM	Total RSED	Total RSED	Dillerence
Assets									
Total Cash and cash equivalents	\$7,872,488	\$55,923,507	\$7,709,389	\$705,624	\$7,034,591	(\$0)	\$79,245,600	\$88,150,370	(\$8,904,770)
Total Accounts Receivable	\$131,921	\$21,967,281	\$1,554,213	\$423,157	\$753,352	(\$26,653)	\$24,803,270	\$23,760,014	\$1,043,256
Total Prepaid expenses and deposits	\$2,679,930	\$1,052,550	\$156,257	\$130,766	\$352,645	\$0	\$4,372,148	\$5,852,877	(\$1,480,729)
Total Security Deposits	\$34,297	\$425,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$459,297	\$459,297	\$0
Total Property, plant & equipment	\$5,303,540	\$131,739,530	\$122,893,218	\$8,113,557	\$39,740,400	\$0	\$307,790,245	\$305,357,199	\$2,433,045
Total Less: Accumulated depreciation	(\$3,367,601)	(\$18,958,129)	(\$6,597,867)	(\$1,440,588)	(\$3,194,033)	\$0	(\$33,558,217)	(\$23,579,298)	(\$9,978,918)
Total Note receivable	\$5,692,952	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$5,692,952)	\$0	\$468,650	(\$468,650)
Total Assets	\$18,347,527	\$192,149,739	\$125,715,210	\$7,932,516	\$44,686,955	(\$5,719,605)	\$383,112,342	\$400,469,043	(\$17,356,701)
Total Accounts payable	\$2,567,257	\$3,073,209	\$770,667	\$180,483	\$272,003	\$0	\$6,863,618	\$4,113,800	\$2,749,818
Total Accrued liabilities	\$2,714,025	\$1,527,290	\$76,202	\$38,324	\$1,172,024	\$0	\$5,527,865	\$6,839,741	(\$1,311,876)
Total Accrued lease payments S-T	\$366,350	\$6,573,791	\$1,866,215	\$472,075	\$769,626	\$0	\$10,048,057	\$9,238,685	\$809,372
Total Deferred Revenue	\$155,000	\$11,089,096	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$11,244,096	\$20,534,783	(\$9,290,687)
Total Deferred management fee S-T	\$0	\$0	\$26,652	\$0	\$0	(\$26,653)	(\$1)	(\$1)	\$0
Total Intercompany Loan	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,500,000	\$0	(\$1,600,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Current portion of loans payable	\$250,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$250,000	\$4,550,000	(\$4,300,000)
Total Current Liabilities	\$6,152,633	\$22,263,385	\$2,739,735	\$2,190,882	\$2,213,653	(\$1,626,653)	\$33,933,635	\$45,277,008	(\$11,343,373)
Total Accrued lease payments L-T	\$847,571	\$101,455,832	\$123,907,934	\$6,301,836	\$36,714,224	\$0	\$269,227,397	\$278,443,868	(\$9,216,470)
Total Accrued Interest	\$2,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,500		\$2,500
Total Loans payable L-T	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,092,952	\$0	(\$4,092,952)	(\$0)	\$0	(\$0)
Total Long-Tern Liabilities	\$850,071	\$101,455,832	\$123,907,934	\$10,394,788	\$36,714,224	(\$4,092,952)	\$269,229,897	\$278,443,868	(\$9,213,970)
Net Assets	\$11,344,823	\$68,430,522	(\$932,459)	(\$4,653,154)	\$5,759,078	\$0	\$79,948,810	\$76,748,168	\$3,200,642
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$18,347,527	\$192,149,739	\$125,715,210	\$7,932,516	\$44,686,955	(\$5,719,605)	\$383,112,342	\$400,469,043	(\$17,356,701)

Despite a positive change in net assets, the organization saw a 10% decline in cash on hand. This is driven by the CA region's drawdown of deferred revenue (cash paid in previous years for multi year grant programs).



## FY25 Year End P&L: CA region budget vs actual

	RDP RSSP RMS RLS RBM RSA ROMO RDL RSK RFZ RRS RFA RRWC CASE		Schools Total													
					( <sub>2</sub> , 1)	<u> </u>	Y25 Actu	als						FY25 Actuals	FY25 Budget	<u>Var</u>
Revenues																
Federal Income	893	779	857	820	1,019	1,051	1,004	976	538	1,061	1,006	1,106	746	11,855	7,528	4,327
State Revenue Sources	8,151	6,165	8,855	7,517	10,878	9,942	11,488	10,536	10,988	10,802	12,569	11,277	5,241	124,408	129,199	-4,790
Other Local Revenues	0	9	35	4	15	0	1	13	8	0	9	1	8	102	13	89
Internal Transfers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grants and Fundraising	0	19	0	5	23	44	22	21	18	10	2	0	6	170	0	170
Total Revenues	9,044	6,972	9,748	8,346	11,935	11,037	12,516	11,547	11,551	11,872	13,585	12,384	6,000	136,535	136,740	-205
Expense																
Personnel & Benefits	4,485	3,194	4,724	3,943	5,358	5,253	6,362	5,102	5,438	5,285	5,703	6,225	3,117	64,188	64,574	386
Books and Supplies	427	314	614	273	500	413	350	496	452	397	451	549	396	5,631	5,668	38
Food Services	301	237	302	217	441	366	366	297	339	394	339	431	207	4,238	5,179	941
Services and Other Operating Expenses	1,614	1,390	2,111	1,110	2,067	1,959	1,593	2,381	1,924	1,612	2,187	2,366	1,404	23,716	21,032	-2,685
Travel & Conferences	27	10	56	9	16	42	20	56	37	50	27	58	21	430	413	-17
Dues and Insurance	57	37	78	41	81	80	64	69	66	79	72	78	40	845	791	-54
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	852	752	1,022	964	995	897	1,058	1,288	998	1,347	1,041	528	95	11,838	12,590	752
Network Support Fee	1,227	957	1,361	1,096	1,643	1,567	1,727	1,653	1,628	1,692	1,954	1,756	824	19,086	19,084	-3
Capital Outlay	24	33	60	34	12	20	33	7	14	10	9	27	3	285	212	-73
Interest Expense	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Miscellaneous Expense	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,074	3,074
Total Expense	9,014	6,926	10,327	7,688	11,112	10,597	11,572	11,350	10,896	10,865	11,785	12,018	6,108	130,258	132,618	2,360
CINA	30	46	-580	658	823	440	943	196	655	1,007	1,800	366	-108	6,277	4,122	2,155
Net assets	1,423	3,904	3,695	4,771	7,679	3,848	8,226	1,647	8,544	8,421	12,670	2,900	439	68,166	66,010	

- Despite missing enrollment targets by ~500 students, the region met its overall revenue budget. This was driven by the use of time-limited restricted grant programs.
- The region as a whole underspent its overall expense target by about 2%.
- All but two schools had positive CINA. RMS has now had two years of negative results.



## FY25 Year End Balance Sheet: CA Region Year over Year

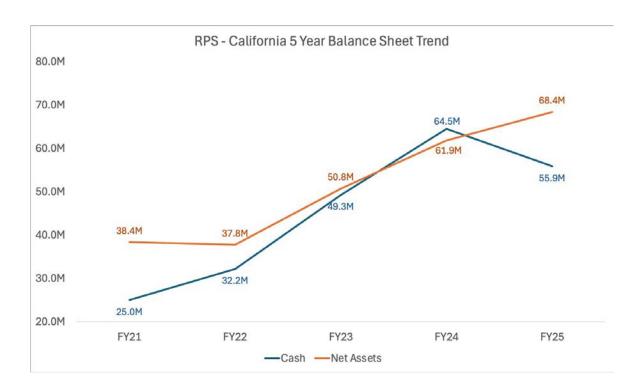
Cash declined despite the increase in net assets due to spending down the large Deferred Revenue balance accrued over the last several years.

Cash is still very strong: 158 days of FY26 operating expenses.

	FY25	FY24	Difference
	CA	CA	CA
Assets			
Total Cash and cash equivalents	\$55,923,507	\$64,533,262	(\$8,609,755)
Total Accounts Receivable	\$21,967,281	\$17,913,003	\$4,054,278
Total Prepaid expenses and deposits	\$1,052,550	\$1,027,637	\$24,913
Total Security Deposits	\$425,000	\$425,000	\$0
Total Property, plant & equipment	\$131,739,530	\$129,780,470	\$1,959,061
Total Less: Accumulated depreciation	(\$18,958,129)	(\$13,343,777)	(\$5,614,351)
Total Note receivable	\$0	\$153,916	(\$153,916)
Total Assets	\$192,149,739	\$200,489,511	(\$8,339,772)
Total Accounts payable	\$3,073,094	\$1,744,937	\$1,328,157
Total Accrued liabilities	\$1,527,290	\$2,910,057	(\$1,382,767)
Total Accrued lease payments S-T	\$6,573,791	\$6,163,455	\$410,336
Total Deferred Revenue	\$11,089,086	\$20,528,585	(\$9,439,499)
Total Deferred management fee S-T	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Intercompany Loan	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Current portion of loans payable	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Current Liabilities	\$22,263,385	\$31,347,034	(\$9,083,649)
Total Accrued lease payments L-T	\$101,455,832	\$107,259,181	(\$5,803,349)
Total Accrued Interest	\$0		\$0
Total Loans payable L-T	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Long-Tern Liabilities	\$101,455,832	\$107,259,181	(\$5,803,349)
Net Assets	\$68,754,846	\$61,883,295	\$6,871,551
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$192,149,739	\$200,489,511	(\$8,339,772)



### **CA Cash Detail**



The \$8.6mm decrease in CA cash, despite a \$6.5mm operating surplus is a function of several things:

- 1. Increased capital investment in facilities: \$2mm in FY25
- 2. Use of multi-year grant revenues that were pre-paid in prior years (\$9mm overall)

This drawdown was necessary when we review our recent history - Cash increased by \$33mm in the previous two years, despite CA schools only running \$24mm in operating surplus and the region began the year with nearly \$21mm in Deferred/Unearned Revenue



## FY25 Year End Budget to Actual - DC

	RISE RLP RIC			DC Schools Tota	1	
	S100 15 V	FY25 Actuals		FY25 Budget	FY25 Actuals	Var
Revenues				**		4 4
Federal Income	877,896	1,285,956	846,792	3,355,094	3,010,644	(344,451)
State Revenue Sources	10,350,024	15,357,084	9,417,506	34,801,218	35,124,614	323,397
Other Local Revenues	175,921	344,801	259,260	297,693	779,982	482,288
Internal Transfers	1,118,774	628,608	628,608	0	2,375,991	2,375,991
Grants and Fundraising	23,810	23,810	23,810	600,000	71,429	(528,571)
Total Revenues	12,546,425	17,640,258	11,175,976	39,054,005	41,362,659	2,308,654
Expense						
Personnel & Benefits	3,906,751	4,815,565	3,678,690	14,645,135	12,401,006	2,244,129
Books and Supplies	410,441	436,998	538,528		1,385,966	(436,726)
Food Services	368,342	463,738	214,032	200 CONT. CO. CO. CO. CO.	1,046,112	(45,467
Services and Other Operating Exper	4,371,163	5,666,106	2,878,767	11,302,676	12,916,035	(1,613,359)
Travel & Conferences	20,219	29,256	33,023	154,209	82,498	71,711
Dues and Insurance	44,460	70,836	60,328	A STATE OF THE STA	175,623	9,679
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	2,095,324	1,936,800	3,721,766	7,517,253	7,753,890	(236,637
Network Support Fee	1,240,035	1,814,141	1,225,298	Complete Com	4,279,474	269,573
Capital Outlay	5,610	6,571	828	3,722	13,009	(9,287
Interest Expense	0	0	1,793		1,793	(1,793
Miscellaneous Expense	1	0	0	0	1	(1
Total Expense	12,462,345	15,240,010	12,353,052	40,307,229	40,055,407	251,822
CINA	84,081	2,400,248	(1,177,077)	(1,253,224)	1,307,252	2,560,476
Net assets	1,808,578	5,973,217	(8,757,218)		(975,423)	

- The region as a whole posted a \$1.3mm <u>surplus</u> for the year. However, this is only possible due to the forgiveness by the national board of \$2.375mm of deferred fee from 2017.
- Absent that, the region would have run a \$1.1mm <u>deficit</u>, slightly better than budget.
- Expenses beat our budget targets by about \$252k, a combination of much lower staffing costs than budgeted and much higher non-compensation.



## FY25 Year End Balance Sheet: DC Region Year over Year

- Cash was basically unchanged in FY25.
- Cash position was negatively impacted by the ~\$1.2mm operating loss (before the loan forgiveness) but supported by the decrease in accounts receivable.
- Year end cash
   position was strong:
   \$7.7mm or 72 days
   of FY26 operating
   expenses.

	FY25	FY24	Difference	
	RPS DC			
Assets				
Total Cash and cash equivalents	\$7,709,389	\$7,673,970	\$35,419	
Total Accounts Receivable	\$1,456,676	\$1,911,609	(\$454,933)	
Total Prepaid expenses and deposits	\$156,257	\$2,047,187	(\$1,890,930)	
Total Security Deposits	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Property, plant & equipment	\$122,893,218	\$122,886,766	\$6,452	
Total Less: Accumulated depreciation	(\$6,597,867)	(\$4,619,955)	(\$1,977,912)	
Total Note receivable	\$0	(\$4,114)	\$4,114	
Total Assets	\$125,617,673	\$129,895,462	(\$4,277,789)	
Total Accounts payable	\$770,667	\$1,434,247	(\$663,581)	
Total Accrued liabilities	\$75,103	\$562,124	(\$487,020)	
Total Accrued lease payments S-T	\$1,866,215	\$1,714,386	\$151,828	
Total Deferred Revenue	\$0	(\$0)	\$0	
Total Deferred management fee S-T	\$26,652	\$347,086	(\$320,435)	
Total Intercompany Loan	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Current portion of loans payable	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Current Liabilities	\$2,738,636	\$4,057,844	(\$1,319,208)	
Total Accrued lease payments L-T	\$123,907,934	\$121,446,027	\$2,461,907	
Total Accrued Interest	\$0		\$0	
Total Loans payable L-T	\$0	\$2,375,991	(\$2,375,991)	
Total Long-Tern Liabilities	\$123,907,934	\$128,114,792	(\$4,206,858)	
Net Assets	(\$1,028,897)	(\$2,277,173)	\$1,248,276	
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$125,617,673	\$129,895,462	(\$4,277,789)	



## FY25 Year End Budget to Actual - TN

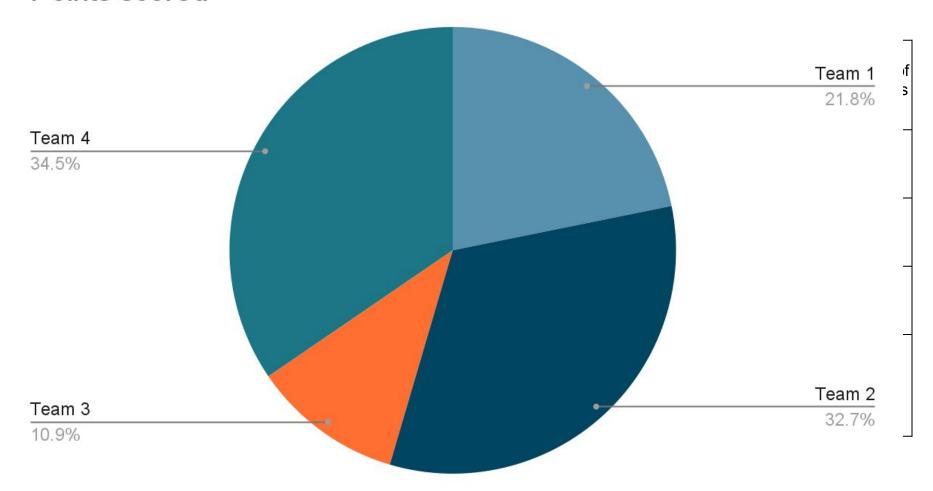
	RNNE RUA		RDCP		TN Schools Total		
		FY25 Actuals		FY25 Budget	FY25 Actuals	<u>Var</u>	
Revenues							
Federal Income	1,005,683	731,357	648,838	2,980,800	2,385,878	(594,922)	
State Revenue Sources	7,324,128	8,204,798	7,015,338	24,733,920	22,544,265	(2,189,655)	
Other Local Revenues	20,516	35,907	16,408	50,400	72,832	22,432	
Internal Transfers	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Grants and Fundraising	59,698	64,007	49,141	0	172,845	172,845	
Total Revenues	8,410,025	9,036,069	7,729,726	27,765,120	25,175,820	(2,589,300)	
Expense							
Personnel & Benefits	4,596,104	4,781,926	3,950,650	14,232,676	13,328,681	903,995	
Books and Supplies	475,738	440,115	386,234	1,198,747	1,302,087	(103,340)	
Food Services	503,078	426,352	408,960	1,166,400	1,338,391	(171,991)	
Services and Other Operating Exper	1,515,071	1,331,086	1,472,151	3,790,528	4,318,308	(527,780)	
Travel & Conferences	52,958	50,146	20,112	118,922	123,216	(4,294)	
Dues and Insurance	62,843	58,800	47,052	153,592	168,696	(15,104)	
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	751,267	717,187	1,632,396	2,516,215	3,100,850	(584,635)	
Network Support Fee	1,169,379	1,282,980	1,101,487	3,969,288	3,553,846	415,442	
Capital Outlay	22,190	21,442	2,213	12,041	45,846	(33,805)	
Interest Expense	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Miscellaneous Expense	993	0	0	0	993	(993)	
Total Expense	9,149,621	9,110,036	9,021,256	27,158,408	27,280,913	(122,505)	
CINA	(739,596)	(73,967)	(1,291,530)	606,712	(2,105,093)	(2,711,805)	
Net assets	2,460,030	6,255,674	(2,842,725)		5,872,979		

- Year end results are a \$2.1mm deficit, driven by a total \$2.6mm variance to the revenue budget (detail on next slide).
- Year-end expenses are consistent with our January and April projections: Compensation is 6% under budget, with supplies and services overspending targets, resulting in a ~1% savings on total expenses relative to budget.



