

# ROCKETSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## **Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep**

**Petition for the Renewal of a Charter School**

**Submitted to the Santa Clara County Office of Education**

**August 31, 2018**

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## CHARTER SCHOOL INTENT AND CHARTER REQUIREMENTS

The Charter Schools Act ("Act") of 1992, codified as California 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 (California Education Code Section 47605).

The California Legislature, in enacting the Charter Schools Act of 1992, 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.

The following sections of this charter explain how Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep fulfills the requirements of Section 47605 of the Act.

## AFFIRMATIONS AND ASSURANCES

As the authorized lead petitioner, I, Maria O'Hollearn, hereby certify that the information submitted in this petition for the renewal of a California public charter school named Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep (the "Charter School" or "Fuerza" or "RFZ"), submitted to the Santa Clara County Office of Education ("the County" or "SCCOE") and located within the Alum Rock Union School District boundaries is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that this petition does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, I understand that if awarded renewal of the charter, the Charter School will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School, including but not limited to:

1. The Charter School will meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Sections 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. California Education Code §47605(c)(1)]
2. The Charter School shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act, Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code. [Ref. California Education Code §47605(b)(6)]
3. The Charter School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. California Education Code §47605(d)(1)]
4. The Charter School will not charge tuition. [Ref. California Education Code §47605(d)(1)]
5. The Charter School shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, and who submit a timely application; unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application will be given a chance of admission through a public random drawing process. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her parents within the State. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B). 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(d)(2)(C). [Ref. California Education Code §47605(d)(2)].
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, immigration status, 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 or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(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 in Education Improvement Act of 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

8. The Charter School will meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations §11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
9. The Charter School will ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools are required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to non-core, non-college preparatory teachers. [Ref. California Education Code §47605(l)]
10. The Charter School will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
11. The Charter School will keep current all 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, 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 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 a transcript of grades or report card and health information. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(3)]
14. 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. California Education Code Section 47612.5(a)]
15. The Charter School shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(c)]
16. The Charter School shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities. [Ref. California Education Code Sections 47605 and 47605.1] The Charter School will be located within the boundaries of the District as required by the Education Code.
17. The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. California Education Code Sections 47612(b), 47610]
18. The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
19. The Charter School shall comply with the Public Records Act.

20. The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
21. The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
22. The Charter School shall comply with all portions of California Education Code and State Board Title 5 Regulations which are not otherwise waived under Ed Code Section 47610.

**August 31, 2018**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. O'Hollearn', written in a cursive style.

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**Lead Petitioner**  
**MARIA O'HOLLEARN**

**Date**



## INTRODUCTION

### CRITERIA FOR RENEWAL

Education Code § 47607(b) states that a charter school must meet at least one of the following criteria to have its charter renewed:

1. Attained its Academic Performance Index (API) growth target in the prior year or in two of the last three years, or in the aggregate for the prior three years [§ 47607(b)(1)];
2. Ranked in deciles 4-10, inclusive, on the API in the prior year or in two of the last three years [§ 47607(b)(2)];
3. Ranked in deciles 4-10, inclusive, on the API for a demographically comparable school in the prior year or in two of the last three years [§ 47607(b)(3)]; or
4. The entity that granted the charter determines that the academic performance of the charter school is at least equal to the academic performance of the public schools that the charter school pupils would otherwise have been required to attend, as well as the academic performance of the schools in the school district in which the charter school is located, taking into account the composition of the pupil population that is served at the charter school [§ 47607(b)(4)(A)].

Due to the State Board of Education's suspension of API, however, Assembly Bill 484 authorized three alternatives to meet legislative and/or programmatic requirements, including charter renewals. These alternatives, described below, are set forth in a May 13, 2014 letter from Superintendent Tom Torlakson at the California Department of Education (CDE).<sup>1</sup>

1. The most recent API calculation.
2. An average of the three most recent annual API calculations.
3. Alternative measures that show increase in pupil academic achievement for all groups of pupils schoolwide and among significant student subgroups.

In this letter, the CDE states that “[p]ursuant to EC Section 47607(a)(3)(A), **the most important factor** in determining whether to grant a charter renewal is the **increase in pupil academic achievement** for all groups of pupils served by the charter school.” (emphasis added)

In addition to the three options described above, the letter from the CDE also allows authorizers to use the fourth option under current law, EC 47607(b)(4)(A):

*The entity that granted the charter determines that the academic performance of the charter school is **at least equal** to the academic performance of the public schools that the charter school pupils would **otherwise have been required to attend**, as well as the academic performance of the schools in the school district in which the charter school is located, taking into account the **composition of the pupil population** that is served at the charter school.*

When making this determination, the CDE instructs authorizers to evaluate all of the following:

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<sup>1</sup> These alternatives are subject to change with the implementation of new state assessments and academic accountability reporting, but they are current at the time of this writing.

- Documented and clear and convincing data;
- Pupil achievement data from assessments for demographically similar pupil populations in comparison schools; and
- Information submitted by the charter school.

As the data presented below shows, Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep has met each and every criteria for renewal under the Education Code and as authorized by the CDE. Furthermore, over the past five years, Fuerza students have demonstrated improvements in pupil academic achievement for all groups of pupils schoolwide and among significant student subgroups as measured by a variety of assessments. Finally, Fuerza students have made substantial progress toward measurable outcomes and achieved at levels not only equal to, but in many cases far exceeding those of, the Alum Rock Union School District (“District”) and the District schools that its students would have otherwise attended.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND GROWTH AT ROCKETSHIP FUERZA

### CAASPP

In accordance with California laws and regulations, Fuerza administers the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). The CAASPP and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) with which they align are unparalleled in rigor. Students in California are being asked to engage in and articulate complex, higher-order thinking across content areas, often in ways they have never previously encountered on performance assessments.

As described above, charter renewal laws mandate that academic performance comparisons include comparisons to the school district in which the charter school is located and to the district schools that charter school students would otherwise attend. Academic comparisons must also take into account the composition of the pupil population that the charter school serves.

Fuerza is located in the Alum Rock Union School District (“ARUSD” or “the District”). A significant number of Fuerza students would otherwise attend Cesar Chavez or San Antonio Elementary Schools (hereinafter described as the “alternative District schools”). Table 1 below shows the breakdown of Fuerza’s primary student subpopulations as compared to the District, the State, and the alternative District schools.

**Table 1: 2016-17 Enrollment Demographics, K-5th\***

	Enrollment	% SED	% ELL	% Hispanic	% SwD
RFZ	622	77%	52%	81%	6%
State of CA	2860733	61%	30%	55%	9%
ARUSD (non-charters)	6861	86%	52%	80%	11%

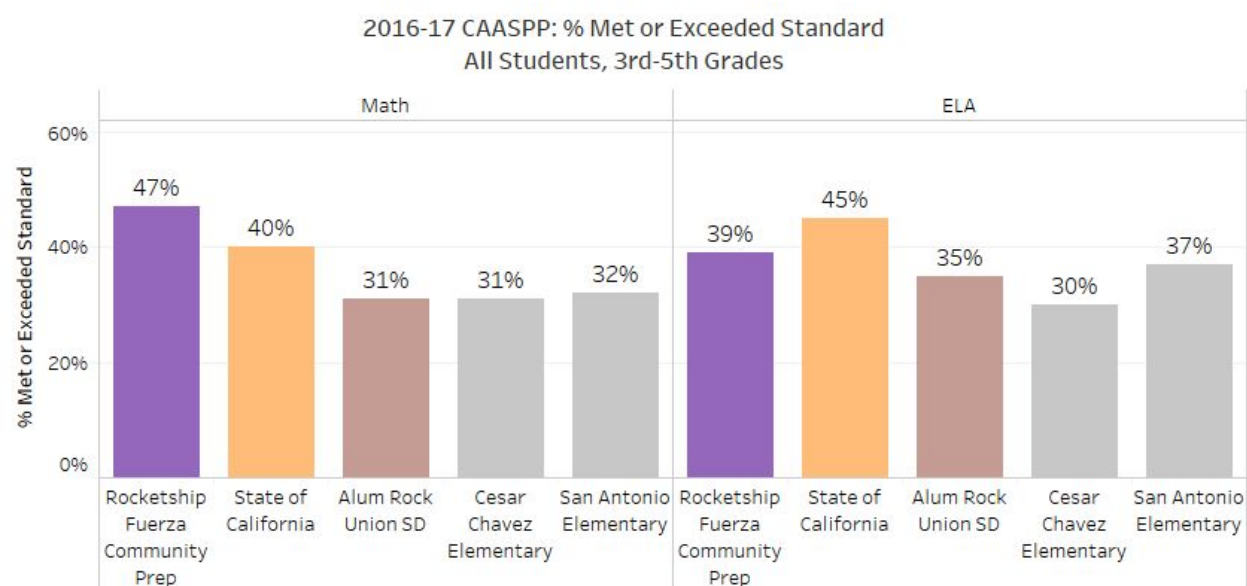
Cesar Chavez ES	397	94%	66%	84%	10%
San Antonio ES	404	89%	49%	78%	14%
Source: California Department of Education, Enrollment Reports ( <a href="https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dataquest.asp">https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dataquest.asp</a> )					

*\*2016-17 data is being used to align with the CAASPP data presented below, which is the most recent school year for which data is available at the time of this writing.*

The data in the remainder of this section illustrates how Fuerza students in 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades largely outperformed the two alternative District schools and the entire District on CAASPP Mathematics and ELA.