## TN Revenue Variance Detail

## Points scored





## FY25 Year End Balance Sheet: TN Region Year over Year

- Following several years of positive cash accumulation, FY25 was RPS TN's first negative cash year.
- Cash was negatively impacted by:
  - Operating loss of \$2.2mm
  - Reduction in long-term debt of \$745k
- Cash loss was mitigated by a reduction in Accounts Receivable.
- Overall cash position is still very strong: \$7.034mm or 89 days of FY26 operating expenses.

	FY25	FY24	Difference	
	Rocketship TN			
Assets			100000000000000000000000000000000000000	
Total Cash and cash equivalents	\$7,034,591	\$7,908,952	(\$874,361)	
Total Accounts Receivable	\$654,984	\$2,124,365	(\$1,469,381	
Total Prepaid expenses and deposits	\$352,645	\$249,008	\$103,637	
Total Security Deposits	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Property, plant & equipment	\$39,740,400	\$39,351,847	\$388,552	
Total Less: Accumulated depreciation	(\$3,194,033)	(\$2,069,336)	(\$1,124,696	
Total Note receivable	\$0	(\$28,872)	\$28,872	
Total Assets	\$44,588,587	\$47,535,963	(\$2,947,376	
Total Accounts payable	\$272,003	\$204,856	\$67,147	
Total Accrued liabilities	\$1,141,333	\$571,170	\$570,163	
Total Accrued lease payments S-T	\$769,626	\$559,392	\$210,233	
Total Deferred Revenue	\$0	\$6,198	(\$6,198	
Total Deferred management fee S-T	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Intercompany Loan	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Current portion of loans payable	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Current Liabilities	\$2,182,961	\$1,341,616	\$841,346	
Total Accrued lease payments L-T	\$36,714,224	\$37,471,528	(\$757,304	
Total Accrued Interest	\$0		\$0	
Total Loans payable L-T	\$0	\$745,846	(\$745,846	
Total Long-Tern Liabilities	\$36,714,224	\$38,217,374	(\$1,503,150	
Net Assets	\$5,691,402	\$7,976,973	(\$2,285,572	
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$44,588,587	\$47,535,963	(\$2,947,376	



## FY25 Year End Budget to Actual - WI

	RSCP	RTP	W	/I Schools Total	
	FY25 Act	uals	FY25 Budget	FY25 Actuals	<u>Var</u>
Revenues					
Federal Income	1,250,842	747,353	2,240,670	1,998,195	(242,475)
State Revenue Sources	5,284,036	3,399,609	8,983,647	8,683,644	(300,003)
Other Local Revenues	78,342	9,572	27,300	87,914	60,614
Internal Transfers	0	0	0	0	0
Grants and Fundraising	6,551	1,573	0	8,124	8,124
Total Revenues	6,619,771	4,158,106	11,251,617	10,777,877	(473,740)
Expense					
Personnel & Benefits	3,925,050	2,216,577	6,695,731	6,141,628	554,103
Books and Supplies	345,296	268,774	417,030	614,070	(197,040)
Food Services	260,825	234,081	513,228	494,906	18,322
Services and Other Operating Exper	602,838	440,860	792,713	1,043,698	(250,985)
Travel & Conferences	55,899	30,677	0	86,576	(86,576)
Dues and Insurance	53,978	42,661	101,122	96,639	4,483
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	424,800	516,004	1,020,864	940,804	80,060
Network Support Fee	930,202	562,570	1,543,397	1,492,771	50,626
Capital Outlay	2,744	58,191	0	60,934	(60,934)
Interest Expense	60,000	0	60,000	60,000	0
Miscellaneous Expense	0	0	0	0	(0)
Total Expense	6,661,632	4,370,395	11,144,086	11,032,026	112,059
CINA	(41,861)	(212,288)	107,531	(254,149)	(361,680)
Net assets	(3,601,191)	(1,058,891)		(4,660,082)	

Year end results were below budget but slightly outperformed our projections from January and April, with a \$254,000 overall deficit, driven by a \$242,000 miss to budgeted revenue.

Expenses were overall about 1% under budget, with large savings in compensation being offset by overages in non-compensation expenses.

Collins

## FY25 Year End Balance Sheet: WI Region Year over Year

Cash took a slight dip this year, affected by the payoff of \$465k of intercompany loan and the \$245k operating loss.

Cash loss was mitigated by the reduction in Accounts Receivable (a priority at year end).

All told, RPS WI finished the year with \$705k in cash on hand, about 17 days of FY26 operating expenses.

	FY25	FY24	Difference	
	Rocketship WI			
Assets			1.0	
Total Cash and cash equivalents	\$705,624	\$881,481	(\$175,857)	
Total Accounts Receivable	\$423,157	\$698,248	(\$275,092	
Total Prepaid expenses and deposits	\$130,766	\$257,614	(\$126,849	
Total Security Deposits	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Property, plant & equipment	\$8,113,557	\$8,108,237	\$5,320	
Total Less: Accumulated depreciation	(\$1,440,588)	(\$971,122)	(\$469,465	
Total Note receivable	\$0	\$93,764	(\$93,764	
Total Assets	\$7,932,516	\$9,068,223	(\$1,135,707	
Total Accounts payable	\$180,483	\$128,628	\$51,855	
Total Accrued liabilities	\$37,592	\$70,593	(\$33,001	
Total Accrued lease payments S-T	\$472,075	\$455,688	\$16,387	
Total Deferred Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Deferred management fee S-T	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Intercompany Loan	\$1,500,000	\$1,965,000	(\$465,000	
Total Current portion of loans payable	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Current Liabilities	\$2,190,150	\$2,619,909	(\$429,759	
Total Accrued lease payments L-T	\$6,301,836	\$6,762,027	(\$460,191	
Total Accrued Interest	\$0		\$0	
Total Loans payable L-T	\$4,092,952	\$4,092,952	\$0	
Total Long-Tern Liabilities	\$10,394,788	\$10,854,979	(\$460,191	
Net Assets	(\$4,652,422)	(\$4,406,665)	(\$245,756	
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$7,932,516	\$9,068,223	(\$1,135,707	



## FY25 Budget to Actual: NeST Teams

	NeST Total		
	FY25 Budget	FY25 Actuals	<u>Var</u>
Revenues			
Federal Income	-	-	
State Revenue Sources	-	496,623	496,623
Other Local Revenues	1,500,000	2,576,603	1,076,603
Internal Transfers	29,780,655	28,412,495	(1,368,160
Grants and Fundraising	4,825,000	7,583,683	2,758,683
Total Revenues	36,105,655	39,069,404	2,963,749
Expense	-	-	
Personnel & Benefits	21,447,158	24,655,647	3,208,489
Books and Supplies	1,226,696	1,337,365	110,668
Food Services	59,613	186,809	127,196
Services and Other Operating Expenses	4,770,421	7,137,800	2,367,379
Travel & Conferences	1,511,509	1,733,958	222,449
Dues and Insurance	527,489	1,030,936	503,447
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	736,609	1,439,022	702,412
Network Support Fee	-	-	-
Capital Outlay	296,972	434,523	137,551
Interest Expense	49,528	26,156	(23,372
Miscellaneous Expense	1,450,499	3,202,579	1,752,080
Total Expense	32,076,496	41,184,796	9,108,300
CINA	3,910,176	(1,559,753)	(5,469,929

NeST revenue exceeded budget target on the basis of stronger interest income and philanthropy, offsetting the ~4.5% miss on network services fee.

Absent the DC loan forgiveness, NeST operating income would have been \$816k, positive but much less than budgeted.

Expenses were substantially higher, driven by:

- 1. Absorbing \$3.8mm more regional team costs than initially intended, especially in CA and DC where margins were very thin.
- 2. Absorbing \$700,000 in Texas rent expense
- 3. Absorbing \$2.4mm in DC loan forgiveness.



### FY25 Year End Balance Sheet - CMO Year Over Year

	FY25	FY25	Difference	
	NeST	NeST	Difference	
Assets				
Total Cash and cash equivalents	\$7,881,979	\$7,152,704	\$729,275	
Total Accounts Receivable	\$96,547	\$1,459,876	(\$1,363,329)	
Total Prepaid expenses and deposits	\$2,684,316	\$2,271,431	\$412,885	
Total Security Deposits	\$28,991	\$34,297	(\$5,306)	
Total Property, plant & equipment	\$5,303,540	\$5,229,880	\$73,660	
Total Less: Accumulated depreciation	(\$3,367,601)	(\$2,575,107)	(\$792,494)	
Total Note receivable	\$5,692,952	\$9,533,746	(\$3,840,793)	
Total Assets	\$18,320,725	\$23,106,761	(\$4,786,036)	
Total Accounts payable	\$2,571,657	\$601,132	\$1,970,525	
Total Accrued liabilities	\$2,637,215	\$2,725,797	(\$88,582)	
Total Accrued lease payments S-T	\$366,350	\$345,763	\$20,588	
Total Deferred Revenue	\$110,000	(\$0)	\$110,000	
Total Deferred management fee S-T	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Intercompany Loan	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	
Total Current portion of loans payable	\$250,000	\$4,550,000	(\$4,300,000)	
Total Current Liabilities	\$6,035,223	\$8,322,692	(\$2,287,469)	
Total Accrued lease payments L-T		\$1,212,331	\$4,822,892	
Total Accrued Interest	\$847,571		\$847,571	
Total Loans payable L-T	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Long-Tern Liabilities	\$847,571	\$1,212,331	(\$364,759)	
Net Assets	\$11,437,931	\$13,571,739	(\$2,133,808)	
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$18,320,725	\$23,106,761	(\$4,786,036)	

CMO Cash \$2,470,13	7 \$4,939,216	\$60,746	\$1,019,629	\$7,152,637	\$7,881,879

<sup>\*</sup> Included \$4.5mm in line of credit balance

- CMO cash improved year over year, boosted by small operating surplus and big reduction in AR/increase in AP and notes receivable (pay off of TN long term loan).
- Cash was negatively affected by repayment of line of credit balance (\$4.5mm)
- This year marks another step in building CMO cash on hand, from \$60,000 three years ago.



### FY26 Business Team Priority 1: Expense Management

After a year of getting systems and team up to speed, our priorities in 2025-26 are supporting schools and regions with meeting our collective obligation to steward our resources and manage tightly to the targets we've set in the budget process.

Each year we spend about 28% of network revenue on expenses other than compensation or facilities. Those categories have been our biggest source of expense variance over the last several cycles.

The national business team is committed to giving budget managers (school leaders, regional leaders, NeST leaders) the **knowledge**, **tools**, and **support** they need to own their budget outcomes with focuses on variable non-compensation.

- **Knowledge**: Updated monthly expense dashboard showing timely, easy to understand spending data relative to monthly targets, reporting each payroll showing overtime and missed meal penalties.
- Tools: the RAMP purchasing tool giving team leaders pre-approval over their team's spending,
   Workday hourly staff time review features
- **Support**: Monthly meetings with teams who are off-track of their budget goals, new Senior Director of Business Operations role providing support with contract management and action planning

### FY26 Business Team Priority 2: Long-Term Financial Planning

While we feel this year's budget process represented an improvement in technical and collaborative terms, we received the (accurate) feedback that budgets were being developed as a one-off exercise, absent the context of a strategic plan.

By the beginning of budget season for 2026-27, our team is committed to developing a multi-year projections tool, to help budget owners see the multi year impacts of enrollment and staffing decisions before they make them, with a focus on:

- Multi year grants
- Long-term enrollment and space needs planning
- Building towards balance sheet goals



### FY26 Business Team Priority 3: Health Care Deep Dive

Total RPS cost of health, dental, and vision exceeded \$10mm in FY24 and FY25, averaging about 11% of salaries, or about \$8,200 per employee overall (\$10k plus per participating employee).

The current fully-insured plan structure has been in place for several years without deep investigation.

While we don't know for certain that we can improve costs, we want to take the year to deep-dive into other options, including self-funding, and make sure we're getting the best possible advice.

Q1: Health broker RFP

Q2: Plan options review and decision

Q3: Implementation and plan design

Q4: Change management and open enrollment

# Approval of Revised 2025-26 Budget, including all School Level Budgets

### **Budget Process Updates**

Following board budget approval in June, we started working on revisions for

August/September board approval. Priorities for August revisions were:

- 1. New information on government revenue, contract costs, salary actuals
- 2. Responding to projected enrollment
- 3. Correcting errors that made it into the June document.

#### In general -

- Revenues per-pupil are up from the June budgets, non-staff expenses are about consistent, staff expenses are up a little (better projected retention = higher average salaries)
- 2. Projected enrollment is a mixed bag. Our August budgets reduce the network target from 10,058 to 9,918

### FY26 August Budget: RSED Consolidated June vs August

		4-		August	Budget	0			June Budget	June to August
	CA Schools	DC Schools	TN Schools	WI Schools	Schools Total	NeST Total	Elims	RSED Total	RSED Total	Better/Worse
Federal Income	\$11,038,659	\$3,765,180	\$2,440,220	\$2,933,048	\$20,177,107			\$20,177,107	\$19,170,731	\$1,006,376
State Revenue Sources	\$123,978,238	\$33,964,591	\$26,430,366	\$12,560,391	\$196,933,586			\$196,933,586	\$198,908,530	(\$1,974,944)
Other Local Revenues	-	\$284,195	\$54,975	\$34,300	\$373,470	\$1,000,000		\$1,373,470	\$1,419,470	(\$46,000)
Network Services Fee	-	-	-	-	\$0	\$29,426,925	-\$29,426,925	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grants and Fundraising	-	-		\$250,000	\$250,000	\$4,900,000		\$5,150,000	\$5,150,000	\$0
<b>Enrollment Contingency</b>						-\$1,471,346		-\$1,471,346	-\$1,494,967	\$23,621
Revenues	\$135,016,897	\$38,013,966	\$28,925,561	\$15,777,739	\$217,734,163	\$33,855,579	-\$29,426,925	\$222,162,817	\$223,153,764	(\$990,947)
Personnel & Benefits	\$66,436,584	\$12,756,607	\$14,873,540	\$9,799,923	\$103,866,654	\$23,356,926		\$127,223,580	\$127,949,108	\$725,528
Books and Supplies	\$5,941,208	\$922,678	\$1,368,793	\$625,259	\$8,857,938	\$1,026,058		\$9,883,996	\$9,296,840	(\$587,156)
Food Services	\$4,759,695	\$898,929	\$1,272,286	\$642,723	\$7,573,633	\$59,613		\$7,633,246	\$7,784,695	\$151,449
Services and Other Op. Ex.	\$21,519,223	\$10,896,986	\$3,983,052	\$962,957	\$37,362,218	\$4,643,678		\$42,005,896	\$41,164,822	(\$841,074)
Travel & Conferences	\$384,863	\$136,397	\$121,348	\$152,097	\$794,705	\$1,685,533		\$2,480,238	\$2,484,700	\$4,462
Dues and Insurance	\$732,247	\$153,700	\$155,974	\$128,787	\$1,170,708	\$696,132		\$1,866,840	\$1,827,242	(\$39,598)
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	\$12,554,818	\$7,805,029	\$2,784,031	\$1,196,974	\$24,340,852	\$747,146		\$25,087,998	\$25,304,265	\$216,267
Network Services Fee	\$18,738,165	\$4,374,146	\$4,142,929	\$2,171,685	\$29,426,925	\$0	-\$29,426,925		\$0	\$0
Capital Outlay	\$287,630	\$3,827	\$4,813	\$5,500	\$301,770	\$296,972		\$598,742	\$598,742	\$0
Interest Expense	□	12	9	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$49,528		\$109,528	\$109,528	\$0
Miscellaneous Expense	\$671,525		-	-	\$671,525	\$760,605		\$1,432,130	\$1,450,476	\$18,346
Expense	\$132,025,959	\$37,948,299	\$28,706,766	\$15,745,905	\$214,426,929	\$33,322,191	-\$29,426,925	\$218,322,194	\$217,970,418	(\$351,776)
CINA	\$2,990,938	\$65,667	\$218,795	\$31,834	\$3,307,234	\$533,388		\$3,840,622	\$4,374,010	(\$533,388)

Across the org as a whole, our shifts from June to August reflect a reduction in enrollment and consequently a 0.4% revenue reduction and a 0.2% increase in expenses. Overall CINA declines slighlty from \$4.4mm to \$3.8mm, less than our prior year budgeted CINA but greater than our actual results.



### FY26 August Budget: CA Regional Total compared to June

- Overall enrollment target is net -5 though some schools are up (RSK +39, RFZ +22, RRS +16) and others are down (RMS -60, ROMO - 11)
- Enrollment shifts are towards higher-revenue districts, so revenue per student is up 2% from June budget.
- Overall staffing is up 15, mostly in ISE roles.
- Non comp expenses up 3% from June, reflecting actual purchases and better ISE projections.
- Overall CINA is down \$900,000 from previous budget.
- Enrollment remains a risk, but we have opportunities to outperform from Attendance Recovery and governor's new block grant.

-	June Budget CA Schools	August Budget CA Schools	Change B/(W)
Enrollment	6,163	6,158	(5)
Staffing	576	591	15
Federal Income	10,597,669	11,038,659	440,990
State Revenue Sources	122,365,831	123,978,238	1,612,407
Other Local Revenues	-	-	i-
Internal Transfers	-	=	-
Grants and Fundraising	-	_	-
Revenues	132,963,500	135,016,897	2,053,397
	7	7, 7	
Certificated Salaries	35,245,570	35,559,076	(313,506)
Classified Salaries	15,495,839	16,419,924	(924,086)
Employee Benefits	14,244,070	14,457,584	(213,514)
Books and Supplies	5,287,058	5,941,208	(654,150)
Food Services	4,759,210	4,759,695	(485)
Services and Other Operating Expenses	20,675,506	21,519,223	(843,717)
Travel & Conferences	381,435	384,863	(3,428)
Dues and Insurance	653,731	732,247	(78,516)
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	12,799,167	12,554,818	244,349
Management Fee	18,582,259	18,738,165	(155,906)
Capital Outlay	287,630	287,630	-
Interest Expense	-	-	8=
Miscellaneous Expense	689,871	671,525	18,346
Expense	129,101,345	132,025,959	(2,924,613)
CINA	3,862,155	2,990,938	(871,217)



### FY26 August Budget: CA Region by School

	1	August Budget												
	RDP	RSSP	RMS	RLS	RBM	RSA	ROMO	RDL	RSK	RFZ	RRS	RFA	RRWC	CA Schools
Enrollment	396	261	414	304	507	531	545	521	570	524	624	675	286	6,158
Attendance %	93.1%	93.1%	93.1%	93.1%	93.1%	93.1%	93.1%	91.1%	93.1%	93.1%	93.1%	93.1%	91.1%	1206.3%
Attendance	369	243	385	283	472	494	507	475	531	488	581	628	261	5,717
Additional Attendance - ADA Recovery	8	5	10	6	11	11	12	14	11	10	13	14	8	132
Staffing	39.5	27	39	31	54.0	46	53	52.5	54	45.5	58	63	29	591
Federal Income	772,035	656,217	756,614	746,550	1,047,387	893,373	975,121	920,545	572,496	982,813	918,663	1,096,068	700,778	11,038,659
State Revenue Sources	7,911,786	5,999,612	8,283,105	6,785,184	10,922,805	9,935,647	11,604,970	10,579,373	10,873,586	11,359,909	12,689,889	11,502,855	5,529,516	123,978,238
Other Local Revenues	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Internal Transfers			-			-		15	-	-	-	-	=	
Grants and Fundraising		-	-	-	=	-	-	-	0.70	-	(=)	-	=	
Revenues	8,683,821	6,655,829	9,039,719	7,531,734	11,970,192	10,829,020	12,580,091	11,499,918	11,446,082	12,342,722	13,608,551	12,598,923	6,230,295	135,016,897
Certificated Salaries	2,226,528	1,678,289	2,258,201	2,040,603	3,150,162	2,926,465	3,362,860	3,131,999	3,156,037	2,917,488	3,399,832	3,591,640	1,718,970	35,559,076
Classified Salaries	1,182,459	715,202	1,129,019	797,266	1,519,276	1,195,126	1,442,828	1,424,053	1,514,863	1,223,538	1,607,675	1,814,881	853,740	16,419,924
Employee Benefits	938,599	678,416	968,708	790,170	1,313,541	1,177,934	1,302,924	1,243,754	1,308,844	1,113,488	1,406,575	1,497,961	716,671	14,457,584
Books and Supplies	355,993	265,919	393,865	358,041	501,360	503,371	522,096	482,484	480,660	500,806	635,859	637,585	303,170	5,941,208
Food Services	331,852	251,139	345,691	224,376	502,759	416,004	454,361	358,086	383,214	438,225	377,145	442,627	234,218	4,759,695
Services and Other Operating Expenses	1,371,034	1,289,631	1,471,872	1,058,547	1,846,742	1,935,110	1,844,411	1,719,723	1,688,639	1,870,301	2,067,985	2,114,726	1,240,502	21,519,223
Travel & Conferences	21,410	15,520	22,775	20,940	30,609	30,300	34,704	29,302	39,263	34,572	42,983	42,784	19,701	384,863
Dues and Insurance	48,562	32,908	50,604	37,971	64,243	60,010	66,012	62,115	66,476	59,470	73,398	75,724	34,755	732,247
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	941,947	735,266	1,015,571	1,090,810	1,054,813	933,071	1,109,730	1,332,873	1,067,122	1,393,416	1,157,076	547,257	175,866	12,554,818
Management Fee	1,170,146	907,167	1,255,810	1,023,097	1,630,429	1,524,786	1,744,377	1,609,055	1,617,059	1,739,297	1,930,036	1,748,157	838,748	18,738,165
Capital Outlay	26,690	33,695	55,754	34,018	12,587	20,447	30,710	5,172	15,036	10,460	9,288	29,784	3,990	287,630
Interest Expense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Expense	43,140	33,170	41,229	38,342	60,951	51,427	59,715	67,568	54,616	57,210	59,226	64,876	40,054	671,525
Expense	8,658,360	6,636,322	9,009,098	7,514,181	11,687,472	10,774,050	11,974,728	11,466,185	11,391,828	11,358,270	12,767,077	12,608,003	6,180,384	132,025,959
CINA	25,461	19,507	30,621	17,553	282,720	54,970	605,363	33,732	54,255	984,452	841,474	(9,080)	49,910	2,990,938

- All but one school are currently projected to break even (with RFA at a \$9k deficit).
- We are seeing a tale of two regions: 80% of positive CINA concentrated in 3 schools with higher revenues



### DC Schools Budget - June vs August Comparison

After monitoring enrollment throughout the summer, we are reducing our target by 183 students (135 K-5 students), creating a \$3.5mm revenue reduction. The reduction is less than anticipated due to increase in state funding formula. In response, we're reducing compensation by \$2.3mm (23 roles). As a result, projected margin is essentially break-even.

	June	August	Change
	DC Schools	DC Schools	B/(W)
Enrollment (PK-5)	1333	1150	-183
Enrollment (K-5)	985	850	-135
Staffing	152.0	129.0	23.0
Federal Income	3,645,527	3,765,180	119,653
State Revenue Sources	37,621,844	33,964,591	(3,657,253)
Other Local Revenues	329,419	284,195	(45,224)
Internal Transfers	-	-	-
Grants and Fundraising	12	_	-
Revenues	41,596,790	38,013,966	(3,582,824)
Personnel & Benefits	15,082,690	12,756,607	2,326,084
Certificated Salaries	7,745,467	7,364,111	381,356
Classified Salaries	4,833,598	3,266,858	1,566,740
Employee Benefits	2,503,625	2,125,638	377,988
Books and Supplies	990,733	922,678	68,055
Food Services	1,035,234	898,929	136,305
Services and Other Operating Expenses	10,956,924	10,896,986	59,939
Travel & Conferences	143,729	136,397	7,332
Dues and Insurance	208,256	153,700	54,556
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	7,801,721	7,805,029	(3,308)
Management Fee	4,945,628	4,374,146	571,483
Capital Outlay	3,827	3,827	-
Interest Expense	17	-	-
Miscellaneous Expense	-	-	
Expense	41,168,743	37,948,299	3,220,445
CINA	428,047	65,667	(362,380)

### FY26 Budget: DC Region by School

	August RISE	August RLP	August RIC	August DC Schools
Enrollment (PK-5)	361	458	331	1150
Enrollment (K-5)	271	308	271	850
Staffing	40.0	49.0	40.0	129.0
Federal Income	1,096,790	1,656,643	1,011,747	3,765,180
State Revenue Sources	10,669,456	13,508,659	9,786,476	33,964,591
Other Local Revenues	89,212	113,184	81,799	284,195
Internal Transfers	-	-	-	-
Grants and Fundraising	-	*		
Revenues	11,855,459	15,278,486	10,880,022	38,013,966
Personnel & Benefits	3,999,762	4,815,210	3,941,635	12,756,607
Certificated Salaries	2,428,776	2,752,340	2,182,995	7,364,111
Classified Salaries	912,973	1,258,451	1,095,434	3,266,858
Employee Benefits	658,013	804,418	663,207	2,125,638
Books and Supplies	289,641	367,467	265,571	922,678
Food Services	282,186	358,008	258,735	898,929
Services and Other Operating Expenses	3,316,776	5,099,834	2,480,376	10,896,986
Travel & Conferences	42,817	54,322	39,259	136,397
Dues and Insurance	48,837	59,331	45,533	153,700
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	2,459,004	3,109,473	2,236,552	7,805,029
Management Fee	1,374,498	1,675,681	1,323,966	4,374,146
Capital Outlay	1,222	1,574	1,030	3,827
Interest Expense	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Expense	2	2	- u	5
Expense	11,814,742	15,540,900	10,592,657	37,948,299
1000			1252 255	
CINA	40,717	(262,414)	287,364	65,667

At our break-even regional enrollment, RLP is running a modest deficit, driven by staffing costs that are about \$1,000 higher per pupil than RISE and RIC.

Unlike prior years, we're presenting facilities costs as leveled per-pupil across the three schools to better reflect variability in school-specific costs.



### FY26 Budget: TN Region June vs August

- In response to enrollment progress throughout the summer, we are reducing enrollment targets by net 7 (some grades/schools up or down).
- Expenses have shifted slightly, with net 3 fewer roles but higher compensation per role.
- Contract actuals increase benefits and services budget.
- Bottom line across the region is nearly the same as June.

	June	August	Change
	TN Schools	TN Schools	B/(W)
Enrollment	1545	1538	-7
Staffing	162.0	159.0	3.0
Federal Income	2,465,534	2,440,220	(25,314)
State Revenue Sources	26,463,519	26,430,366	(33,153)
Other Local Revenues	55,226	54,975	(250)
Internal Transfers	-	-	-
Grants and Fundraising			-
Revenues	28,984,278	28,925,561	(58,717)
Personnel & Benefits	14,886,406	14,873,540	12,866
Certificated Salaries	7,204,299	7,136,347	67,951
Classified Salaries	4,214,542	4,216,127	(1,585)
Employee Benefits	3,467,565	3,521,065	(53,500)
Books and Supplies	1,374,955	1,368,793	6,162
Food Services	1,278,077	1,272,286	5,791
Services and Other Operating Expenses	3,883,691	3,983,052	(99,360)
Travel & Conferences	121,874	121,348	526
Dues and Insurance	168,298	155,974	12,324
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	2,821,475	2,784,031	37,444
Management Fee	4,207,666	4,142,929	64,736
Capital Outlay	4,813	4,813	-
Interest Expense	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Expense	-	_	-
Expense	28,747,255	28,706,766	40,489
			• CO-18-0
CINA	237,023	218,795	(18,228)



### FY26 Budget: TN Region by School

- We are not currently meeting our goal of all schools break even:
- RDCP's facilities
   costs are ~2x the
   other two schools,
   and distort its bottom
   line relative to RUA.
- RNNE is in an
   investment year and a
   modest loss to fully
   staff the school and
   get achievement back
   on track is our best
   path.

	August RDCP	August RNNE	August RUA	August TN Schools
Enrollment	517	473	548	153
Staffing	53.0	52	54	159.
Federal Income	769,023	918,315	752,882	2,440,220
State Revenue Sources	8,872,810	8,133,564	9,423,992	26,430,366
Other Local Revenues	18,480	16,907	19,588	54,975
Internal Transfers		-	-	-
Grants and Fundraising	-	v	-	
Revenues	9,660,313	9,068,786	10,196,462	28,925,561
Personnel & Benefits	4,905,691	4,906,908	5,060,941	14,873,540
Certificated Salaries	2,403,977	2,318,751	2,413,619	7,136,347
Classified Salaries	1,384,619	1,388,760	1,442,748	4,216,127
Employee Benefits	1,117,094	1,199,396	1,204,574	3,521,065
Books and Supplies	446,049	427,481	495,263	1,368,793
Food Services	427,680	391,282	453,324	1,272,286
Services and Other Operating Expenses	1,295,405	1,266,297	1,421,350	3,983,052
Travel & Conferences	35,235	39,894	46,219	121,348
Dues and Insurance	51,919	49,448	54,607	155,974
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	1,291,073	777,293	715,664	2,784,031
Management Fee	1,384,052	1,294,333	1,464,544	4,142,929
Capital Outlay	11=	2,661	2,153	4,813
Interest Expense	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Expense		-	-	_
Expense	9,837,104	9,155,596	9,714,065	28,706,766
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CINA	(176,791)	(86,810)	482,397	218,79



### FY26 Budget: WI Region June vs August

- In response to enrollment progress this summer, we've lowered enrollment targets across the region by 15 students net (-17 at RTP, +2 at RSCP) and reduced staffing by 1 FTE net (-1 at RTP, +2 at Stellar).
- Due to increased state funding, overall revenue is actually <u>up</u> despite lower enrollment.
- However, compensation <u>per</u>

   employee is running 2.5% higher
   than our initial budget, due to
   stronger than expected staff
   retention (especially at Stellar) a
   good problem to have.
- RPS WI has the highest potential for enrollment upside to target based on early attendance.

	June Budget	August Budget	Change
	WI Schools	WI Schools	B/(W)
Enrollment	995	980	-15
Staffing	105	104	1
Federal Income	3,002,001	2,933,048	(68,953)
State Revenue Sources	12,457,336	12,560,391	103,055
Other Local Revenues	34,825	34,300	(525)
Internal Transfers	-	-	-
Grants and Fundraising	250,000	250,000	-
Revenues	15,744,162	15,777,739	33,577
Personnel & Benefits	9,637,607	9,799,923	(162,316)
Certificated Salaries	5,133,367	5,325,425	(192,058)
Classified Salaries	2,569,976	2,540,233	29,743
Employee Benefits	1,934,264	1,934,264	-
Books and Supplies	618,037	625,259	(7,222)
Food Services	652,561	642,723	9,838
Services and Other Operating Expenses	1,005,023	962,957	42,066
Travel & Conferences	152,129	152,097	32
Dues and Insurance	100,825	128,787	(27,962)
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	1,134,756	1,196,974	(62,218)
Management Fee	2,163,790	2,171,685	(7,895)
Capital Outlay	5,500	5,500	-
Interest Expense	60,000	60,000	_
Miscellaneous Expense	-	-	-
Expense	15,530,228	15,745,905	(215,677)
CINA	213,933	31,834	(182,100)



### FY26 Budget: WI Region by School - August Revision

- We are not currently meeting our goal of all campuses individually breaking even, with RSCP continuing to have very high staff costs per student (64% of revenue compared to 55% at RTP) and Stellar's ISE staffing costs being higher than anticipated.
- We have opportunities to outperform - if the schools enrolled to their original 995 target, we'd add ~192k in revenue.

	August Budget	August Budget	August Budget	August Budget
	RSCP	RTP	Stellar	WI Schools
Enrollment	435	335	210	980
Staffing	48	31	25	104
Federal Income	1,296,863	1,035,184	601,001	2,933,048
State Revenue Sources	5,614,464	4,332,203	2,613,725	12,560,391
Other Local Revenues	15,225	11,725	7,350	34,300
Internal Transfers	=	=	-	-
Grants and Fundraising	-	_	250,000	250,000
Revenues	6,926,551	5,379,112	3,472,075	15,777,739
Personnel & Benefits	4,427,003	2,999,395	2,266,202	9,799,923
Certificated Salaries	2,322,102	1,621,690	1,381,633	5,325,425
Classified Salaries	1,234,635	749,585	556,013	2,540,233
Employee Benefits	870,266	628,120	435,878	1,934,264
Books and Supplies	268,976	208,705	147,579	625,259
Food Services	285,290	219,706	137,726	642,723
Services and Other Operating Expenses	405,843	313,235	243,878	962,957
Travel & Conferences	50,931	50,717	50,449	152,097
Dues and Insurance	58,809	41,691	28,287	128,787
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	533,964	446,699	216,311	1,196,974
Management Fee	951,299	737,671	482,715	2,171,685
Capital Outlay	500	5,000		5,500
Interest Expense	60,000	-	:-	60,000
Miscellaneous Expense		-		-
Expense	7,042,616	5,022,820	3,680,469	15,745,905
	,	•	•	
CINA	(116,065)	356,292	(208,394)	31,834



### NeST Overall Budget June to August

Very small changes in our NeST planning since the June board budget:

- Small reduction in network service fee payments from schools due to enrollment adjustments.
- Continuing to hold a 5% revenue contingency in case of enrollment miss.
- No change in expense targets for NeST teams.

	August Budget	June Budget	Variance
	NeST Total	NeST Total	Better/(Worse)
Other Local Revenues	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$0
Network Services Fee	\$29,426,925	\$29,899,343	(\$472,418)
Grants and Fundraising	\$4,900,000	\$4,900,000	\$0
Enrollment Contingency	(\$1,471,346)	(\$1,494,967)	\$23,621
Revenues	\$33,855,579	\$34,304,376	(\$448,797)
Personnel & Benefits	\$23,356,926	\$23,356,926	\$0
Books and Supplies	\$1,026,058	\$1,026,058	\$0
Food Services	\$59,613	\$59,613	\$0
Services and Other Op. Ex.	\$4,643,678	\$4,643,678	\$0
Travel & Conferences	\$1,685,533	\$1,685,533	\$0
Dues and Insurance	\$696,132	\$696,132	\$0
Rental, Leases, & Repairs	\$747,146	\$747,146	\$0
Network Services Fee	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital Outlay	\$296,972	\$296,972	\$0
Interest Expense	\$49,528	\$49,528	\$0
Miscellaneous Expense	\$760,605	\$760,605	\$0
Expense	\$33,322,191	\$33,322,191	\$0
CINA	\$533,388	\$982,185	(\$448,797)



### School Budget Next Steps

#### Finishing the budgets:

- Following regional and national board approval, these become our official annual budgets which we'll share with authorizers and track progress against.
- Risks across the network from enrollment (especially back to school retention), staffing alignment to budget, and expense management (variable compensation and hourly comp).