### **Comparison- All Students.**

**Figure 1**



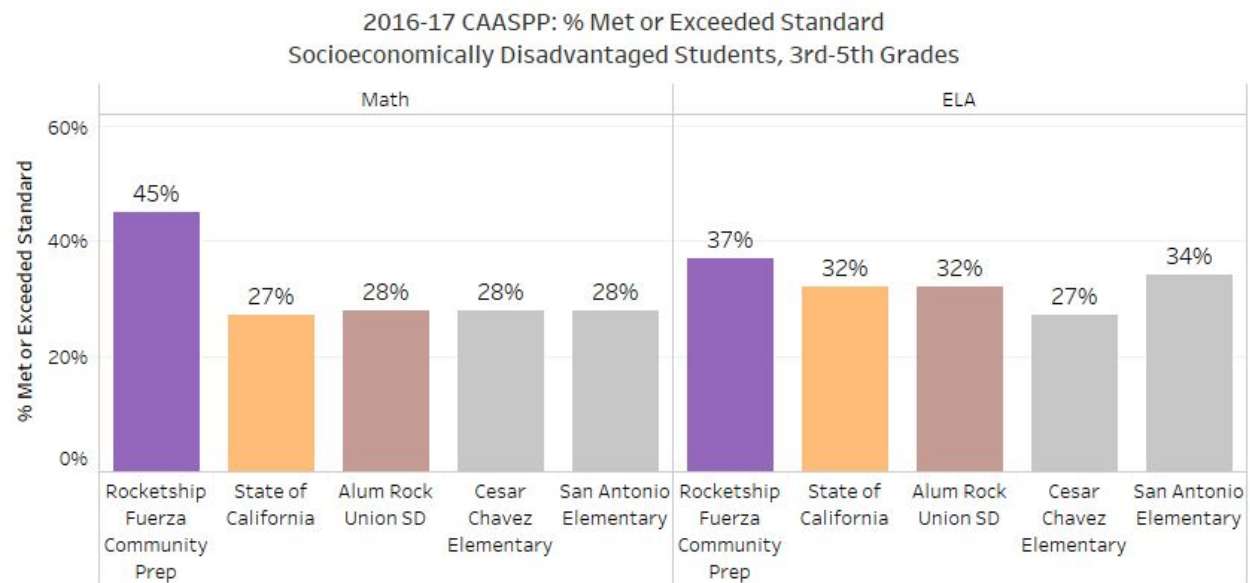
Source: California Department of Education. Grades 3-5 percentages calculated by Rocketship Public Schools from grade-level data in research files downloaded from the CAASPP website (<https://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/>).

As Figure 1 above shows, Fuerza students scored more than 15 percentage points higher than the alternative District schools and the District in Mathematics standards on the CAASPP. Fuerza also outperformed the State in Mathematics.

Fuerza students as a whole also outperformed the District and the alternative District schools in ELA.

### **Comparison - SED Students.**

**Figure 2**

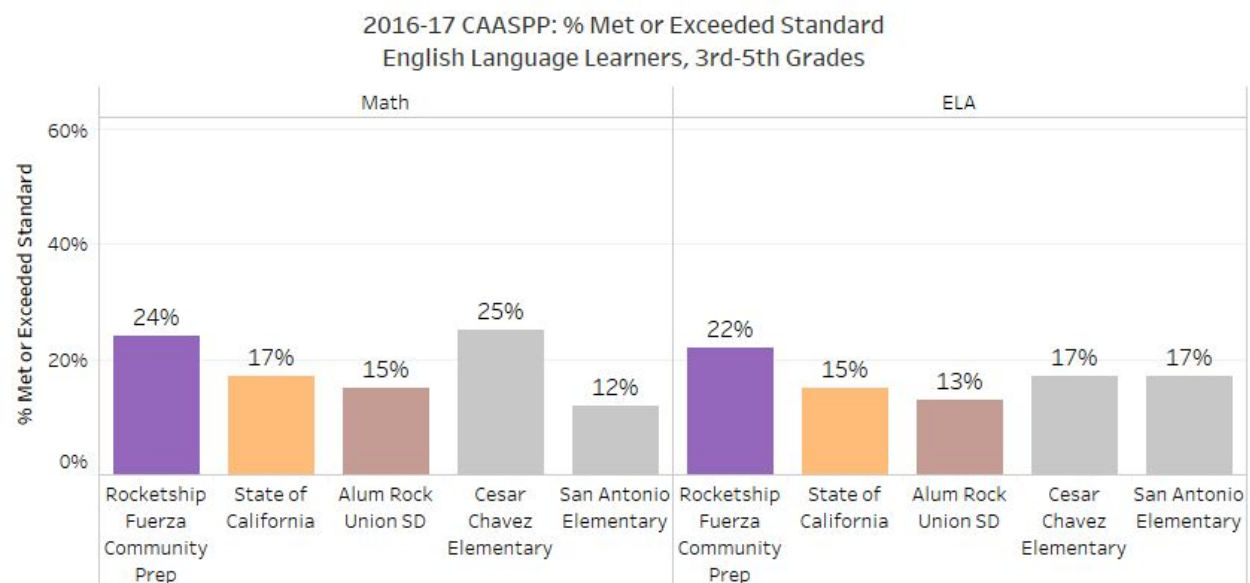


Source: California Department of Education. Grades 3-5 percentages calculated by Rocketship Public Schools from grade-level data in research files downloaded from the CAASPP website (<https://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/>).

Approximately 82 percent of Fuerza students in grades 3-5 are socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED). Figure 2 shows how Fuerza’s SED students outperformed the SED subpopulations among all comparison groups in both Mathematics and ELA.

**Comparison - English learners.**

**Figure 3**

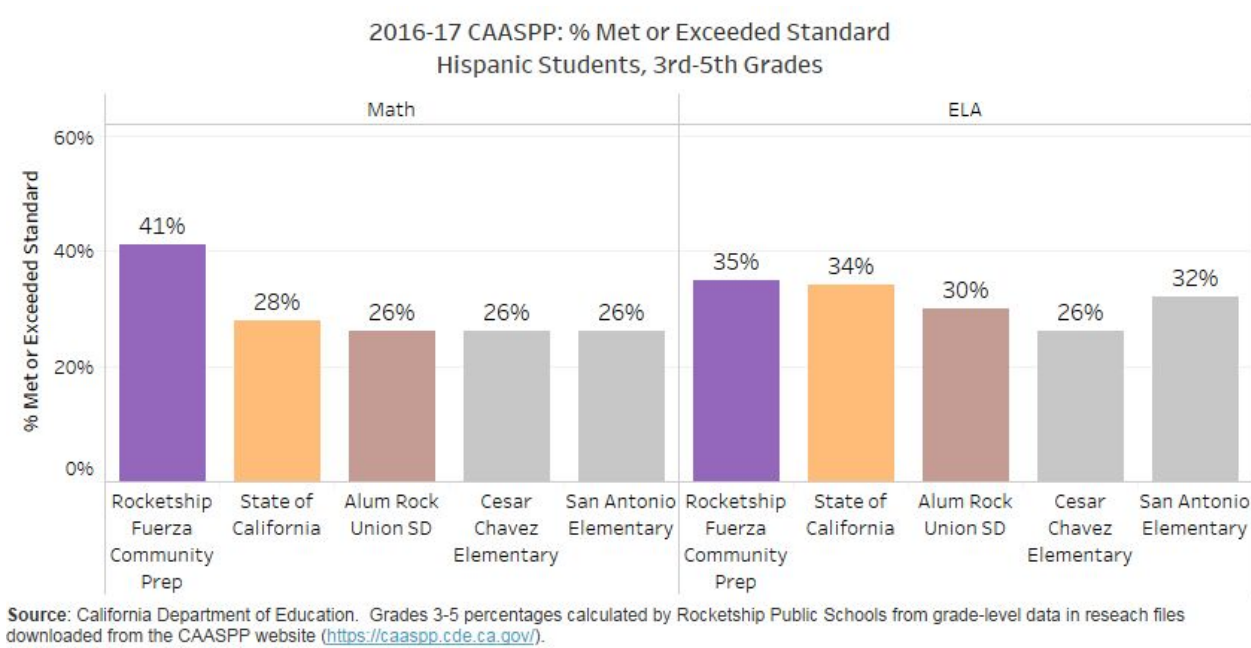


Source: California Department of Education. Grades 3-5 percentages calculated by Rocketship Public Schools from grade-level data in research files downloaded from the CAASPP website (<https://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/>).