#### **Rest of year:**

- Regional and school leaders are being invited to a budget management kick off later this
  month to review their budgets, become acquainted with our Adaptive reporting platform
  and cadence, and learn about the tools and support they have for budget management
  and their responsibility to "own" budget outcomes..
- From there, we will have monthly progress reports out to all budget owners in the first half of each month and will meet each month with those teams not on track to meet budget to action plan and provide support.

# Review and Approve Revised Rocketship Fiscal Policies

### Fiscal Policies Updates since June 2025

### Major changes:

- Enhanced Conflict of Interest, Procurement, and Payroll policy language
- Updates throughout to reflect regions outside California
- Clarifications and enhancements around purchasing thresholds and rules to capture Ramp capabilities

### Next steps:

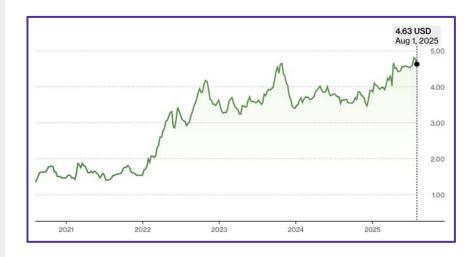
- National Audit and Business Committee review
- National Board adoption September 10
- Regional board ratification in Q2 meetings

National CMO Decision:

# Approve Resolution #2025-06 Rocketship Tennessee Bond Financing

### **RDCP Transaction Updates**

- Following our first two years of occupancy, we're now obligated to either buy RDCP from its developer, or get locked into the next 28 years of the lease.
- Purchase price will be \$14.9mm.
- We have until 11/30 to buy the building possibility of extending a month or two but
  not much longer.
- At current rates, we project a minimal cash savings over the next 2-3 years, but more substantial savings compared to the current lease in the long-term.
- RPS TN board members will have a special meeting in September to approve the transaction.
- RSED national is being asked to continue its management fee subordination to support the deal.



The 30 year AAA municipal bond index is near its post-COVID high point. Rocketship bonds have typically closed between 180 and 220 basis points above AAA.



### Today's Vote

The national board is being asked to approve a resolution authorizing:

- 1. The reaffirmation of the existing management fee subordination for Rocketship TN in favor of current and future lenders.
- 2. The execution of amendments to any prior loan or lease documents signed by Rocketship to facilitate the new bond sale.
- 3. The execution of any tax certificates or other documents necessary for the new bonds.

### Break

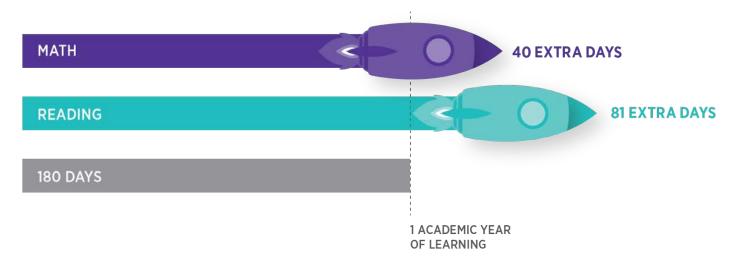


# 2024-25 Achievement Recap and 2025-26 Response

# Our students gained the equivalent of **81 additional** days of learning in reading during the 2024/2025 school year.

Our ability to propel outcomes for our most vulnerable students is rooted in our educational model, built on personalized learning for students *and* teachers. Based on our most recent data, **students grew 1.2 years in math and 1.5 years in reading** during the 2024/2025 school year.

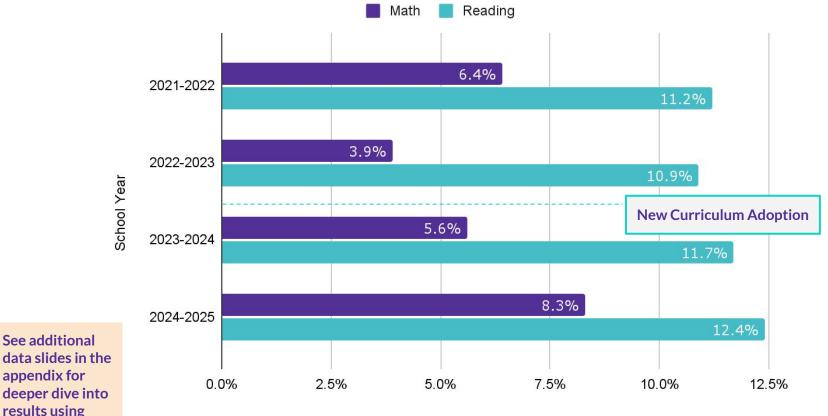
Rocketeers receive the equivalent of 40+ extra days of instruction in core subjects



Gaining more than a year's worth of learning in a single school year, and repeating that year after year after year for the past 18 years, is how we are eliminating the achievement gap and ensuring our Rocketeers are on the path to college and career success.

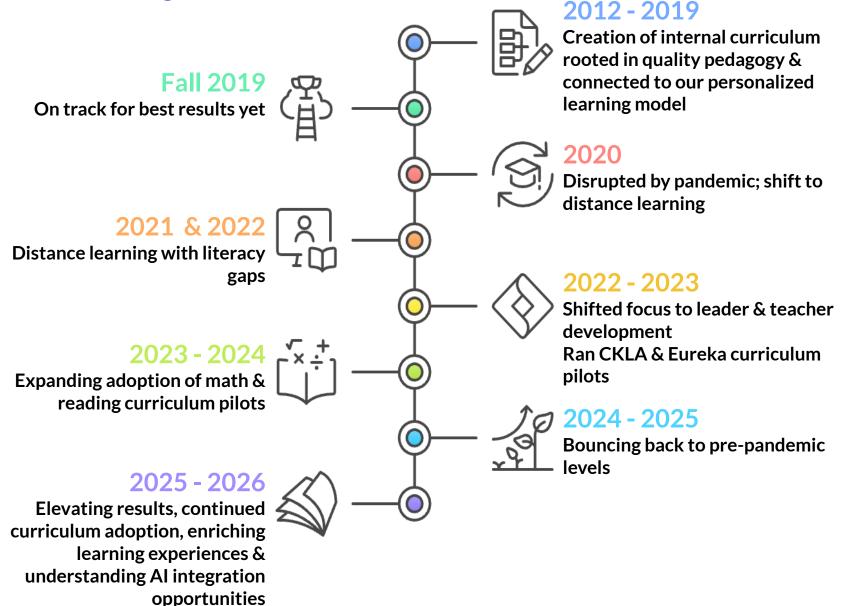
### In just the second year of curriculum adoption, Rocketeers saw the largest fall-to-spring absolute gains in both math and reading since 2021.

#### Annual Fall-to-Spring Absolute Change in Achievement at the 67th Percentile



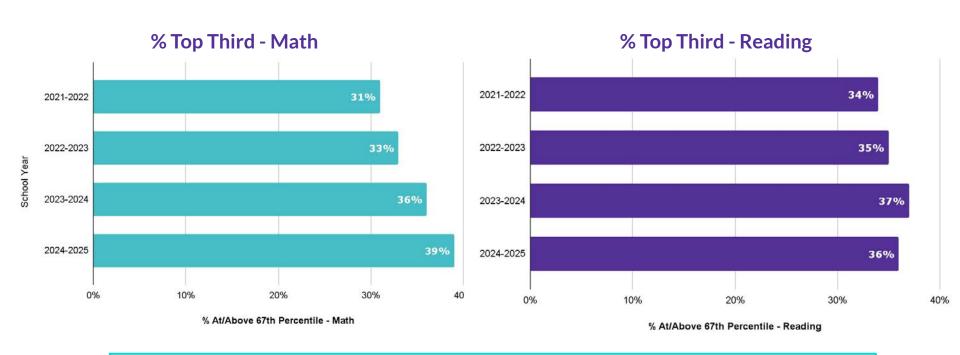
data slides in the appendix for deeper dive into results using **2020 Norms** 

### Our Journey



Rocketship continues to prepare our students for **college** and career success by making steady gains in achievement at the highest level.

% of Rocketeers who perform at the 67th percentile, or top third, on the NWEA, predictive of college entry and graduation.



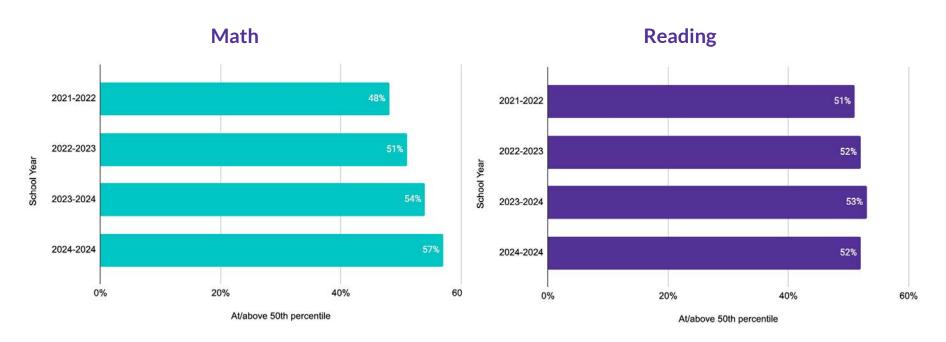
Nationwide, only about 25% of Black and Latino students make it to and through college. Already, Rocketship is ahead of the curve with our latest results, and seeks to reach 55% of Rocketeers achieving in the top third by 2030.

### Rocketship continues to ensure more Rocketeers are on track for academic success.

#### Rocketship is increasing the number of students performing at or above the national average.

These gains at the 50th percentile reflect broader improvements in grade-level proficiency, ensuring more Rocketeers are firmly on track for long-term success.

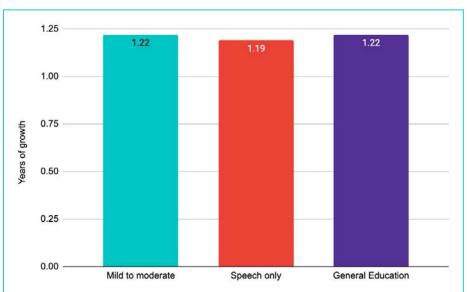
% of Rocketeers who perform at the 50th percentile on the NWEA, noting performance at or above grade-level proficiency in core subjects



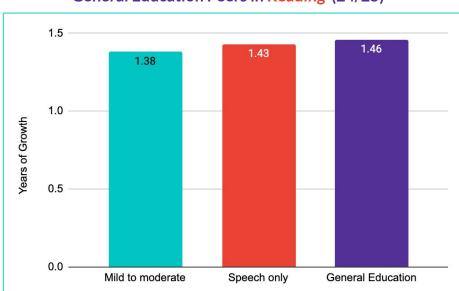
# Rocketship **students with disabilities** grew at strong rates last year and narrowed achievement gaps with their general education peers, demonstrating the strength of our model to support every single student.

Rocketship leaders from across the network are eager to share what's working for them in the hopes of **elevating and replicating best practices** within our Integrated Special Education (ISE) model. Co-teaching between general education and ISE teachers, enhanced teacher coaching opportunities, personalized learning plans that leverage real-time data, and consistent family partnerships continue to move the needle for these students.

Rocketship Integrated Special Education Student Growth vs. General Education Peers in Math (24/25)



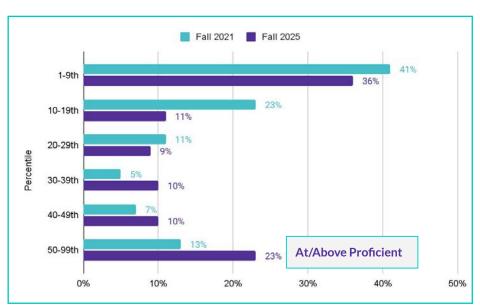
Rocketship Integrated Special Education Student Growth vs. General Education Peers in Reading (24/25)



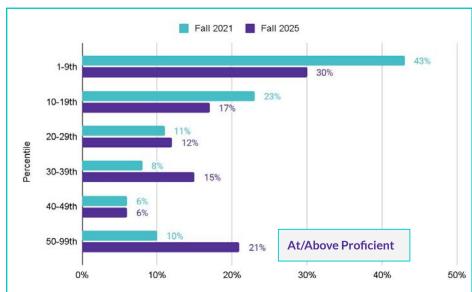
# Longitudinal data reveals how Rocketship's personalized learning and Integrated Special Education (ISE) model are leading to strong results for students with disabilities.

Students with disabilities who have received Rocketship's Integrated Special Education (ISE) services since 2021 have made significant movement out of the bottom 2 deciles, while making significant increases in proficiency in core subjects (marked by performance at the 50th percentile or higher on the NWEA).

MATH: Percentile Performance Distribution of ISE Rocketeers from 2021-2025



READING: Percentile Performance Distribution of ISE Rocketeers from 2021-2025

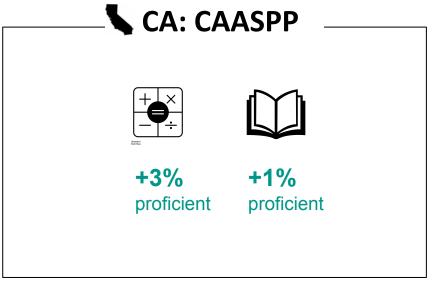


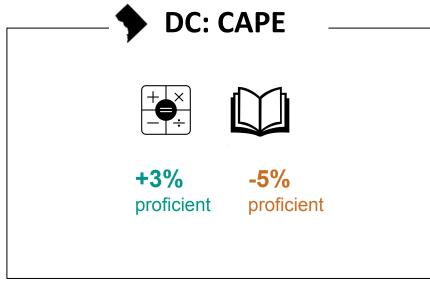
Even though Fall-to-Spring (F-S) Reading growth rates are higher than Math, greater YoY absolutes gains are not being realized with lower Spring-to-Spring (S-S) growth rates

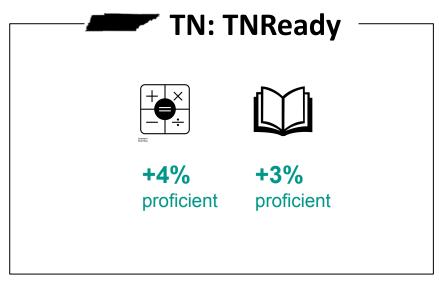


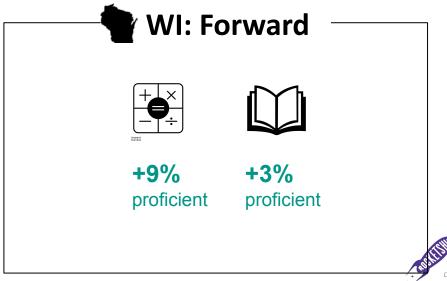
- Reading exhibits a much larger drop from Fall to Spring gains than Spring to Spring gains
- Suggests that while Reading growth during the school year outperforms national peers, Rocketship students have greater summer loss than national peers

All regions with preliminary state assessment results report increased proficiency from last year in Math and three regions reported ELA gains

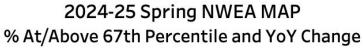


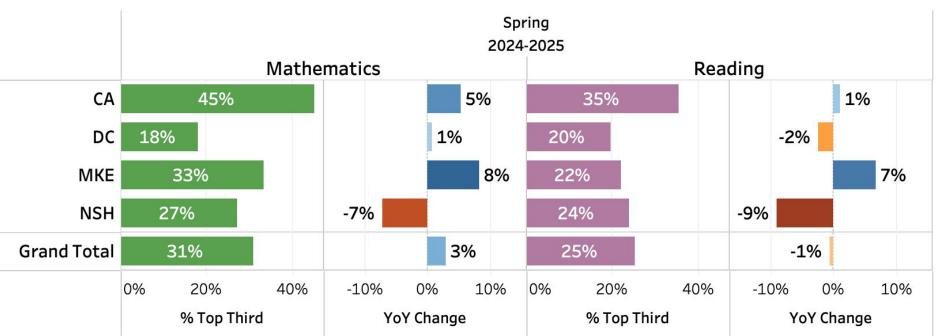






### California & Wisconsin led network results





- While NSH decline driven by RNNE's data, the region would have just maintained 23-24 rates if excluded RNNE
- Growth not as rapid as we would like in lower tiers and in G1-2 ELA

### We would like to see even stronger growth at the lower tiers

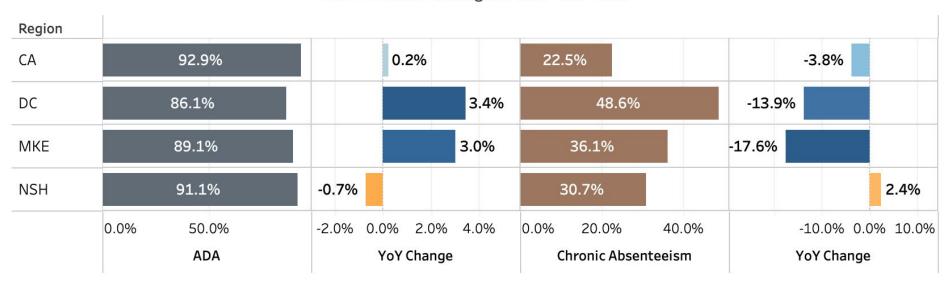
### Average Fall-to-Spring Growth Years by Grade and Starting Tier under 2025 Norms

			Spring 2024-2025						
TestSubject	t Fall Starting Tier	К	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Total	Growth Goal
Mathemati	<b>cs</b> Bottom Third	1.33	1.40	1.16	1.24	1.11	1.49	1.28	1.4
	Lower Inner Third	1.41	1.28	1.15	1.06	1.05	1.20	1.20	1.3
	Upper Inner Third	1.41	1.41	1.12	1.02	1.06	1.32	1.21	1.2
	Top Third	1.30	1.44	1.09	0.97	1.03	1.20	1.16	1.1
	Total	1.35	1.40	1.13	1.08	1.07	1.35	1.22	
Reading	Bottom Third	1.30	1.29	1.18	1.36	1.67	1.75	1.39	1.4
	Lower Inner Third	1.39	1.33	1.25	1.57	1.70	1.70	1.48	1.3
	Upper Inner Third	1.44	1.40	1.33	1.53	1.66	1.66	1.50	1.2
	Top Third	1.64	1.58	1.24	1.46	1.66	1.67	1.52	1.1
	Total	1.41	1.39	1.23	1.44	1.67	1.71	1.45	

 Would like to see more aggressive growth in lower tiers and in Grades 1 & 2 ELA and Grades 2-4 Math.

## DC and MKE regions made large gains in attendance from last year and reduced gap with CA/NSH

#### August-May Attendance Metrics 2024-25 and Change from Prior Year



2024-25 Attendance from first day of school through May 30th compared to 2023-24 full yeer.

All regions still need to improve attendance for accountability

- In DC and MKE we still have room for improvements to catch-up to CA/NSH
- In DC we must further reduce chronic absenteeism to maximize ASPIRE points
- CA improved but average chronic absentee rates still above 20% and will limit state dashboard performance unless further improvements are made

### 2024 - 2025 Response

Strategy	Rationale
Deeper partnership & on-the-ground support for DC and Tennessee regions	<ul> <li>East Coast based Program Team more fully built out</li> <li>Lessons from WI success - able to accelerate impact with more integrated supports</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>L&amp;L team resource development &amp; coaching focus on Grades 1 &amp; 2 Instruction, including</li> <li>Regular coaching walkthroughs</li> <li>Shared video analysis of lower literacy instruction with regional and school lower literacy coaches</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Stronger, more sustained growth needed in G1-2 literacy</li> <li>G2 Math data also impacted by reading level (first year students must read test independently)</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Coaching &amp; Development focus on Small Group Reading Instruction (specifically targeting bottom tiers)</li> <li>Emphasizing F&amp;P levels as easier for goal setting and understanding for Rocketeers, families, and teachers</li> <li>"Rocketizing" Tier I Literacy Curriculum resources to support Tier II</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Stronger, more sustained growth needed by students in the bottom third</li> <li>Small group instruction and Tier 2 supports most important for our region with highest % of students in bottom third (DC)</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Continued scaling of curriculum transition with emphasis on implementation support</li> <li>Exploration of Al-powered tools to elevate planning &amp; instruction</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Shared curriculum allows for more transferable practices</li> <li>Elevate ability to be more rapidly data-driven and responsive</li> </ul>

## DC & TN Support Plans Highlights

- Weekly to biweekly on-the-ground program coaching support
- Weekly principal & regional leader development meetings; led by VP of Program and VP of Academics
- Weekly content development meetings for Assistant Principals & Regional Leaders for in both Humanities & STEM; led by National Program content teams
- National Program Team partnership in region-wide Intellectual Prep/Unit Planning meetings
- National Program Team partnership in region-wide professional development design and delivery
- Additional tutoring support for bottom quartile students in upper grades
- In DC partnering with Simply Great Schools to provide on-the-ground principal coaching (every 2-3 weeks), leadership professional development and virtual coaching for east coast Program Team leaders

### For Further Discussion

- What feedback does the board have on our planned ELA response? What resonates and what might we be missing?
- What strategies might we consider when attempting to mitigate the summer loss of our Rocketeers, particularly in reading?
- What feedback does the board have on our DC & TN support plans?
   What resonates and what might we be missing?
- A common challenge we face is how to maintain growth through staffing and leadership transitions. What are best practices in shifting from a people-driven model to a more balanced systems-driven model that can endure throughout change?

## DC Charter Review & Regional Support Plan

# DC 10-year charter review during 2025-26

### The following slides outline the:

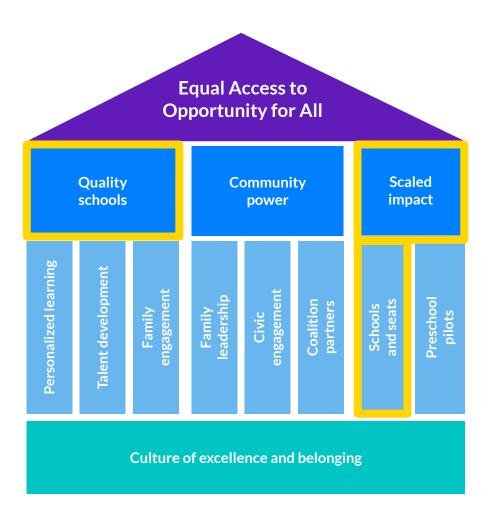
- Purpose
- Process
- Timeline of key milestones

### For discussion:

- What feedback do you have for how we best prepare for the DC 10-year charter review?
- What other <u>considerations</u> should we weigh? Are we missing anything?

## Grounding context for DC 10-year charter review

- Our mission calls us to expand access to opportunity for all – a successful 10 year charter review is core to achieving our mission and growing our impact to serve even more Rocketeers and families
- Successful charter review in DC is a shared priority for National and the DC Region for SY25-26, aligned to Quality Schools and Scaled Impact / Schools and Seats in our 5-year strategic plan
- Our goal is to successfully navigate a 10-year review by solidifying our foundation now
  - Most growth for the region in NWEA, returning to levels last seen in 22-23
     School Year
  - Middle States Accreditation achievement last year lays the foundation for a positive review this year

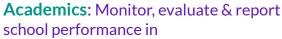




## Summary: 10-year charter review process overview



## The DC Public Charter School Board Review Process Has 3 Foci



- ASPIRE
- Qualitative Site Reviews
- Special Education & Emerging Multilingual Learners monitoring

**Finances**: Analyze & monitor the financial health of schools

- Financial Analysis Report
- Financial Correction Action Plan
- Review budgets, financial audits, 990s

**Organization:** Review, report & ensure schools are in compliance

- Create Annual Compliance Reports
- Connect schools with city services
- Conduct annual water testing



## The 10-year Review Questions & Potential Outcomes

#### **Essential Questions**

- Did the school meet its charter goals outlined in the agreement?
- Did the school commit a material violation of the law or its charter?
- Did the school commit a pattern of nonadherence to GAAP, of fiscal mismanagement, or is no longer economically viable?

#### **Potential Outcomes**

- Continue the charter
- Conditionally continue the charter
- Initiate the charter revocation process



## The DC Public Charter School Board's (DC PCSB) Qualitative Site Review

#### **Purpose**

- Gathers & documents evidence to support school oversight
- Evaluate schools' environment and instructional quality (ASPIRE PreK-8 Framework)
- It provides a snapshot of overall program implementation quality; not intended to evaluate individual teachers

#### **Components**

- School leader virtual training
- Unannounced campus observations based upon Danielson Framework for Teaching (FFT)
- Review English Language Arts & Math assignments = student work (The New Teacher Project Protocols)
- Debrief with campus leadership
- Formal QSR report summarizing DC Public Charter School Board's (PCSB) findings
- \*\*If needed, QSR appeal for a follow-up QSR or dispute the findings of the QSR Charter review

# Effective review requires high collaboration and coordination across teams...

DC ED: Overall owner of DC 10-year charter review during 2025-26; drives on project management (PM) in partnership with Strategy team

Strategy: Ensure quality, consistency, and rigor of review, in partnership with the region; provide centralized PM, coordinate across teams, create meeting agendas, act as a thought partner, help problem-solve issues, provide academic data analytics support, draft NET and Board decks

## DC Executive Assistant/Pro

Assistant/Project Manager:
Partner with Strategy to
ensure review quality; act as a
thought partner and probe
team diligence, help
problem-solve issues, finalize
decks for NLT and Board

**Program:** Provide training for school teams and walkthroughs using the classroom environment & instructional rubrics used during the QSR; weekly to biweekly on-the-ground program coaching support; principal & regional leader development meetings; HUM & STEM development meetings for assistant principals & regional leaders; partnership in region-wide Intellectual Prep/Unit Planning meetings; region-wide PD design & delivery, partnership with Simply Great Schools to provide on-the-ground principal coaching (every 2-3 weeks), additional tutoring support for bottom quartile students in upper grades, (partnershing with Open Lit at RISE & Kid Power at RLP); understand district academic / testing requirements and support staff model planning; support family engagement & retention

<u>Talent</u>: Understand talent needs and dynamics; build internal and external pipeline to supply talent required; support hiring and onboarding processes

<u>Finance</u>: Build and update a region-specific financial model to assess long-term financial viability and determine fundraising needs

Family Recruitment: Build family relationships; qualitatively assess & support improvement of recruitment & enrollment based on family needs, preferences & competitive positioning

MarComms: Provide tailored materials & review charter documents

<u>Facilities</u>: Partnership to maximize the use of existing facilities

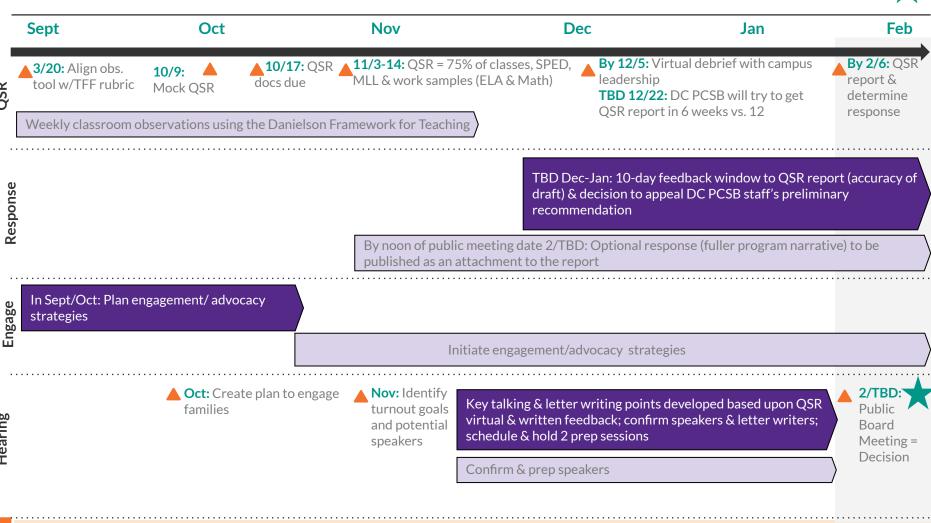
<u>Development</u>: Drive fundraising to meet 100% of region's launch goal; manage prospects, timelines, and donor engagement, partnering with ED and CEO

<u>Legal & Compliance</u>: Provide legal guidance to manage risk, ensure compliance with authorizer, and review the charter documents

## DC Review Process: Timeline of Key Milestones

Charter Review

2025





**QSR Report** 

External





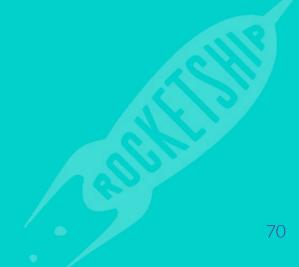


## **Discussion**

What feedback do you have for how we best prepare for the DC 10-year charter review?

What other <u>considerations</u> should we weigh? What are we missing?

## **Growth Updates**





## Growth Updates:

## Orange County Greenlighting

For RPS National Board

## Executive summary and guiding questions

#### **Executive summary**

Rocketship's 5-year strategic plan names Scaled Impact as a focus area to drive towards our mission of equal access to opportunity for all. We've set a goal of 44,000 Lifetime Rocketeers served by SY28-29, with 27,500 Lifetime Rocketeers coming from California.

While the original Lifetime Rocketeers goal included Texas, the separation has given us energy and opportunity to re-focus on scaling impact in California and our other existing regions. Orange County represents an unique opportunity to continue to serve more students, and there is exciting momentum on the ground.

We have begun our greenlighting diligence process in Orange County, assessing viability across mission alignment, external support, model execution, and organization health, and identifying emerging considerations and risks. What follows is a regrounding of our goals and an update on the OC work done to date.

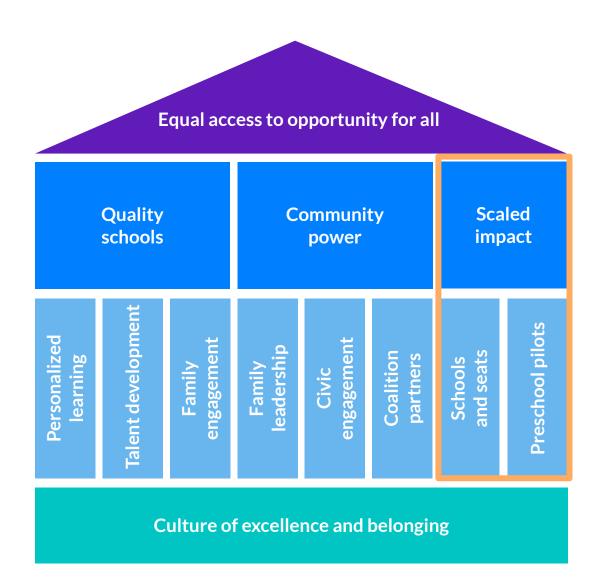
### **Guiding questions**

What questions do you have about the OC greenlighting work done to date?

What resonates most (or least) about Orange
County as a region for potential scaled impact?



# Reminder: Our 5-year strategic plan IDs focus areas and goals to drive towards equal access to opportunity for all



44,000 Lifetime Rocketeers served (with 27,500 served in

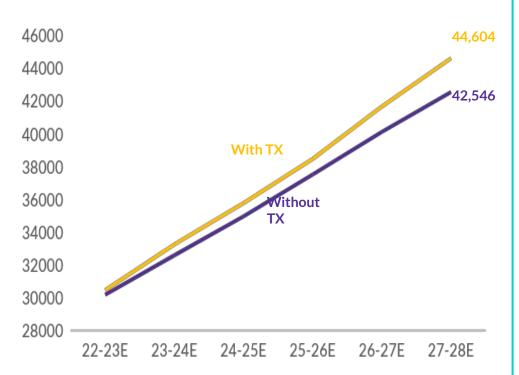
California)



# Scaling our impact to serve more Rocketeers is core to our mission and we remain committed to our goal

## Originally, Texas was part of our path to 44,000 Lifetime Rocketeers...

## **Projected Lifetime Rocketeers with and without TX** (Lifetime Rocketeers)



## ...Now, we can focus on scaling our impact in CA, WI, TN, and DC



California: Explore greenlighting Orange County as a new, full-scale region (targeting first school in SY27-28)



Wisconsin: Opened WI3 in SY25-26 (Stellar acquisition) and exploring additional opportunities



**Tennessee**: Opening TN4 in SY27-28 (withdrew TN5 as of August 2025)



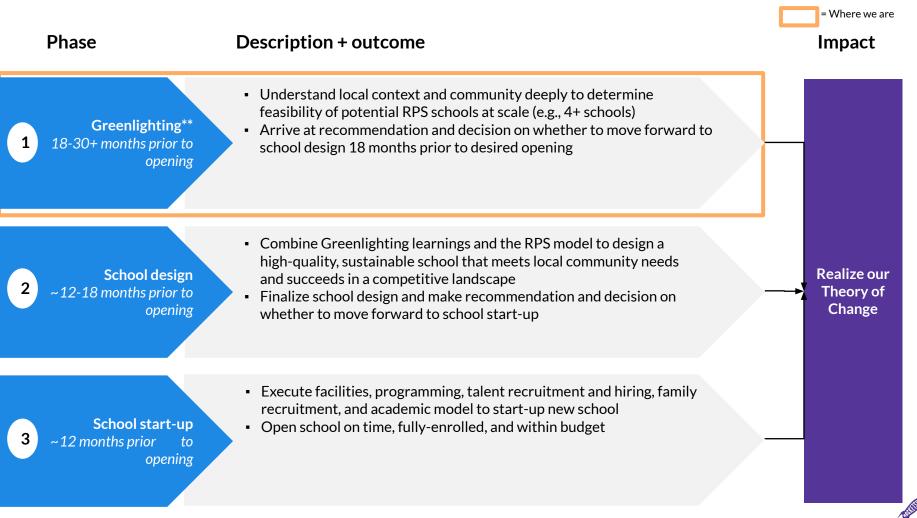
**DC**: Exploring pre-school pilot and eventual roll-out



# Reminder: Exploring OC is a named SY25-26 Scaled Impact priority for National and California

	Y2 goal	Priorities	Target accomplishments and milestones
National / network- wide	36,500	<ul> <li>Full enrollment</li> <li>Regional growth and new region exploration</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>All schools meet and/or exceed enrollment targets</li> <li>Secure authorizer approval and open WI3</li> <li>Secure authorizer approval and move to design/implementation phases of TN4; navigate appeals process for TN 5</li> <li>Explore and pursue successful greenlighting of Orange County</li> </ul>
CA	24,800	<ul><li>Full enrollment</li><li>New region exploration</li></ul>	<ul> <li>All schools meet and/or exceed enrollment targets</li> <li>Explore and pursue successful greenlighting of Orange County</li> </ul>
WI	2,450	<ul><li>Full enrollment</li><li>Regional growth</li></ul>	<ul> <li>All schools meet and/or exceed enrollment targets</li> <li>Open WI3 in 25-26 strong/high-quality</li> <li>Build retention strategy, especially for the north side</li> </ul>
TN	5,300	<ul><li>Full enrollment</li><li>Regional growth</li></ul>	<ul> <li>All schools meet and/or exceed enrollment targets w/targeted waitlists</li> <li>Approve and prepare for 26-27 opening of TN4</li> <li>Approve and prepare for 27-28 opening of TN5</li> </ul>
DC	3,100	<ul><li>Full enrollment</li><li>ECE</li><li>Charter review</li></ul>	<ul> <li>All schools meet and/or exceed enrollment targets, with focus on retention</li> <li>Renegotiate short term contract with AppleTree</li> <li>Successful charter review</li> </ul>

# Reminder: Greenlighting is the first phase of three when RPS opens a new region



# Reminder: Greenlighting includes conducting qualitative and quantitative diligence across 4 areas

# Mission alignment: Are there underperforming schools in this area and demand for RPS?

- What is the size of the opportunity / need for Rocketship schools (e.g., sizable achievement gap, insufficient access) to high quality public education options)?
- What is the demand (pull) for Rocketship schools how confident are we that we can fully enroll?
- What are the enrollment dynamics of the community?