Approximately 57 percent of Fuerza students are English learners (ELs). As Figure 3 above demonstrates, Fuerza’s ELs outperformed all comparison groups in ELA and almost all comparison groups in Mathematics.

**Comparison - Hispanic students.**

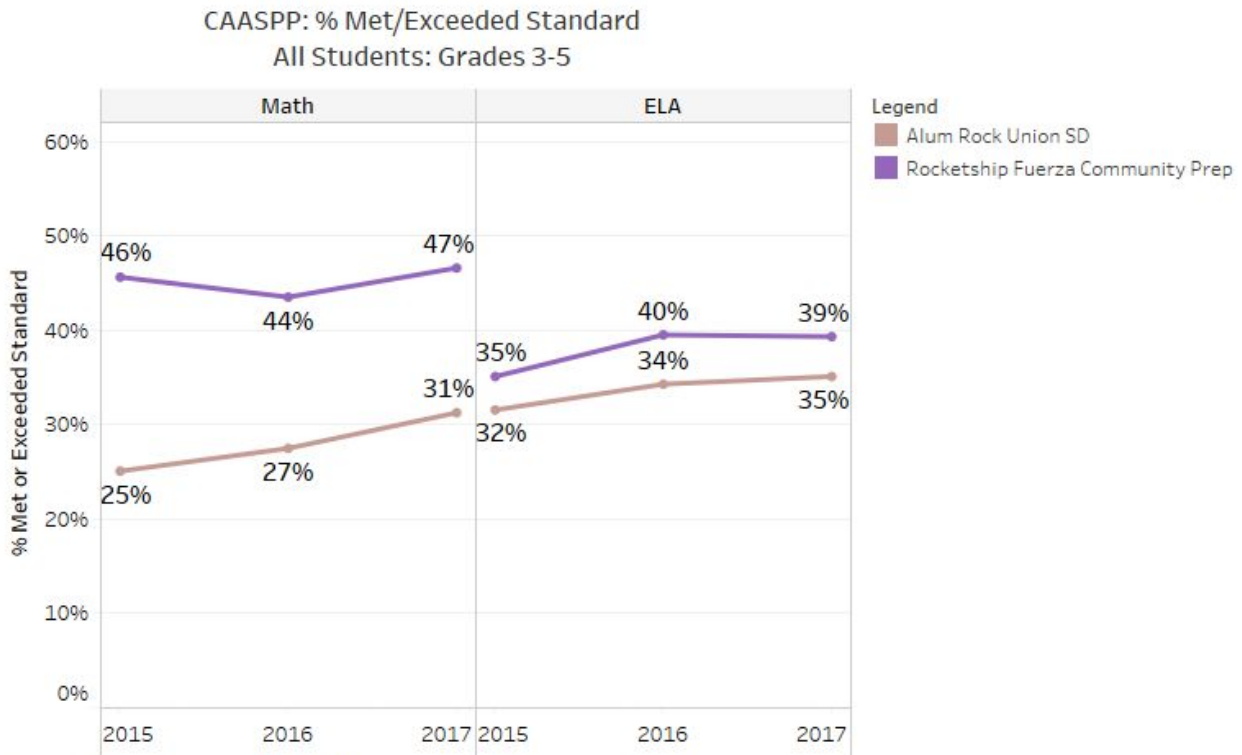
**Figure 4**



Approximately 81 percent of Fuerza 3rd- 5th graders are Hispanic. As shown above in Figure 4, Fuerza’s Hispanic students outperformed all comparison groups in both Mathematics and ELA.

**Year-over-Year Change: All Students.**

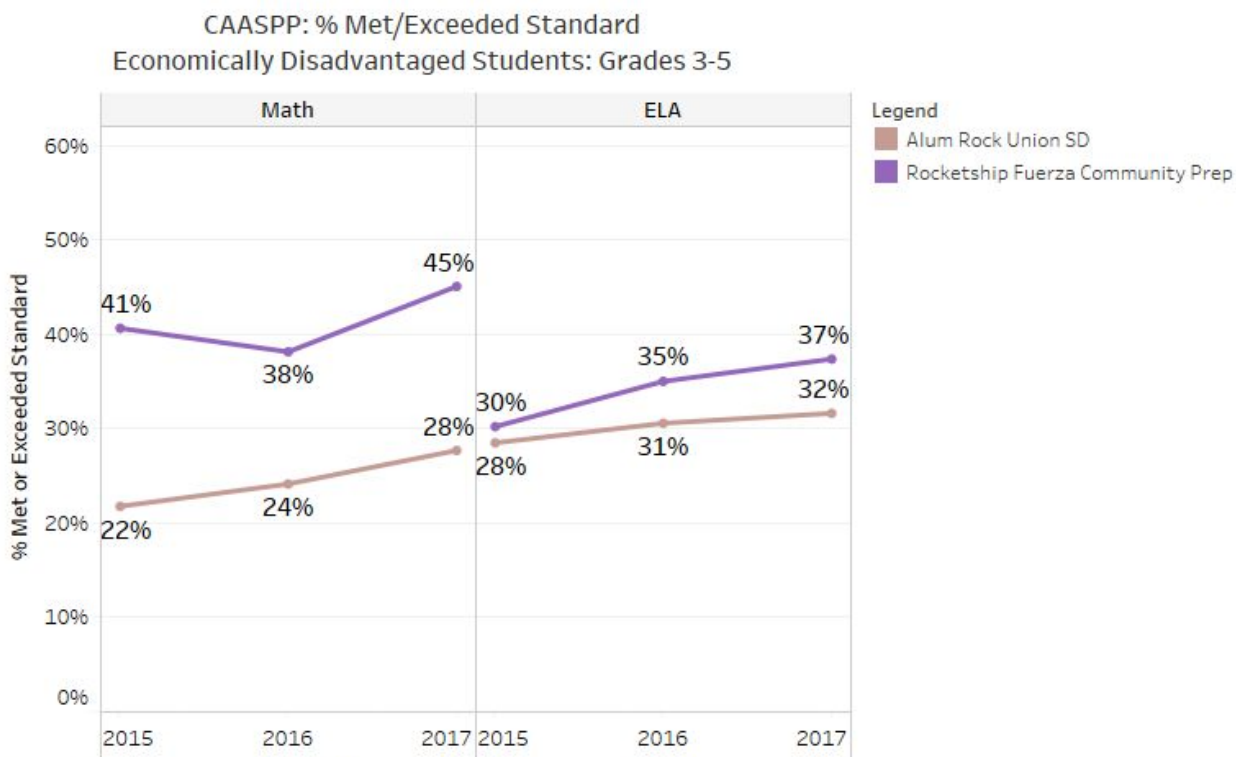
**Figure 5**



Source: California Department of Education. Grades 3-5 percentages calculated by Rocketship Public Schools from grade-level data in research files downloaded from the CAASPP website (<https://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/>).

As described above, the CAASPP is unparalleled among standardized assessments in its rigor and depth. Although the 2016-17 school year was only the third year that California schools administered the CAASPP assessments, Figure 5 above shows how Fuerza has continued to outperform the District, even as the District has improved each year. Though Fuerza has experienced some slight dips in performance, the school has maintained relatively consistent and strong results over time.

**Figure 6**



Source: California Department of Education. Grades 3-5 percentages calculated by Rocketship Public Schools from grade-level data in research files downloaded from the CAASPP website (<https://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/>).

Figure 6 above illustrates the significant gains by Fuerza’s SED population in both CAASP ELA and Mathematics, especially as compared to the SED students in the District.

As further described in this petition, Rocketship is committed to exploring ways to continue to evolve and improve our instructional model to ensure that Fuerza students are able to achieve even higher levels of mastery of the rigorous standards called for by the CA CCSS and CAASPP.

### NWEA MAP

As described above, the CDE has stated “the most important factor in determining whether to grant a charter renewal is the increase in pupil academic achievement for all groups of pupils served by the charter school.”

Rocketship uses the nationally-normed NWEA MAP assessments to measure growth throughout the school year in Reading and Mathematics. The data below shows how students have made significant growth in both subjects over the past four years of attending Fuerza.