## Org health: Are the internal conditions in place to grow?

- Are RPS as a network and the California region in a strong position to support a new region?
- What risks does this opportunity pose to RPS / CA and how might we mitigate?

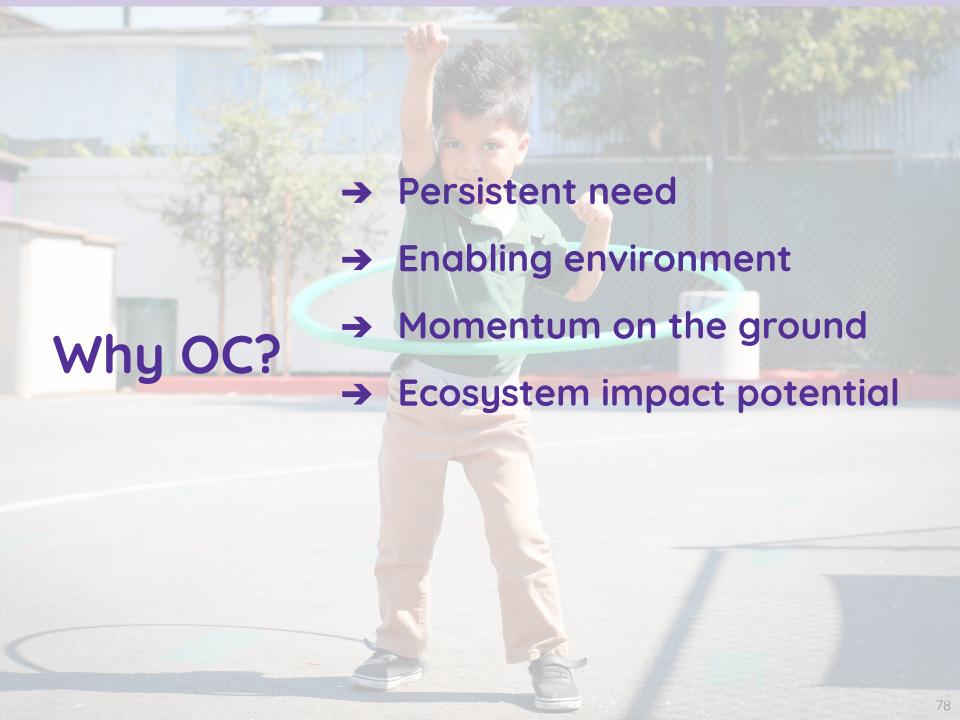
# External support: Does the external environment support our ability to scale impact?

- Do we have the necessary grass-tops (e.g., funders, RPS board support), organizational (e.g., non-profits), and grass-roots (e.g., families) support to succeed?
- What is the path to realizing a charter and facility?

## Model execution: Can we execute our model with fidelity?

- Can we reach financial sustainability?
- Can we identify and deliver a facility?
- Can we meet the necessary talent needs for a robust pipeline?
- Are there any potentially significant programmatic shifts?
- How are we going to launch (school size, configuration, etc.)?





## Despite projected enrollment declines, OC still has high need, and tens of thousands of underserved children



35%

Low performing is defined as OC schools with less than 35% proficiency on CAASPP in ELA or Math in TK-5<sup>1</sup>



~53,500

Total number of OC students currently in low-performing schools serving TK-5 students



~40,800

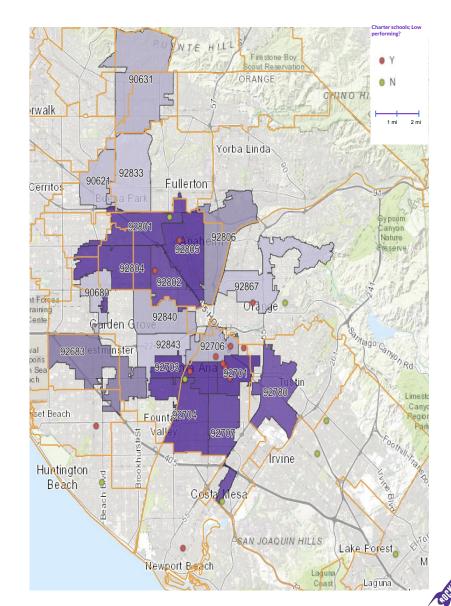
Projected total number of OC students in low-performing schools in 2033-34 serving TK-5 students



13 out of 19 charter schools currently serving TK-5 are low performing<sup>1</sup>

The estimated potential of 3-5 schools is spread across multiple districts, suggesting that a county-wide strategy may be more practical

## Charter schools serving TK-5 students mapped against zip codes and district boundaries



### Update: Where we are in the work to date (1 of 4)

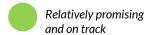
Current as of 8/27

#### Diligence area

#### Where we are

#### Risks or considerations ID'ed

#### Mission alignment



- Validated initial addressable market hypothesis and viability for a full-scale region, even with projected population declines through district level analysis
- Narrowed focus areas through zip code analysis; this will help other diligence workstreams prioritize
- **NEW PRACTICE:** Fielding primary market research study (n=400) in target districts to rigorously assess demand for public school choice among families and current attitudes, behaviors and motivations. Select preliminary findings:
- 97% of parents with children are somewhat or extremely happy with the school their child(ren) attend despite variability in school academic performance and quality
- Parents in North OC are knowledgeable about charter schools, with ~75% correctly ID'ing that charter schools are free public schools with greater flexibility in curriculum and educational approach
- 7/10 parents with children indicated they would be somewhat or very likely to enroll their child in a charter school if one was available in their area

- Orange County total 4-10 year-old population CAGR -1.1% by 2029, with all districts projecting enrollment declines per CDE
- Orange Unified may close six schools (<u>link</u>); Santa Ana approved 262 layoffs (<u>link</u>); Anaheim Elementary rescinded 119 planned layoffs after protests (<u>link</u>)



## Update: Where we are in the work to date (2 of 4)

Current as of 8/27

#### Diligence area

#### Where we are

#### Risks or considerations ID'ed

#### **External support**



Some emerging concerns but mitigatable; further diligence required

- Being pulled in by local stakeholders
- Completed 3 OC visits, meeting with funders, partners, existing CMOs, and potential Education Organizer candidates (see below) to understand local dynamics and begin building coalition of support; additional visits scheduled
- Secured funding for new Orange County Education Organizer (EO) role - hiring process in motion
- Believe that county board is supportive of charters
- Started attending local advocacy councils with County Superintendent and other CMO leaders

- Navigator Schools recently submitted a petition for 3 schools and Magnolia Public Schools is exploring expansion (in addition to indications on the ground of 15+ charter petitions being submitted)
- Some districts are strongly opposed to charter; still need to continue to validate and build charter support by district and community
- May need to navigate planning commissions and city councils for facilities, who may not be as favorable
- Need to identify larger fundraising base



### Update: Where we are in the work to date (3 of 4)

Current as of 9/3

#### Diligence area

#### Where we are

#### Model execution



Some emerging concerns but mitigatable; further diligence required

- Finance: Confirmed funding formula / regional viability comparable to Bay Area for most hypothesized districts; financial model being refined to assess path to adequate \$ to fuel launch and determine OC debt until sustainable
- Facilities: Partnering with real estate firm to provide local facilities expertise and support in building search
- Talent: Stood up local recruiting 3 OC Fellows (with OC connections) hired and placed in San Jose schools as School Leaders for incubation and development (RBM, RSSP, and RMS)!
- Talent: Indications of internal CA staff interest in transferring to OC; formal communications plan for internal talent and local SoCal talent recruitment strategy in development
- Talent: Compensation benchmarking in progress

#### Risks or considerations ID'ed

 Estimates for facilities cost is 15% of revenue based on initial market research, compared to 9% for all current Bay Area schools

Facilities search in progress; financial model to be updated based on actual sites

 Of all elementary schools in Orange County offering TK-5/6, 57% offer TK-6 and 31% offer TK-5; elementary grade levels vary by district



### Update: Where we are in the work to date (4 of 4)

Current as of 8/27

#### Diligence area

#### Where we are

#### Risks or considerations ID'ed

#### Org health



Some strengths and some emerging concerns but mitigatable

#### Region:

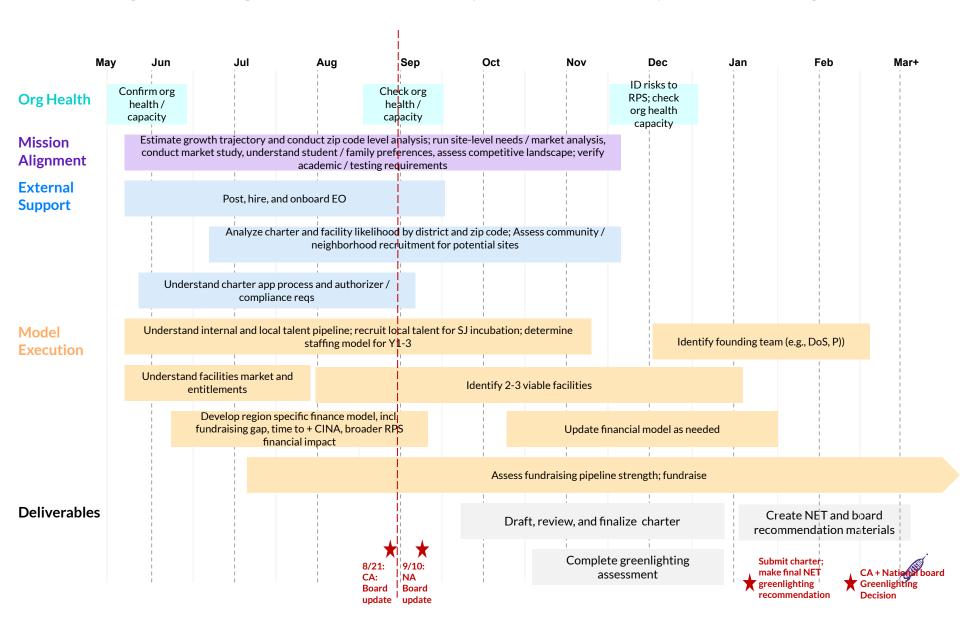
- RPS CA has solid academic results 11 out of 13 CA schools meet or exceeded 35% in either ELA or Math on 23-24 CAASPP (i..e, stronger than low-performing schools in OC considered in addressable market)
- CA regional leadership team highly experienced
- CA working to improve enrollment and chronic absenteeism

#### National:

 OC is a named priority and investments made to rebuild centralized capacity and expertise in greenlighting  Some role transitions across NeST to navigate



# Key milestones to get to a recommendation and decision on Orange County (current as of September 3; subject to change)



### Next steps and discussion questions

#### **Next steps**

- Complete market study to deeply understand student / family preferences
- Identify potential facilities and conduct site-level analyses to confirm viability
- Continue to build coalition of support from grasstops to grassroots, and hire education organizer
- Complete and refine region-specific financial model

### **Discussion questions**

What questions do you have about the OC greenlighting work done to date?

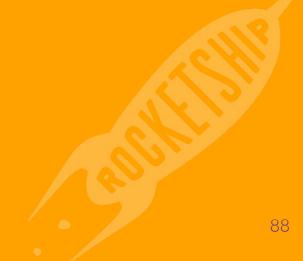
What resonates most (or least) about Orange County as a region for potential scaled impact?



## Adjourn



# Appendix



## Appendix:

## **DC Charter Review**

## DC Charter Review Appendix

 The following slides provide more detail regarding the Quality Site Review (QSR)

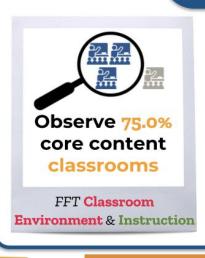
## Double Click: DC PCSP's QSR Observations

## The Qualitative Site Review (QSR)

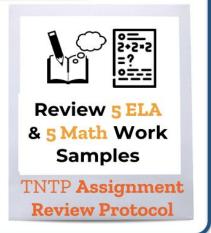


The QSR is a qualitative snapshot of an LEA's instructional program

## The QSR Report









## Double Click: DC PCSP's QSR Timeline

### Oct 7-9

Mock QSR conducted by Rocketship DC, NET & National Program teams one month prior to the QSR window

### **Oct 17**

 Two weeks prior to QSR window all documents are submitted to Egnyte.



#### Nov 3-14

 Unannounced observations are completed within the two-week QSR window.



### By Dec 5

 A virtual debrief is held with school leaders within three weeks of the close of the QSR window.



### By Feb 6

 The QSR report is sent to the LEA's Board Chair and Executive Director within 12 weeks of the QSR window.





## Double Click: Required Documentation & Observations



### Oct 17: Submit QSR Required Documentation

- Master/Daily Schedule
- Campus Calendar, including testing info
- Campus Visitor Protocol
- Teacher Roster & Schedules (Gen Ed, SPED, EML - for schools with 10+ EL students) with room numbers + time blocks
- Questionnaires: Instructional, ELA, EML
- Five student ELA work samples covering a range of grades + 1 cover page for each ELA assignment
- Five student math work samples covering a range of grades + 1 cover page for each Math assignment



## Nov 3-14: Unannounced QSR Campus Observations

- Observe 75% core content classrooms (classroom environment & instruction) aligned with Danielson Rubric
- Observe special education (SPED) & emerging multi lingual (EML) implementation
- Review of sample ELA & Math assignments (student work) - using The New Teacher Project (TNTP) Assignment Review Protocols

# There are key support structures and deliverables for the review



#### **Established Partnership meetings**

Regular 1:1 cadence with DC ED and national partners to collaborate & problem solve



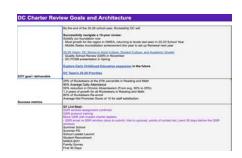
Regular cadence with DC ED, regional leaders and national partners to:

- Coordinate collaboration across the org & ensure we are moving forward in lock step
- Sharpen thinking & make best decisions
- Create visibility into the process



#### 25.26 Program Initiative Planning

Mobilizing grasstops advocacy to support clear path to charter and site approvals



## DC Charter Review Goals, Architecture & Work Plan

Identifies end of year goals, key deliverables, success metrics, support structures, and progress monitoring



#### 25.26 DC Strong Vision

Plan to ensure DC is a STRONG Organization and meet our ASPIRE Goals on the "Path to 30" we will prioritize adult culture, student culture and growth for students and staff



#### DC 25.26 Priorities

Identifies DC's top priorities aligned with 5-year plan in quality schools, community power, scaled impact and culture

## Appendix:

Orange County Greenlighting



## Basic facts about Orange County greenlighting



There are 27 districts in Orange County serving ~188,000 TK-5 students total



The 5 largest districts (Capistrano, Santa Ana, Irvine, Garden Grove, Anaheim Elem.) serve ~45% of the total TK-5 population



Of ~428 schools serving TK-5 in Orange County currently, 26 are charter schools (5.4% of TK-5 students)



District
demographics
(race/ethnicity,
ELL, SWD, SED),
and District
Unduplicated
Pupil Percentage
varies between
North OC and
South OC



Depending on the district, enrollment is projected to decline by 8.9% to 39.1% between 2023-24 to 2033-34



### Despite projected enrollment declines, OC still has high need, and tens of thousands of underserved children

		Total # of students in	% of students in	Projected 10-year		Est. # of students in
	Total # of students	low performing	low performing	change in	Est. total # of studen	ts low performing
District	(SY23-24)	schools (SY23-24)	schools (SY23-24)	enrollment**	in SY33-34	schools in SY33-34
Anaheim Elementary	12,715	11,496	90%	-15.1%	10,795	9,760
Brea-Olinda Unified	2,736	0	0%	-11.2%	2,430	0
Buena Park Elementary	2,508	1,487	59%	-18.3%	2,049	1,215
Capistrano Unified	20,518	3,131	15%	-20.4%	16,332	2,492
Centralia Elementary	3,480	435	13%	-15.8%	2,930	366
Cypress Elementary	2,790	0	0%	-16.5%	2,330	0
ountain Valley Elementary	3,825	0	0%	-18.7%	3,110	0
Fullerton Elementary	7,546	2,133	28%	-18.9%	6,120	1,730
Garden Grove Unified	16,608	2,853	17%	-24.0%	12,622	2,168
Huntington Beach City Elementary	3,176	0	0%	-21.1%	2,506	0
rvine Unified	17,343	1,311	8%	-8.9%	15,799	1.194
aguna Beach Unified	971	0	0%	*	•	0
a Habra City Elementary	2,925	768	26%	-15.1%	2,483	652
os Alamitos Unified	3,808	0	0%	-19.9%	3,050	0
owell Joint	1,956	0	0%	-39.1%	1,191	0
Magnolia Elementary	4,174	1,439	34%	-16.2%	3,498	1,206
Newport-Mesa Unified	7,519	1,905	25%	-26.3%	5,542	1,404
Ocean View	4,493	913	20%	-20.9%	3,554	722
Orange County Department of Education	4,350	1,626	37%		•	•
Orange Unified	11,031	3,123	28%	-19.6%	8,869	2,511
Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified	9,651	1,384	14%	-20.0%	7,721	1,107
Saddleback Valley Unified	10,194	1,465	14%	-20.3%	8,125	1,168
Santa Ana Unified	17,380	13,250	76%	-29.3%	12,288	9,368
Savanna Elementary	1,506	0	0%	-15.6%	1,271	0
SBE - Magnolia Science Academy Santa Ana	207	0	0%			-
Tustin Unified	9,065	3,019	33%	-21.9%	7,080	2,358
Westminster	5,306	1 752	33%	-19.5%	4,271	1 // 11
Total (all districts)	187,781	53,491			145,965	40,833



### Appendix:

What is Greenlighting?



# The purpose of greenlighting is to methodically and rigorously determine whether to open a new region (or school), and if so, where

Purpose	Rationale (additional detail in appendix)				
To sharpen thinking and make the best decisions on which regions and schools to greenlight and how	In launching WI and TN, we learned there were many things we could have known earlier, which would have strengthened the process and outcome				
To <b>coordinate collaboration</b> across the organization and ensure we are moving forward in lock step	In previous greenlighting and startup processes, teams worked in silos, communicated ad hoc, or regional voices and perspectives were not adequately captured, which caused conflicts, misalignment, and non-optimized outcomes (i.e., achievement, satisfaction, retention, etc.)				
To <b>create visibility</b> into the process to leadership	Aligning on clearer outcomes and timelines better enables leadership to pivot and support as necessary				



#### What greenlighting is and is not

#### What it is



#### What it is not



The diligence and decision-making process that assesses the feasibility of opening a new region / school. It looks at:

- External: Market need / demand, external environment, charter, facility, talent pipeline, and financial viability
- Internal: Capacity, capability

It does not get to the next level of detail on what changes are needed to our model or program (this occurs in Design)

A process that makes an **internal recommendation** to move forward with school design, initiates more robust resource investments, and ultimately **aims to get Board approval** for the new region / school.

It is **not the final call** on opening the school. The process should set us up to make as robust a decision as possible, though we may learn more later that impacts our ability to launch on the initial timeline we planned for

The **first step** in the overall process for launching a new school

The process is not set in stone – we are always looking to make it more effective and efficient



### Appendix:

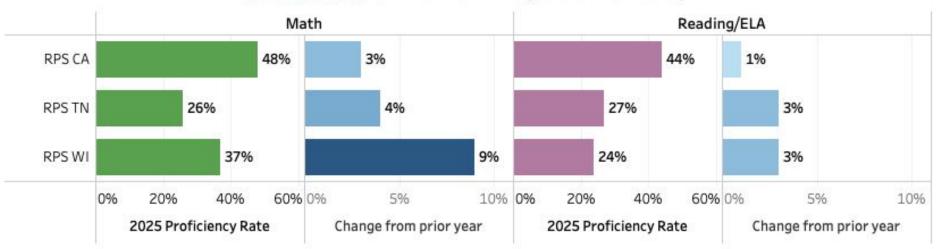
Additional Achievement Data Slides

### Note on Expected Changes to Current Results with NWEA 2025 Norms

- Data results reported in this appendix use 2020 NWEA norms
- NWEA will be released new 2025 norms in late August and results reported in this deck will likely change
  - These will be the first norms using post-pandemic data and should give us an even better understanding of how Rocketeers have recently performed compared to the national sample.
- Expect absolute results will improve with 2025 NWEA norms given NWEA reports showing slow pandemic recovery and persistent gaps between preand post-pandemic results but uncertain of magnitude of shift
- Unknown how growth rates will be impacted

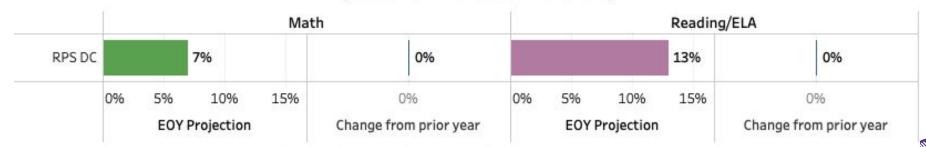
# State test proficiency - All regions with preliminary data increased proficiency from last year. DC expected to maintain last year's rates.

#### EMBARGOED 2024-25 Preliminary State Proficiency



Proficiency rate are preliminary and subject to change with complete data and accountability requirements are factored in.

#### Projected 2024-25 State Proficiency

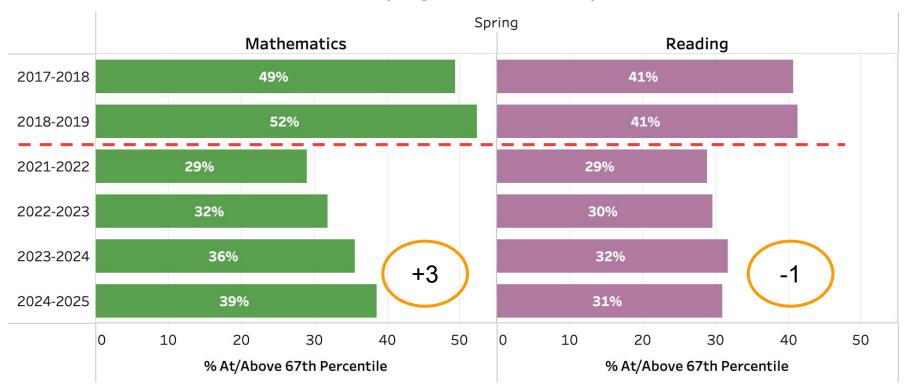


State Projections use on NWEA linking studies RIT thresholds for state proficiency



# % At/Above 67th: RPS attained NWEA absolutes gains in Math for the third year in a row. Network Reading absolutes largely unchanged.

RPS Network: Spring NWEA MAP % in Top Third



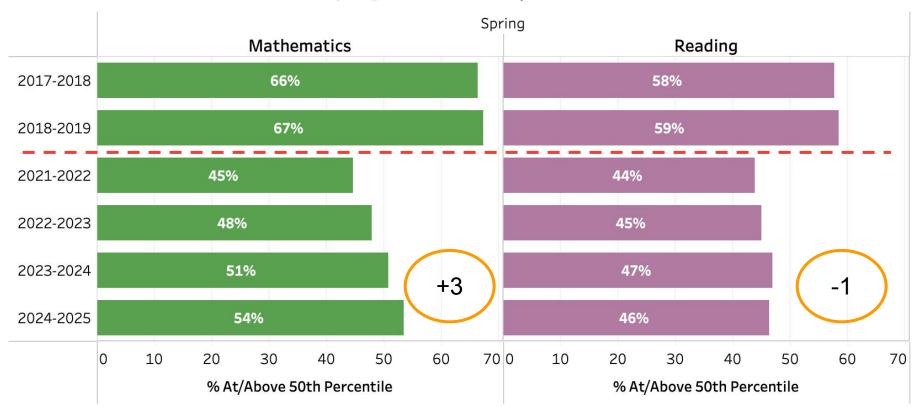
Dotted line represents 2019-20 and 2020-21 when Spring testing was disrupted

- Note: Results will likely change with NWEA 2025 norms release later this summer
  - Expect absolutes will improve under new 2025 norms



% At/Above 50th: RPS made NWEA absolutes gains in Math for the third year in a row. Reading absolutes largely unchanged for the network.

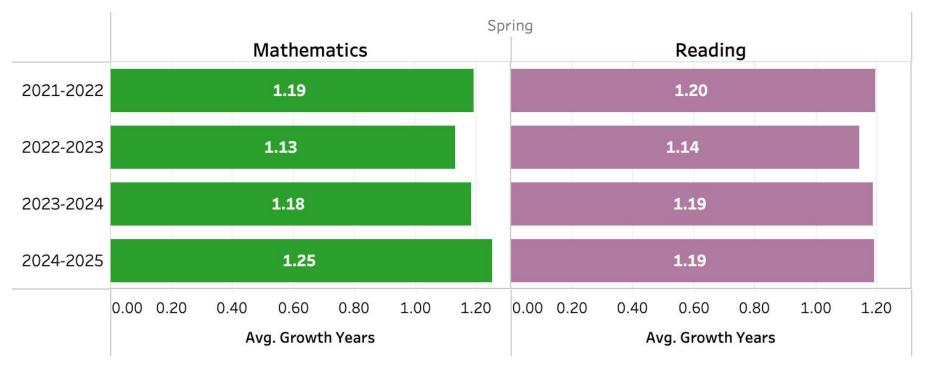
RPS Network: Spring NWEA MAP % At/Above 50th Percentile



Dotted line represents 2019-20 and 2020-21 when Spring testing was disrupted

## Network Averaged 1.2-1.25 years of growth in both subjects

### Avg NWEA MAP Growth Years RPS Network

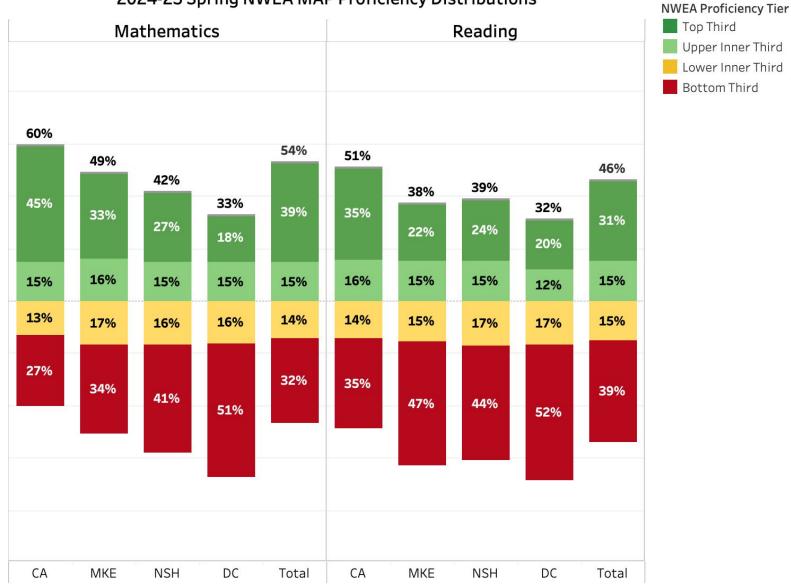


- Math growth rates improved and are getting closer to 1.3 years growth years target to be on-track for 5-year goals
- Reading growth rates same as last year and continue to be below growth rates needed to achieve 5-year goals



### Regional Absolute Distribution



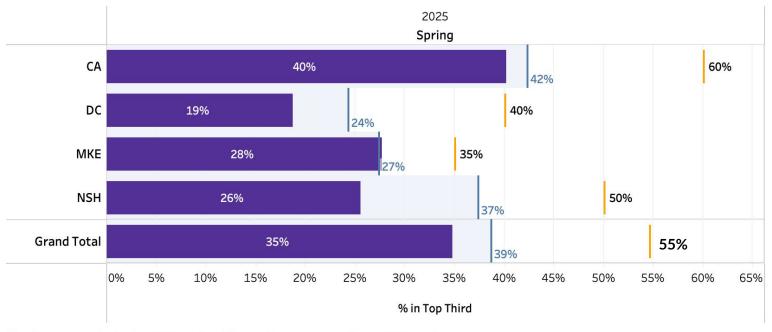






# Update on 2029 Goals: MKE exceeded its interim 2025 target, CA close, and DC, NSH below their targets

2024-25 Spring NWEA MAP % At/Above 67th Percentile compared to Spring 2025 & 2029 Goal



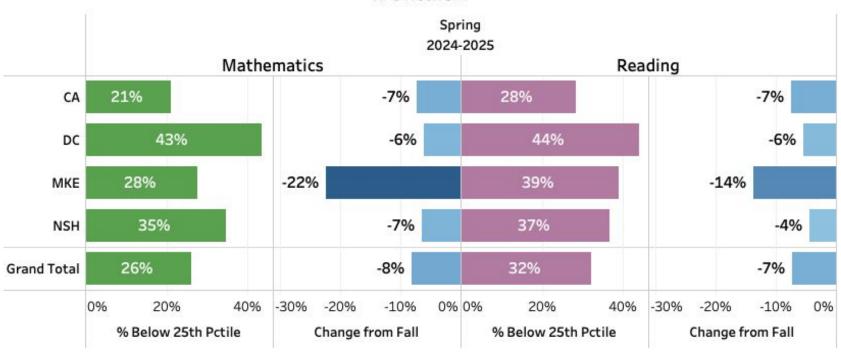
Blue line represents Spring 2025 goal and Orange line represents Spring 2029 goal

- Set ambitious targets for 2029 which would have required ~4 percentage point gains in Top Third each year to stay on track
  - Off-track regions now need ~5 percentage point gains each year for the next 4 years to reach 2029 goals
- DC and NSH Top Third lower than last year
- NOTE: Regions will likely be closer to goals than currently reported after 2025 NWEA norms release



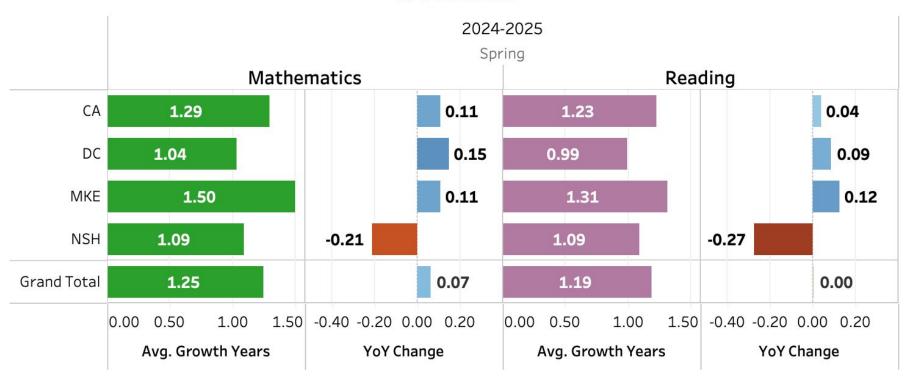
### Regions made larger shifts in Bottom Quartile

#### 2024-25 Spring NWEA MAP % Below 25th Percentile and Change from Fall RPS Network



### Growth rates improved across regions from last year

### Avg NWEA MAP Growth Years RPS Network



- If exclude RNNE, NSH average would have slightly increased in both subjects
  - Network Reading average would have also seen a slight increase



# MKE averaged 1.4 years of growth or higher for bottom third students and CA averaged 1.3 years

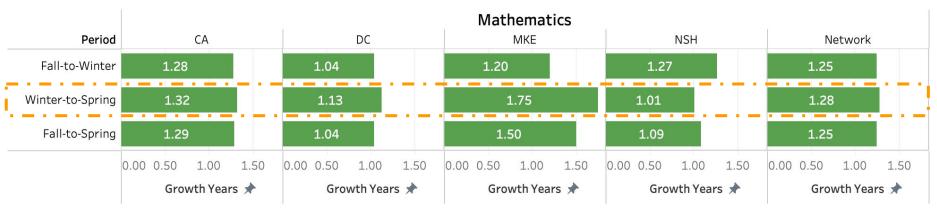
2024-25 Avg Growth Years by Starting Tier and Region

	Mathematics			Grand	Growth	
	CA	DC	MKE	NSH	Total	Goal
Bottom Third	1.33	1.07	1.58	1.09	1.27	1.4
Lower Inner Third	1.29	1.05	1.45	1.10	1.24	1.3
Upper Inner Third	1.31	1.01	1.35	1.10	1.25	1.2
Top Third	1.25	0.91	1.40	1.07	1.22	1.1
Grand Total	1.29	1.04	1.50	1.09	1.25	
		Rea	ding		Grand	Growth
	CA	DC	MKE	NSH	Total	Goal
Bottom Third	1.27	0.99	1.41	1.11	1.22	1.4
Lower Inner Third	1.26	0.96	1.19	1.05	1.19	1.3
Upper Inner Third	1.22	1.08	1.07	1.07	1.18	1.2
Top Third	1.15	0.93	1.21	1.10	1.13	1.1
Grand Total	1.23	0.99	1.31	1.09	1.19	



# Except for NSH Math, regions achieved similar or higher 2nd Semester growth with Reading making the greatest gains

#### 2024-2025 Avg Growth Years by Term

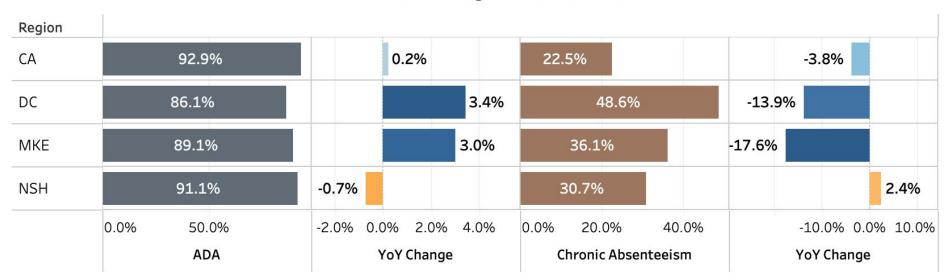


#### 2024-2025 Avg Growth Years by Term



# DC and MKE regions made large gains in attendance from last year and reduced gap with CA/NSH

#### August-May Attendance Metrics 2024-25 and Change from Prior Year



2024-25 Attendance from first day of school through May 30th compared to 2023-24 full yeer.

All regions still need to improve attendance for accountability

- In DC and MKE we still have room for improvements to catch-up to CA/NSH
- In DC we must further reduce chronic absenteeism to maximize ASPIRE points
- CA improved but average chronic absentee rates still above 20% and will limit state dashboard performance unless further improvements are made

**MLL Subgroup**: Across the network, MLL students achieved higher Math growth rates than non-MLL peers and similar rates in Reading.