**Figure 7**



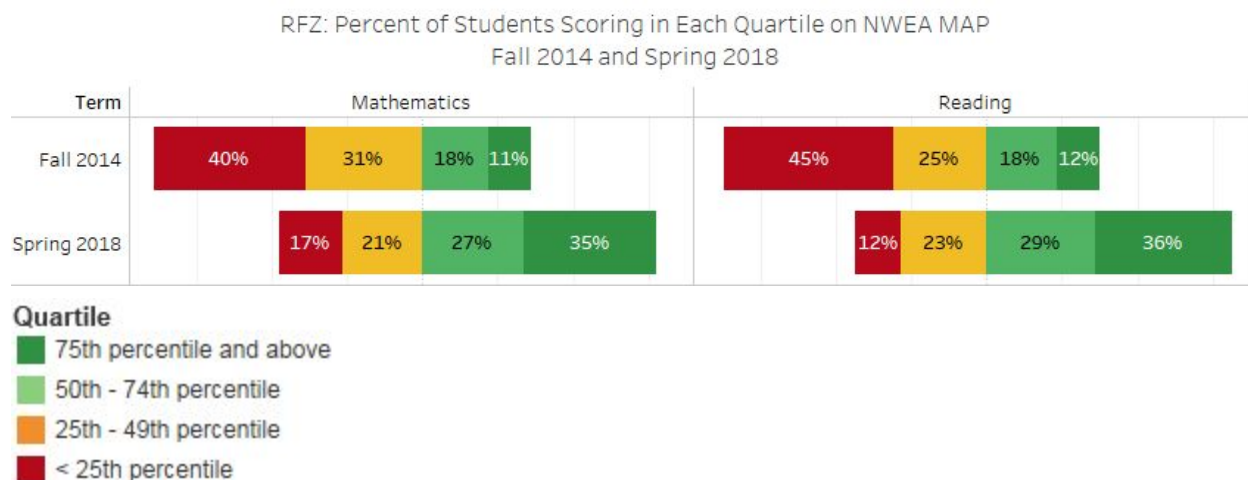


Figure 7 shows how, in the fall of 2014, 29 percent of Fuerza students were scoring at or above the national norm (50th percentile rank) in Mathematics. By spring 2018, 62 percent of these same students were scoring at or above the national norm, more than doubling the percentage of students on grade level. In addition, the number of students scoring below the 25th percentile decreased by more than half in Mathematics and more than two-thirds in Reading.

This data shows that Rocketship's instructional program works. Students really do make meaningful growth during their time at Fuerza. The ability to move such a significant percentage from below to above grade level during a four-year time frame is why we continue to do what we do at Rocketship; that is, to change the educational trajectories of all our students on our quest to eliminate the achievement gap.

Additionally, over the past four school years, Fuerza students averaged approximately 1.3 years of growth on both NWEA Reading and Mathematics. While average growth in Math and Reading has slightly decreased over recent years, after 2014-2015, more than 50 percent of students were already on grade level, meaning less growth was required (as students didn't need to catch up).

**Table 2**

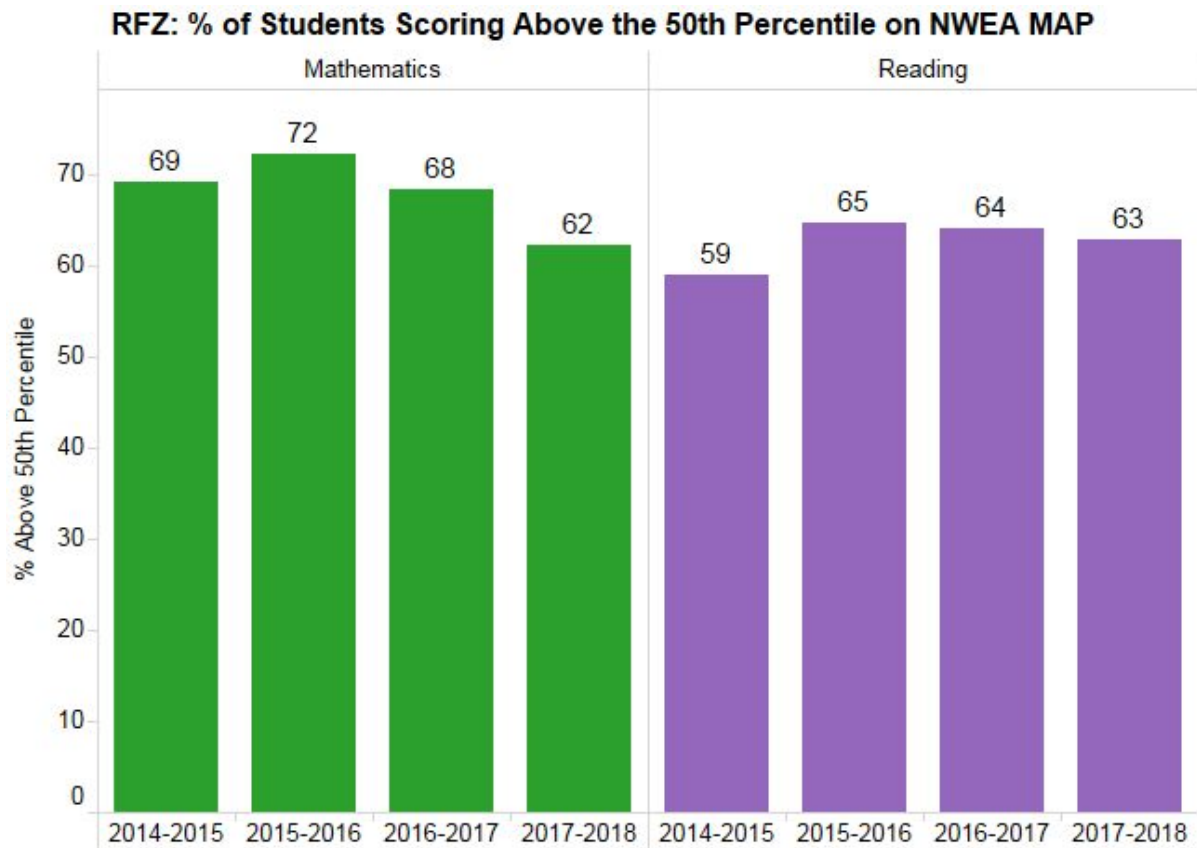
**Average Growth Years NWEA MAP Mathematics and Reading**

School Year	Mathematics	Reading
2014-15	1.68	1.64
2015-16	1.29	1.27
2016-17	1.21	1.12
2017-18	1.11	1.15



Furthermore, as Figure 8 below shows, three quarters or more of Fuerza students scored above the 50th percentile in Mathematics and roughly two-thirds of Fuerza students scored above the 50th percentile in Reading in each of the past four school years.

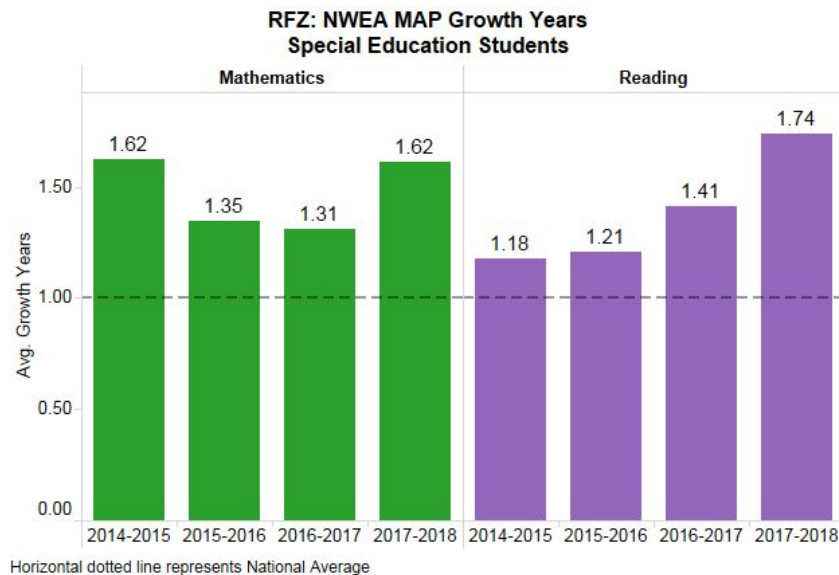
**Figure 8**



***Special Education Students.***

Fuerza deeply values its special education students and has an Integrated Special Education team dedicated to best serving each of them. The graph below shows Fuerza’s special education growth over the past four school years.

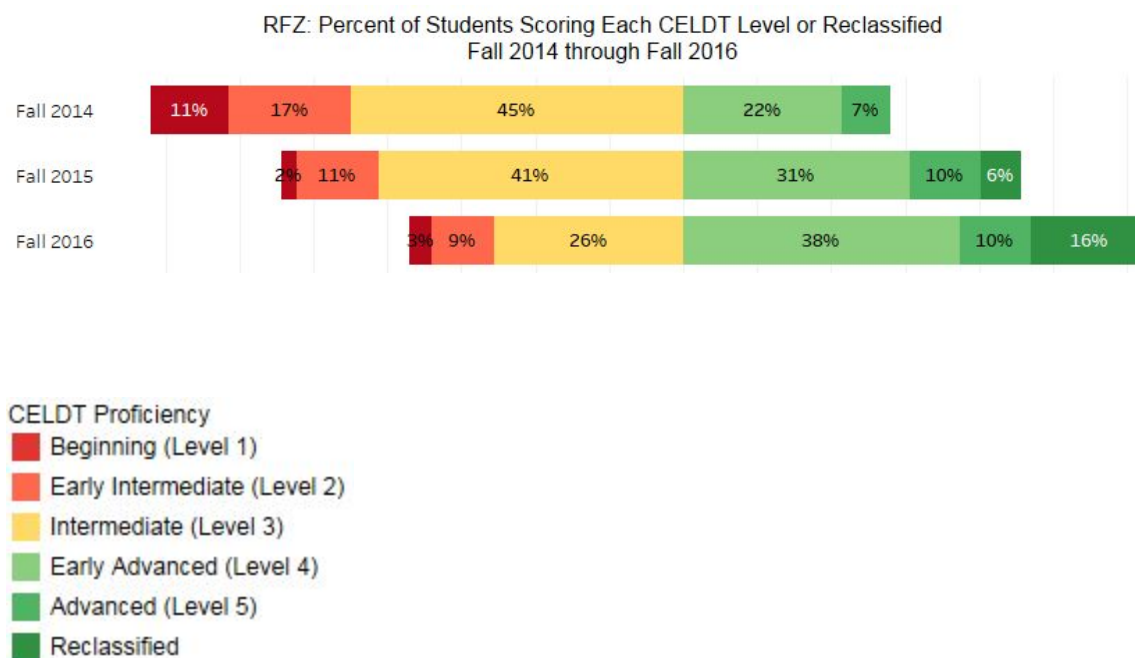
**Figure 9**



## CELDT GROWTH

Fuerza has also helped its EL students make tremendous gains in English proficiency over the past five years. Figure 10 below shows the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) proficiency levels among 200 students who were tested in fall 2014 and who were still enrolled at Fuerza in fall 2016 (the last year the CELDT was administered).

**Figure 10**



As Figure 10 shows, in fall 2014, 28 percent of these students were proficient (Early Advanced or Advanced) when they became students at Fuerza. By fall 2016, this number had grown to 63

percent- an increase of 35 percent in just two years. Additionally, by fall 2016, 16 percent of students had been reclassified.<sup>2</sup> (Element A below provides more details on Rocketship's reclassification process.) This data shows how Rocketship's instructional program is successful in significantly increasing the English proficiency of ELs during their time at Fuerza.

## Dashboard

As the State is no longer using API, we present the Dashboard in Figure 11 to demonstrate an additional measure of achievement and growth. According to these California School Dashboards, which were published in December 2017, Fuerza scored the second highest level on the Mathematics Academic Indicator. Fuerza received a lower rating on Suspensions than the District because their number increased while the District's maintained; however, Fuerza's overall suspension rate is lower than the District's (1.5 percent vs. 2.7 percent).

**Figure 11**

Indicator	RFZ	ARUSD	Cesar Chavez	San Antonio
Suspension Rate	Orange (Level 2)	Yellow (Level 3)	Orange (Level 2)	Blue (Level 5)
EL Progress	N/A <sup>3</sup>	Green (Level 4)	Red (Level 1)	Green (Level 4)
ELA	Orange (Level 2)	Orange (Level 2)	Yellow (Level 3)	Yellow (Level 3)
Math	Green (Level 4)	Orange (Level 2)	Yellow (Level 3)	Yellow (Level 3)

### Performance Levels:

 Red (Lowest Performance)
  Orange
  Yellow
  Green
  Blue (Highest Performance)

## FUERZA IMPACT

Rocketship Public Schools has a long history of successfully serving our families throughout Santa Clara County and beyond. Rocketship's story began in 1999, when Father Mateo Sheedy, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, created a scholarship to Santa Clara University but the students in his parish lacked the basic academic requirements to attend Santa Clara — or any other top-tier university. Father Sheedy concluded that his students needed a better early education foundation, a tuition-free alternative to the local district school. In 2006, his parishioners approached John

<sup>2</sup> Rocketship policy at the time dictated that a student had to be in 2nd grade to be eligible for reclassification.

<sup>3</sup> Due to an error in CELDT labeling in 15-16, we do not have a performance level for that year. While we have the current status for 16-17, we are not able to calculate the change from 15-16.

Danner and Preston Smith two educational entrepreneurs. Together they founded Rocketship and they introduced their founding principal, Maricela Guerrero.

In 2013, the families of East San Jose banded together with “ganas”—the determination to see a school born to serve their children. The school was chartered initially by the Santa Clara County Board of Education as the first of a group of countywide authorizations. Entitlements for the school campus, to be retrofitted into an old postal office on Jackson Avenue, were approved by the San Jose City Council in December 2013. Entering 2014, the school was fully enrolled, and parents were excited for the year ahead when litigation intervened to put the charter on hold. More than 400 parents did not give up their quest. Parents joined with Rocketship to file a new district charter petition with the Alum Rock Union School District, who denied the petition. Parents marched on and turned to the Santa Clara County Board of Education, which ultimately voted to approve the charter in June 2014 prior to the August opening. The families had such unrelenting strength and hope that they gave a name to their school before the school was approved. Hence, Rocketship #9 on Jackson Avenue was born. Parents baptized the school with a name that embodied their perseverance: Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep. Today, many of these families remain as proud 4th and 5th grade parents, older students are in middle school.

Rocketship Fuerza has grown over the past four years, this year serving over 630 families on our campus. Initially, our commitment to our families was to offer them an alternative choice to their local district school--an option that unleashed academic prowess and leadership in the students. The founding kindergarten class is in 4th grade and academically outperforming their district peers.

Rocketship Public Schools operates 19 schools nationwide and ten of these schools are in San Jose (Santa Clara County). Rocketship Fuerza is part of a network of high-performing charter schools that are centrally governed and operated by Rocketship Public Schools, a nonprofit public benefit corporation with 501(c)(3) status. As further described below, Rocketship Public Schools is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of diverse and experienced community leaders.

The Board is ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of each Rocketship school. Board members have a responsibility to solicit input from school staff and students’ parents regarding issues of significance and to weigh the input and opinions carefully before taking action. We are also expanding our Advisory Board, which may consist of a diverse group of parents, teachers, and civic and business leaders committed to closing the achievement gap. The primary responsibility of the Advisory Board is to serve as a formal structure giving voice to Rocketship student, family, and community needs.

## ROCKETSHIP FUERZA AS PART OF THE ROCKETSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS NETWORK

Rocketship Fuerza is part of a network of high-performing charter schools that is centrally governed and operated by Rocketship Public Schools (“Rocketship” or “RPS”), a non-profit public benefit corporation with 501(c)(3) status. As further described in Element D below, Rocketship Public Schools is governed by a Board of Directors 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. We are also expanding our San Jose Regional Advisory Board to include a diverse group of parents, civic, and business leaders. The primary responsibility of the Regional Advisory Board is to serve as a formal structure giving voice to Rocketship student, family, and community needs. The Advisory Board may provide advice and counsel to Rocketship's executive leadership; provide meaningful input to the Board of Directors on topics such as plans and strategies for local growth, model improvement, and staff development; build local partnerships to enhance the quality and sustainability of Rocketship schools; and speak at local events, political forums, and site visits.

In addition to benefiting from a deeply experienced Board of Directors, Rocketship Fuerza receives management services from our centralized network staff. As we have expanded our network and reach over the past decade, we have focused on building organizational capacity to maintain high-quality schools while also fueling growth. 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: DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

*"A description of the educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the 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."*

*"A description, for the charter school, of annual goals, 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, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school, 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."*

*- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(A)(i)-(ii)*

## MISSION, VISION, AND MODEL

There is a significant and growing gap in student achievement in our country. It's a gap between ethnic groups, between income levels, even between neighboring communities in the same city. Regardless of which side we're on, ultimately, the achievement gap affects us all.

The achievement gap is bigger than grades and standardized tests. It affects dropout rates, college graduation, employment, lifetime earnings and quality of living. And it's a perpetual cycle, persisting for generation after generation in the same community.

### MISSION STATEMENT

Rocketship's mission is to eliminate the achievement gap by graduating all students at or above

grade level. Our goals include the following:

- Rocketship students will graduate from Rocketship at or above grade level.
- Rocketship students will become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.
- Rocketship students will develop a deep love of learning.
- Rocketship will provide parents of with a path for their children to take in order to have the best chance to attend a four-year college.
- Rocketship will encourage our alumni both to become leaders in their community and help others achieve their goals.

### VISION STATEMENT

Rocketship seeks to create a future in which thousands of children have graduated from four-year colleges and have come back to eradicate the last traces of the achievement gap.

### ROCKETSHIP MODEL

The Rocketship model is built on three foundational pillars of excellence, which we believe are the key to our continued success as we work to close the achievement gap in California and beyond.

***Teachers and Leaders: Elevating and Celebrating Instruction.*** Teachers and leaders are one of the most important factors in student success. To ensure our students have access to the best teachers and leaders, we provide dedicated coaching, professional development, and leadership programs to help them grow professionally and personally—regardless of their experience level. We elevate and celebrate teaching, providing exciting and rewarding careers where educators feel empowered, appreciated, and valued. We help our teachers grow using embedded learning opportunities, personalized coaching and customized training as part of the regular workday. And we grow our leaders from within our schools, providing on-the-job leadership and principal training programs with a clear path towards long-term career goals.

***Rocketeer Students: Personalized Learning and Growth.*** We all learn in our own unique ways. From the time we're children until long after we leave school, each person has their own way of learning and advancing. Unfortunately, the traditional school system doesn't allow for that. Our students (called Rocketeers) get personalized instruction targeted to their needs and tailored to their unique learning styles. Our blended learning model combines traditional instruction, technology and tutoring, allowing every Rocketeer to learn at their own pace. And best of all, this model works for all students in the Rocketship program, whether they are catching up or racing ahead.

***Rocketeer Parents: Leaders in the Home, the School, and the Community.*** Engaged parents are essential to eliminating the achievement gap. We work with our parents to help them become powerful advocates for their children and their communities. We work directly with parents, helping them become leaders at home, in the schools, and in the community. This includes helping with homework, managing the household and serving as a positive role model for their children, leading community meetings, planning school-wide events, advocating for their children's needs, assisting in the teacher and leader interview process, being active members in the community, participating in advocacy groups and school boards, and standing up for their students and their schools.

### TARGET SCHOOL POPULATION – WHO THE SCHOOL IS ATTEMPTING TO EDUCATE

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. Although all Rocketship schools are open to all students, and we do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, or any other actual or perceived characteristic, we do target students from predominantly low-income neighborhoods where access to high-quality, high-performing schools is limited. We believe that these students will derive the most benefit from our model, which is further described in our petition.

The vast majority of students that we serve are socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED). As shown below, our network has experience working with students from a diverse range of backgrounds, including Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, and Asian students as well as English learners.

**Table 4**

**Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep Demographic Data\* 2014-2018\*\***

School Year	% Hispanic	% Black/ African American	% White	% Asian	% ELL	% SED	% SPED
2014-2015	85.1%	1.6%	0.8%	11.6%	61.6%	84.9%	5.4%
2015-2016	84.9%	1.0%	0.8%	12.2%	50.6%	80.1%	6.1%
2016-2017	81.2%	1.1%	0.8%	11.3%	52.3%	77.2%	5.8%
2017-2018	81.1%	0.8%	0.7%	12.7%	57.0%	82.4%	6.2%

*\*Source: Rocketship official demographic data*

*\*\*Data for the 18-19 school year not yet available*

## ROCKETSHIP’S HISTORY SERVING OUR TARGET POPULATION

Rocketship has a long history of successfully serving our target population throughout the Bay Area and beyond.

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, among 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.

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 Public Schools, to serve other schools in the neediest neighborhoods.

Rocketship Public Schools 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 Public Schools 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 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.

As of the 2018-19 school year, 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. In the 2016-17 school year, we opened a new school in Concord as part of our movement to expand and serve students deep into the East Bay. Also in furtherance of this movement, this school year we opened Rocketship Delta Prep in Antioch.

We also have diverse experience opening new schools in other regions throughout the country. We opened our first school in Milwaukee in 2013, followed by two schools in Nashville in the subsequent two school years. During the 2016-17 school year, we opened our first school in Washington, D.C, followed by a second in 2017-2018. Most recently, in the 2018-19 school year, we opened a second school in Milwaukee. Though geographically different, each of our school launches shares the common experience of profound community and parent involvement. As described above, we begin working with local community stakeholders, parent leaders, and prospective families well before our doors open for the first time. We host community meetings, informational sessions, and even educational events (i.e family reading night) to establish meaningful connections with our Rocketeers.

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TARGET ENROLLMENT

Rocketship targets an enrollment of approximately 600 students each year at Fuerza. Table 5 shows Fuerza’s enrollment over it’s first four years. (At the time of this writing, data for the 2018-19 school year is not yet available.)

Table 5

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
TK	50	52	45	29
K	110	115	107	119
1	112	113	120	119
2	112	109	110	111
3	58	113	10	97
4	56	52	106	99
5	0	35	24	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>614</b>

Currently, Rocketship uses PowerSchool for student attendance accounting and reporting.

The following table shows our projected enrollment and ADA through 2022.

**Table 6**

	2018-19 <i>Year 5</i>	2019-20 <i>Year 6</i>	2020-21 <i>Year 7</i>	2021-22 <i>Year 8</i>	2022-23 <i>Year 9</i>
<b>Enrollment &amp; ADA</b>					
<b>Projected Enrollment by Grade</b>					
Transitional Kindergarten	26	25	25	25	25
Kindergarten	118	112	112	112	112
1st Grade	118	112	112	112	112
2nd Grade	111	112	112	112	112
3rd Grade	101	112	112	112	112
4th Grade	98	100	100	100	100
5th Grade	49	48	48	48	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>621</b>
<b>Average Daily Attendance</b>					
ADA %	94%	94%	94%	94%	94%
<b>Total</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>584</b>

For more details on our enrollment projections and grade level breakdowns over the first five

years of operation, please see our Budget Narrative attached as Appendix 1.

## OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

### WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN EDUCATED PERSON IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> 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 him/her 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 metacognition. 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 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.

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.

### PERSONALIZED LEARNING

At Rocketship, personalized learning is about reaching each student with the right content at the right time using the right method of instruction. 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. We use tutors and adaptive online learning programs to augment teacher led instruction and provide valuable time for students to practice new concepts and develop the mastery they need to advance. This carefully orchestrated combination of instructional methods is made possible through robust and regular data streams that highlight where students need support to achieve mastery – from concept acquisition all the way through practice and repetition. This is how we ensure we are optimizing our teachers talent and instructional time, targeted in our tutoring, and purposeful in our use of technology.

Personalization is critical to our Rocketeers' success. We enroll students at all grade levels every

year. Many of our students, particularly those in the upper grades, arrive at Rocketship performing far below grade level and with a diverse set of needs. We address these gaps by coupling a holistic instructional model that addresses academic and social-emotional needs via purposeful student groupings in class with thoughtfully-planned instructional opportunities in the Learning Lab through adaptive online programs and tutoring. By providing multiple opportunities to pursue mastery of content, Rocketship's approach to personalized learning allows Rocketeers to make gap-closing gains in academic performance. Importantly, we strive for this growth for every single Rocketeer, every single school year. We do not just enroll kindergarteners and count on five years at Rocketship to realize the results we are after.

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 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.

## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

### STANDARDS-ALIGNED CURRICULUM

The Rocketship curriculum follows California's adoption of the Common Core State Standards ("CCSS") for English/Language Arts, English Language Development, and Mathematics; the Next Generation Science Standards; and state standards for other content areas including Social Studies and Visual and Performing Arts.<sup>4</sup>

We understand and appreciate that the new CA CCSS are unprecedented in rigor. Additionally, the CCSS-aligned Smarter Balanced assessment system that California has adopted tests a wide range of complex cognitive skills that require students to both engage in and articulate higher-order thinking across content areas. As such, we have evolved our classroom instructional practices to 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.

Along with our students, our teachers will be required to make their own cognitive leaps as they develop and align their classroom practices to the increased rigor of the CA CCSS and Smarter Balanced. Rocketship's centralized network Achievement Team is tasked with designing an intellectual preparation process to best set teachers and students up for short and long-term

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<sup>4</sup> Pursuant to CA Education Code 60605.

success. The Achievement Team partners with teachers and School Leaders (school principals and assistant principals) 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 Achievement 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?”*

Additionally, the Achievement Team maps out the actual sequence of the particular unit, determining which content teachers will teach on each day to solidify student understanding. Rocketship also identifies a lead planner at every grade level to be a common planner for the network. The lead planner writes daily lesson plans that are made available to all Rocketship teachers. This planner also prepares videotapes to accompany the lessons so that teachers can internalize best practices. Each grade level also designates a model teacher to serve as the go-to resource for teachers who need additional support.

The Achievement Team works year-round to dissect, analyze, and further investigate the standards for all content areas that we teach, including English/Language Arts, English Language Development, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Visual and Performing Arts. The Achievement Team, along with Rocketship’s network Schools Team and Analytics Team, also design and analyze standards-based assessments throughout the year to help design instruction and track student progress. Through it all, we constantly share our learnings with teachers and School Leaders and 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.<sup>5</sup>

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## ELA/LITERACY

### CCSS-ALIGNED INSTRUCTION

#### Core Beliefs about Literacy Instruction

1. We believe that all students can and must learn lifelong reading habits and a love of reading, which only happens when families, educators and teachers in our community cultivate lifelong reading habits and a love of reading with our students.
2. We believe teachers must provide necessary and appropriate scaffolds for students to experience productive struggle with rigorous text and content.
3. We believe that all components of language development--reading, writing, speaking and listening--reinforce students to become fervent readers and confident communicators.
4. We believe rigorous discourse is at the heart of great instruction, which must be buoyed by rich language and accountability for ideas by all participants.

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<sup>5</sup> These sections describe our instruction as it is currently being implemented in accordance with the CA CCSS. 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 being equipped for mastery. In accordance with CA Education Code 47607, we will notify our authorizer at any time should any adjustment become of the magnitude that may constitute a material revision to our charter.

5. We believe all instructional choices should build independence in learners to set them up for future success.

Each of the elements of our reading and writing instruction are focused on the CA CCSS for English/ Language Arts (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 CA 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 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, we are committed to focusing our instruction on the three new emphases in the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy (also called “shifts” from the previous standards). These emphases include

(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). We recently added a new nonfiction block to our ELA/Literacy instruction, where students in grades 2 and up receive comprehension instruction for both narrative *and* nonfiction text every single day and the lower grades receive alternating lessons in narrative and nonfiction. We are also providing explicit training to our reading teachers on how to purposefully select complex texts that are rich with academic vocabulary. Our instruction now also includes strategies for using text to support a response. We understand that these three emphases were developed in response to the growing literacy demands of college and the workforce, and we are committed to launching our Rocketeers on a path of long-term success beginning at the earliest age.

### 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.

***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.

- **Phonics:** 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.
- **Phonemic awareness:** 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).
- **Language arts:** 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, suffixes, root words), compound words, homophones, and syllabication.
- **Fluency:** 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.

***Explicit teaching of reading comprehension skills.*** Reading comprehension instruction will occur 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.

***The application of literacy and reading comprehension skills.*** This element of our reading instruction occurs primarily through guided reading, which is the linchpin 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 in the moment to advance in reading ability.

We use assessments as the starting point for our guided reading instruction. Our assessments, particularly the STEP 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 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.

***The explicit teaching and application of writing skills and the writing process.*** Our writing instruction includes both teacher-driven and student-driven components. Using the CCSS-aligned long-term unit plans, teachers will teach various writing skills, strategies and features. Our Achievement Team also develops writing assessments that mirror the level of rigor that students encounter under the CAASPP assessments and regularly assess student achievement and progress throughout the year.

As further described below in our Special Populations section, we also incorporate the English Language Development (ELD) standards into our ELA/Literacy block through both integrated and designated 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:

- Scope and sequence curriculum maps, which lay out the standards-aligned objectives for each unit throughout the school year.
- Unit plans
- Sample daily lesson plans
- Fiction and nonfiction texts that correlate with the lesson plans, objectives, and units

For samples of Rocketship's preparation materials, including scope and sequence maps, please see Appendix 2.

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## MATHEMATICS

### CCSS-ALIGNED INSTRUCTION

Core Beliefs for Mathematics Instruction:

- The heart of effective mathematics instruction is an emphasis on thinking, problem solving and reasoning, which must sit on a foundation of purposeful practice and the building of strong fluency and automaticity in basic math facts and procedures.
- Effective Mathematics instruction should stimulate inquiry and curiosity within students and teachers.
- All students can demonstrate mastery given the supports they need in the STEM classroom.
- Mathematics is a language we teach - one that allows us to communicate precisely, notice patterns and infer future outcomes, and helps us explain the world we observe.

Our mathematics instruction is centered on the CA 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.
- Use appropriate tools strategically: Proficient students will be able to consider the available grade-appropriate tools when solving a problem, make mathematical models, and identify external mathematical resources.
- Attend to precision: 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.
- Look for and make use of structure: 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.

- Transitional Kindergarten: (1) developing important aspects of counting, including cardinality and 1:1 correspondence, (2) sorting & classifying objects by shared attributes, (3) developing a basic understanding of geometric properties of everyday objects. Note: Per Cal. Ed. Code Section 48000(f), we have aligned our transitional kindergarten curriculum to the California Preschool Learning Foundations standards.
- Kindergarten: (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
- Grade 3: (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.

- 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 Common Core, 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 STEM block
- Well-designed routines and number stories closely matched to grade-level content and the development of number sense and math strategies
- The purposeful and data-driven integration of online learning programs within the STEM classroom, to provide aligned and personalized practice that is incentivized, monitored, and aligned by the teacher

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. It also requires homework to be considered as a component of the daily schedule and not a separate element or add-on to the classroom routines.

***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 a 5-6 problems aligned to previous objectives and skills. Students complete the majority of their math board the previous evening as homework and then complete 1-2 additional problems for the first 5 minutes of their math block as their “Do Now” routine. Teachers then use the remaining 10 minutes of their 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.

**Number Stories.** Number Stories at Rocketship are a critical part of our students' STEM education. Number stories ask students to explore their understandings within a familiar context, with a focus on making sense of the mathematics and discovering new strategies for solving problems, using a Cognitively Guided Instruction approach. Students work on not just solving problems, but understanding, representing, discussing, and approaching problems using various strategies. Students practice producing visual, oral, and written explanations for problems, as well as responding to and critiquing others' reasoning. We believe that STEM is a language we teach - number stories help students examine what the language of math looks like in real-life contexts and discussions.

**Counting Routines.** In TK & K, counting routines consists of 2 routines that rotate based on the time of the year, the content of the unit and the grade level. In the second half of the year, counting routines starts to alternate with Number Stories.

- **Count Around the Room** - Count Around the Room is designed to give students practice with counting by many different numbers and to foster numerical reasoning about the relationships among numbers.
- **Counting Collections** - Counting Collections has students practice counting collections of objects and share different ways to organize them. It builds 1-to-1 matching, cardinality and eventually base-10 understanding.

**Core Lesson.** The Core Lesson is the portion of the math instructional block where new skills are taught. This component is infused with checks for understanding and culminates in a formal measure of mastery in the form of an exit ticket. Teachers will follow a network-designed scope & sequence map for this component.

Lessons take one of three formats based on the content of the standard, the scope of the objective and the location of the lesson within the unit. Every objective in the Scope & Sequence Map is tagged with one of the following three formats.

- **Direct Instruction** - The direction instruction format allows teachers to explicitly model new skills and have students practice through a gradual release of responsibility.
- **Explore & Notice** - The explore & notice format has students investigate a short problem using their background knowledge and problem-solving skills. This is then followed by a group discussion of "noticings" students made during their exploration, which the teacher explicitly stamps as the key understanding for the day. Students then practice applying this understanding in different scenarios, working toward independence.
- **Task** - Mathematical tasks ask students to solve a complex problem or series of problems. They allow students practice integrating knowledge and skills across multiple objectives and/or standards - a key component of college and career

readiness. Tasks also push students to transfer their learning to new and authentic situations, and present realistic conditions and constraints for students to navigate. Student work time is followed by a teacher-led debrief, which provides students opportunities to justify their conclusions and respond to the conjectures of others.

***Application and Flexible Grouping.*** The Application & Flexible Grouping component of the block has two primary goals:

- Give students the opportunity to explore extended application of developing concepts
- Provide teachers an explicit time to respond to their formative and summative assessment data, and to pull groups of varying size to give students the “just right” instruction for them at that time, whether re-teaching, intervention or extension.

There are three basic structures for the Application & Flexible Grouping component. Choice around structure should be guided by student data and may change throughout the year:

- Small Group Instruction - In this structure, teachers leverage this time to work in depth with a group of students. They may focus on needed intervention to fill in content gaps from the previous grade-level, additional re-teaching on content from the current grade-level, or challenge and extension work for accelerated learners. There is no limit to the size of a small group - it may consist of 2-3 students, or it may consist of 75% of the class. During this time, students not participating in the small group should be working on extended application work, either independently or in groups.
- Whole Group Corrective Instruction - Teachers can also leverage this time for whole group corrective instruction when formative data indicates that the majority of students need additional work with a concept to attain mastery. In this structure, teachers lead the whole class in a short review of an objective, tightly aligned to a specific misconception, and then work through a series of practice problems, releasing students to additional independent application work as they demonstrate mastery.

Whole Group Corrective Instruction will likely be used more in the upper grades given the current gaps in knowledge and skills in many of our upper-elementary students, however regular use of Whole Group Corrective Instruction should signal significant gaps in the effectiveness of the lesson planning and execution. Additionally, regular use of this structure (more than 10% of the time) inhibits the ability of students to receive personalized, targeted instruction, which is one of the main goals of the Application & Flexible Grouping component.

- Homogenous Rotations - The third structure involves building a rotational model for this time where students are homogeneously grouped according to recent formative and summative data and then are scheduled into different learning activities that most match the content they need. This structure is a best practice, though it requires significant planning and systems development. Additionally, this structure involves incorporating OLPs and technology as an assigned practice or extension activity that some students engage in, while others are receiving teacher-led differentiated instruction, and others are engaged in other learning activities.

As further described below in our Special Populations section, we also incorporate ELD standards and strategies related to academic vocabulary in our Mathematics block.

## 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.
- **Modules:** We prepare comprehensive guide books, called “modules,” for various mathematical concepts that are designed to help teachers develop a profound and broad understanding of the mathematics standards. Modules also reference a variety of resources that teachers can use to further their understanding and effectively teach the standard. A number of these resources come from the CCSS-aligned Singapore Math. Singapore Math is based on the national mathematics curriculum used for grades K-6 in Singapore, modified for the United States and aligned to Common Core. (In fact, the creators of the Common Core consulted the Singapore Ministry of Education when creating the standards due to the success of Singaporean students on international assessments. ) Two of Singapore Math’s key approaches that our teachers are trained to use are (1) employing a concrete to pictorial to abstract trajectory when teaching concepts and (2) bar modeling to help illustrate and solve word problems.
- **Sample objectives:** While the modules described above are designed to give teachers a broad understanding of the “why,” the sample objectives provide the “how.” These documents break down each unit in terms of number of days and the standards-aligned objectives to be taught each day. These help teachers plan their lessons and stay on track to teach all content within the confines of the school year.

For STEM scope and sequencing, please see Appendix 3.

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## SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION

### INTEGRATED CONTENT INSTRUCTION

“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.

With our shift to the CA CCSS, we have moved away from designating explicit portions of the school day for isolated science and social studies instruction. The CA CCSS actually 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 (i.e. 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 CA CCSS. We also explicitly teach science and social studies content during our ELA/Literacy and mathematics instruction.

**Explicit vocabulary instruction.** Consistent with the goals of the CA English Language Development (ELD) 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. Additionally, we devote 10 mins every day to teaching science/social studies through GLAD strategies specific to that non-fiction unit (one focus strategy per week). This is a time where teachers are introducing students to pre-selected vocabulary words and using them in context with their strategy of the week.

**Projects and investigations.** We provide students with opportunities to conduct research, do projects, and make observations while learning new content. This can occur during either the Literacy or Mathematics block. As our instructional model evolves, we also hope to incorporate projects and investigations into our 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

We strive to align our current social studies instruction with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and also the existing California History-Social Science content standards. Our goal is for students to become proficient in social studies in order to achieve civic competence- the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of all students to be active and engaged participants in public life.

Some of the key concepts that our students will learn as they progress through Rocketship include investigations into the world's ancient peoples and civilizations; studies of ancient peoples of our own continent, Native Americans; native peoples in different areas of our continent; and early

explorers, colonialism, and westward movement. Students will also explore topics like producers and consumers in society; social justice, including studies of pioneers like Rosa Parks and Cesar Chavez; major historical conflicts such as the Civil War; and geography and map skills.

We also use Social Studies as a further opportunity to celebrate our students' diverse heritage. We invite students to share their language, cultural ideas and observations, customs, and backgrounds to provide a multicultural dimension. We also conduct lessons and units centered on important multicultural figures and events.

## SCIENCE INSTRUCTION

**NGSS-Aligned Instruction.** At Rocketship, we are continuing to monitor and participate in the California Department of Education (CDE)'s Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Implementation Plan, which addresses how the CDE, schools, and community stakeholders can collaboratively work to actualize the NGSS in California classrooms.

We participate in meetings, trainings, and workshops and develop teaching and coaching tools for NGSS-aligned instruction. We use resources that are available on the CA NGSS Digital Center, research best practices, use high-quality sample CA NGSS-aligned assessment resources, engage in community outreach to educate stakeholders about the ongoing transition to NGSS, and establish partnerships within the district and region to assist us in better understanding the NGSS framework.

**Components of Rocketship Science Instruction.** Science instruction is an integral component of our STEM block. We build NGSS-aligned science units into the STEM block, which occur during the Lesson of the Day component described above. We also administer NGSS-aligned unit assessments.

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

- Physical Sciences. 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.
- Life Sciences. Our instruction includes grade-appropriate lessons in the NGSS focus areas of molecules and organisms, heredity (inheritance of traits), ecosystems, and biological evolution.
- Earth Sciences. 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.



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## PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT

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

All students will receive Physical Education. We have a strong focus on wellness, and as such we will align our P.E. program in accordance with E.C. 51210(g), which requires students in grades 1-5 to be provided with not less than 200 minutes each ten school days, exclusive of lunch and recesses. Pursuant to EC 60800 and 5 CCR 1040, we will administer the Physical Fitness Test (PFT) to our fifth grade students.

In addition to P.E., Rocketship schools have a variety of enrichment programs, including Art, Urban Gardening, Folklorico Dance, and Engineering. The number and type of enrichment programs vary depending on enrollment each year at each school. We hire enrichment instructors who have demonstrated expertise and interest in a specific enrichment content area. Students will receive some type of enrichment during every full school day. (For Fuerza's bell schedule, please see Appendix 5.) 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.

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## 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.

### 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; at Fuerza, this fifth value is “ganas”. By nurturing and developing students’ natural curiosity, Fuerza believes students learn to become critical thinkers who develop their own ideas, express their feelings, make responsible choices, and achieve success in school and life.

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 Core Value Rockets, which can be redeemed at the school store or entered into a prize raffle. Furthermore, teachers try to identify which specific core values students are not demonstrating when students receive a behavioral consequence (i.e. a student is moving down on the classroom behavior “clip chart”

because his/her actions were not demonstrating our core value of respect).

## 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 urgency. 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)

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. Each member of the team is tasked with overseeing a different PBIS component, further described below.

- Data: The Data Lead will enter information on negative behaviors that occur at school into an online system to analyze trends and make data-based decisions about how to shift behaviors. (For example, the Data Lead may analyze data that reveals that kindergarteners tend to get into trouble in the late afternoon toward the end of each week and help design a management system targeted at this time period.)
- Positive Behavior: The Positive Behavior Lead is in charge of school-wide incentive programs such as Core Value of the Month and Student of the Month. The Incentives Lead also ensures that the school is incentivizing positive behaviors and giving consequences fairly and consistently.
- Staff: The Staff Lead oversees staff culture and designs programs to promote staff enjoyment, wellness, and ensure a positive environment.
- Kimochis/RULER Curriculum: The Kimochis/RULER Leads oversee the implementation of these social-emotional learning curricula, further described below.

## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL CURRICULUM

**RULER Approach.** The RULER Approach is the social-emotional curriculum that we use in our upper grades. The curriculum includes a set of four tools designed to build students’ emotional intelligence:

- The Class Charter: Each class comes together to name the feelings that the students want to feel at school, the actions they will take to produce these feelings, and the actions they will take if someone is not showing these feelings. The purpose of the charter is to establish

an environment where students feel safe talking about feelings at school.

- **The Mood Meter:** The mood meter is a coordinate grid that plots students' levels of pleasantness/unpleasantness against their energy levels. Each grid quadrant is associated with a color. Students are taught to identify how they feel in relation to the grid. Students are also taught vocabulary associated with these feelings and regulation strategies to introduce actions they can take to change their feelings.
- **The Meta-Moment:** For students who find themselves angry or anxious, the meta-moment is a tool for students to use to stop themselves from reacting, picture their "best selves," and pick a strategy to become their "best selves."
- **The Blueprint:** The blueprint is a conflict management tool that teaches students to take others' perspectives and react to a situation based on how another person is feeling.

Teachers spend the first part of the school year unrolling these tools and getting students well-versed in them. Students then use these tools the rest of the year and track their behaviors, feelings, and progress in a mood journal.

***Kimochis Curriculum.*** Kimochis is a more scripted behavioral curriculum that we use in our younger grades. *Kimochi* means "feelings" in Japanese. The curriculum is designed to give young students the knowledge, skills, and attributes they need to recognize their emotions, demonstrate care and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and correctly handle challenging situations.

The curriculum is centered on five characters, which each have a unique temperament and personality. The characters act as a safe third party that students can relate to as they consider their own strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, the Kimochis Keys to Communication provide communication tools to help students learn how to listen openly, make good choices, speak in a respectful and responsible way, and be open in negotiating.

For sample RULER and Kimochis materials and research supporting these curricula, please see Appendix 4.

## **LEARNING LAB**

The Learning Lab offers access to adaptive Online Learning Programs (OLPs), targeted tutoring instruction, leveled independent reading exercises, and purposeful independent work. This gives Rocketeers multiple and varied opportunities to master content at their level. In the Learning Lab, we reinforce concepts introduced in the classroom and provide repeated practice opportunities for students under the support and guidance of a trained tutor. The Learning Lab is like a high quality afterschool program that is integrated into a student's school day and tightly tailored to their unique learning process and needs. Our student's time in the Learning Lab does not replace any time with a teacher, rather it augments their classroom learning by helping students learn at their own pace and develop more ownership of their learning.

Classroom instruction is complemented with a variety of Learning Lab activities, supporting students in multiple ways as they work to master standards. For example, while tutors spend time every day teaching small-group guided reading, students also use an Online Learning Program to read independently, leveraging the program's extensive library and using its assessments that check for comprehension. Similarly, while tutors focus on building a conceptual understanding of

mathematics, students build fluency on math Programs allow tutors to assign work in specific areas where they see a student struggling, while others are adaptive, allowing Rocketeers to work through relevant content at their own pace. Our use of Online Learning Programs is further described below.

During the learning lab block, students will also participate in small group instruction with students with similar learning needs. Based on academic performance, our students are grouped according to their academic need. In these leveled small groups, students receive regular tutoring on literacy and/or math skills by tutors who are utilizing research-based curricula to deliver lessons which align to students' specific learning needs.

The Learning Lab is staffed by Individualized Learning Specialists (