2024-25 Avg Growth Years by EL Status

		EL	EO/IFEP	RFEP	Grand Total
Mathematics	CA	1.31	1.28	1.29	1.29
	DC	1.61	0.99		1.04
	MKE	1.45	1.53		1.50
	NSH	1.15	1.05	1.17	1.09
	Total	1.29	1.21	1.29	1.25
Reading	CA	1.20	1.25	1.30	1.23
	DC	1.30	0.96		0.99
	MKE	1.22	1.38		1.31
	NSH	1.13	1.06	1.20	1.09
	Total	1.19	1.17	1.29	1.19

 DC MLL students achieved strong growth rates in both subjects

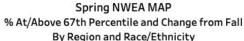


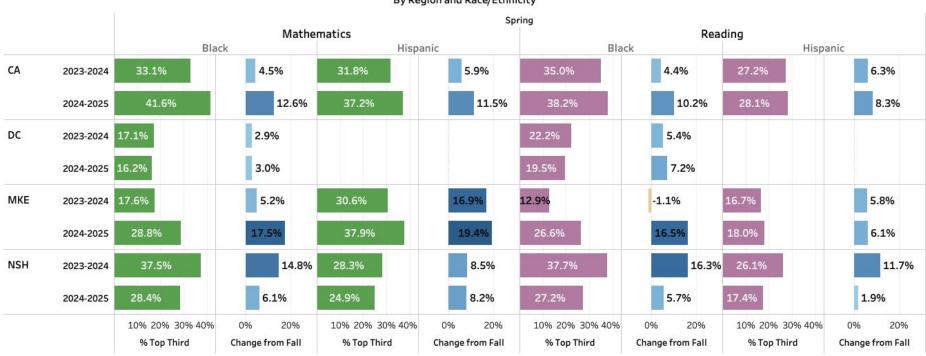
# **ISE**: ISE student NWEA growth achieved similar growth rates as peers across the network

2024-2025 Avg Growth Years by ISE Type

		mild to moderate	speech only	Non-ISE	Grand Total
Mathematics	CA	1.33	1.23	1.30	1.30
	DC	1.09	0.95	1.03	1.04
	MKE	1.35	1.57	1.53	1.51
	NSH	1.02	1.02	1.10	1.09
	Total	1.26	1.22	1.25	1.25
Reading	CA	1.30	1.20	1.23	1.23
	DC	1.14	1.20	0.96	0.99
	MKE	1.24	1.60	1.32	1.32
	NSH	0.92	1.05	1.11	1.10
	Total	1.22	1.22	1.19	1.19

### % At/Above 67th Percentile by Race and Change from Fall

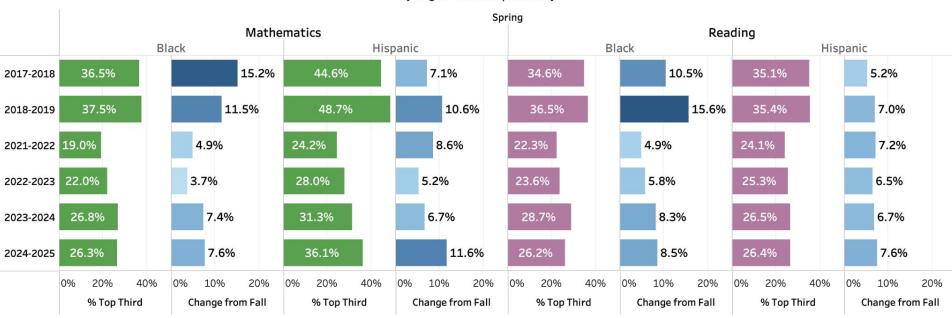




Continuing to make progress on absolute metrics with Black and Hispanic students in both Math and Reading, with CA and Milwaukee aggressively closing the gap YoY.

# Network: % At/Above 67th Percentile by Race and Change from Fall

RPS Network: Spring NWEA MAP
% At/Above 67th Percentile and Change from Fall
By Region and Race/Ethnicity

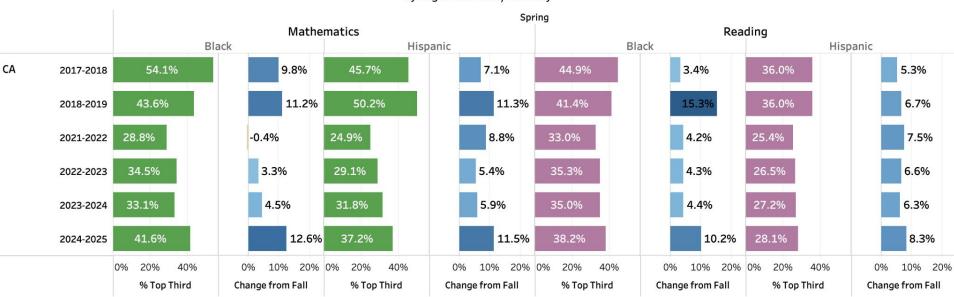


- In 24.25 SY, saw the strongest change in top third from fall to spring for Black and Hispanic students, since the pandemic
- Launching the Black Student Achievement Collective to further rapidly advance absolute results



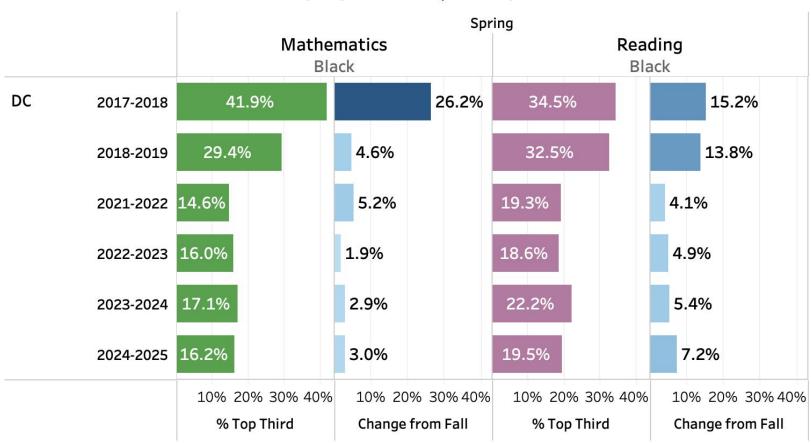
## CA: % At/Above 67th Percentile by Race and Change from Fall

### RPS CA: Spring NWEA MAP % At/Above 67th Percentile and Change from Fall By Region and Race/Ethnicity



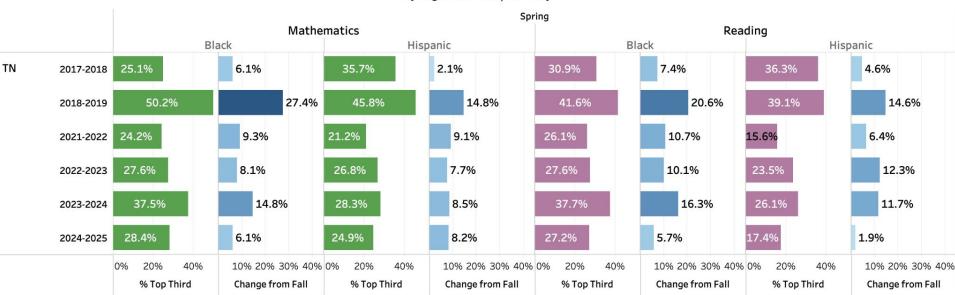
## DC: % At/Above 67th Percentile by Race and Change from Fall

RPS DC: Spring NWEA MAP
% At/Above 67th Percentile and Change from Fall
By Region and Race/Ethnicity



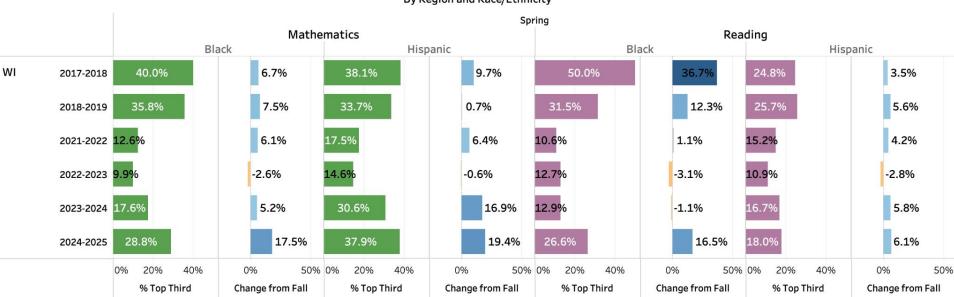
## TN: % At/Above 67th Percentile by Race and Change from Fall

### RPS TN: Spring NWEA MAP % At/Above 67th Percentile and Change from Fall By Region and Race/Ethnicity



## WI: % At/Above 67th Percentile by Race and Change from Fall

### RPS WI: Spring NWEA MAP % At/Above 67th Percentile and Change from Fall By Region and Race/Ethnicity



### % At/Above 67th Percentile by Race

#### NWEA MAP % At/Above 67th Percentile by Race/Ethnicity

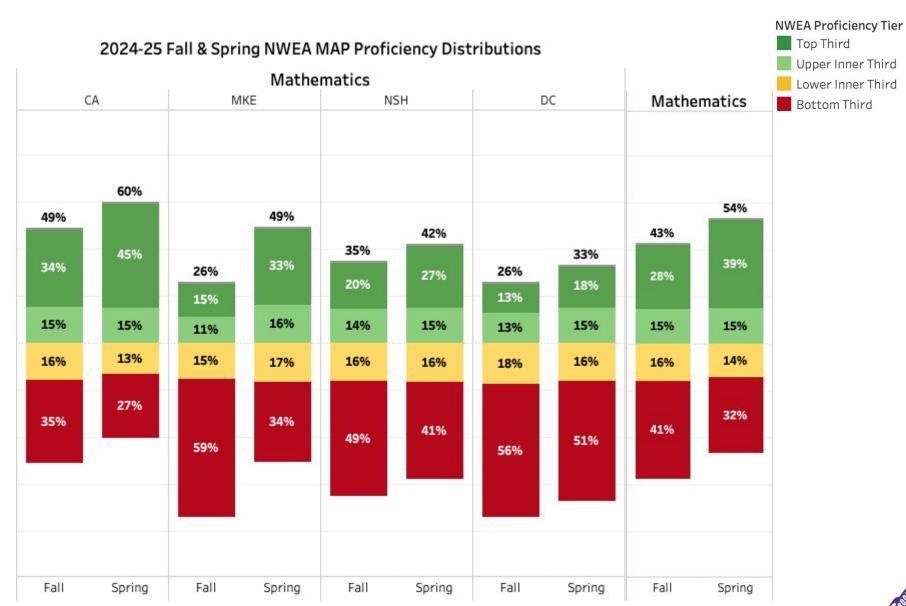
		Asian	Black	Hispanic	Other/Multiple	White	Grand Total
Mathematics	CA	79%	42%	37%	45%	65%	45%
	DC		16%		28%	40%	18%
	MKE		29%	38%		30%	33%
	NSH	50%	28%	25%	38%	24%	27%
	Total	79%	26%	36%	37%	43%	39%
Reading	CA	65%	38%	28%	39%	58%	35%
	DC		20%		28%	13%	20%
	MKE		27%	18%		27%	22%
	NSH	40%	27%	17%	35%	24%	24%
	Total	64%	26%	26%	33%	36%	31%

### Avg Growth Years by Race

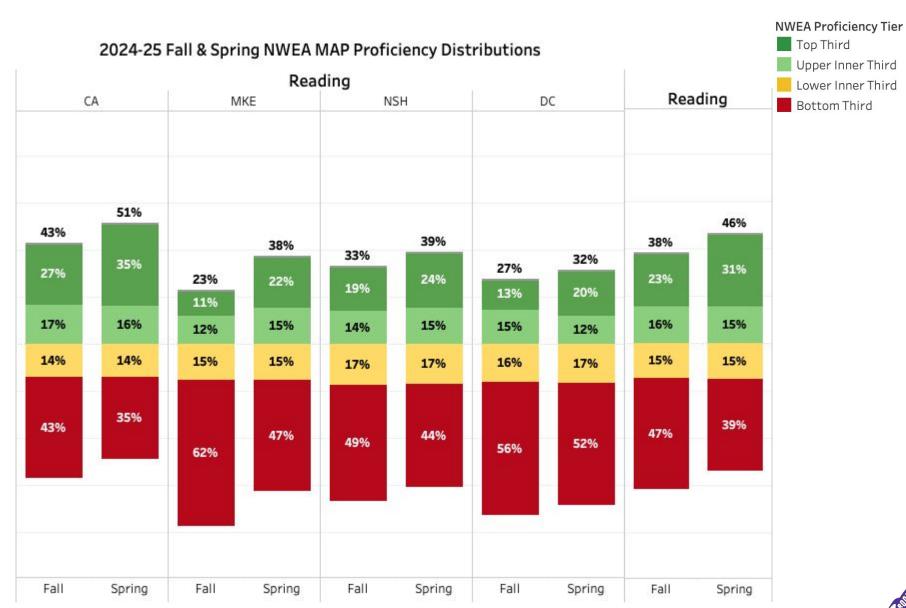
2024-25 Avg Growth Years by Race/Ethnicity RPS Network

		Asian	Black	Hispanic	Other/Multiple	White	Total
Mathematics	CA	1.48	1.31	1.25	1.30	1.25	1.29
	DC		0.99			1.67	1.03
	MKE		1.55	1.45			1.50
	NSH		1.06	1.11	1.19	1.14	1.09
	Total	1.48	1.14	1.25	1.25	1.28	1.25
Reading	CA	1.34	1.20	1.20	1.26	1.36	1.23
	DC	7	0.97		-0	1.35	0.99
	MKE		1.46	1.16			1.31
	NSH		1.07	1.11	1.17	1.13	1.09
	Total	1.34	1.10	1.19	1.22	1.27	1.19

### Math Regional Absolute Distribution: Fall and Spring

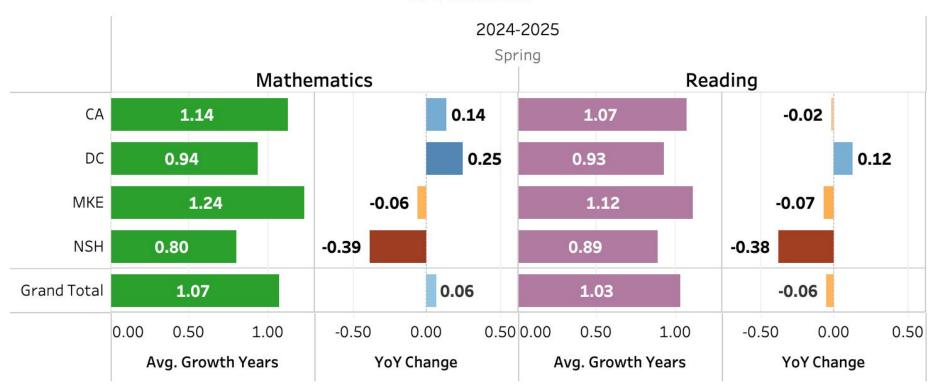


### Reading Regional Absolute Distribution: Fall and Spring



### Spring-to-Spring growth

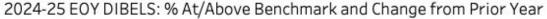
### Avg NWEA MAP Spring-to-Spring Growth Years RPS Network

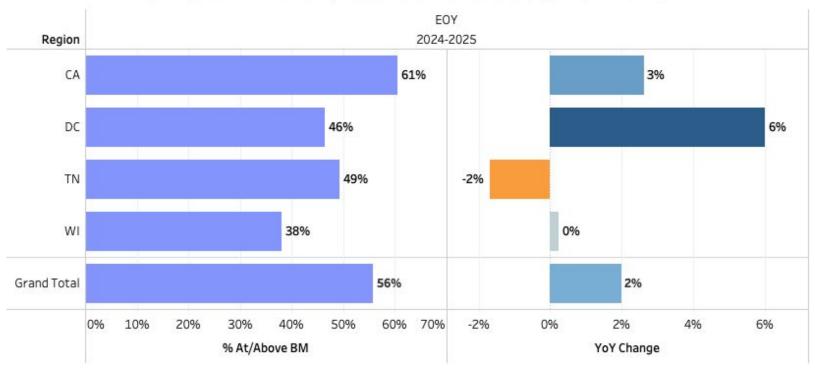


• Includes students who tested as K-G4 in Spring 2024 and returned for full SY 24-25 in G1-G5.



### Most regions achieved gains in DIBELS proficiency in the second year of implementation

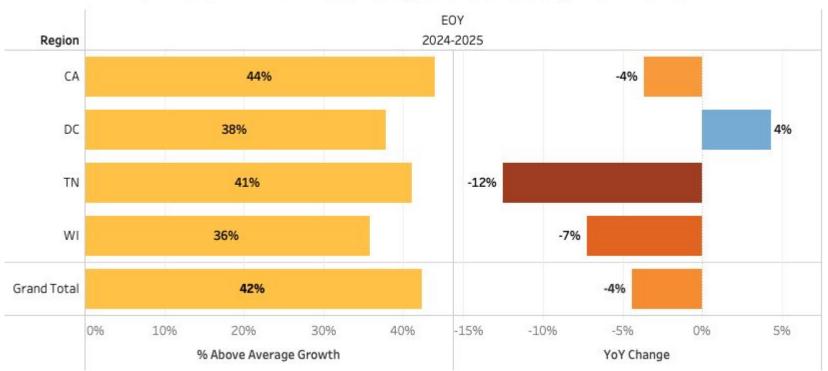




- DC reporting greater gains on DIBELS proficiency than NWEA Reading
- WI proficiency would report increase without Kinder
  - WI Kinder had significantly lower proficiency this year

While proficiency increased, the percent of students achieving above average growth on DIBELS for the year declined from last year due to lower 2nd semester growth rates





- 1st semester growth rates were generally higher than last year
- 2nd semester rates are typically higher than 1st semester but below last year's 2nd semester rates



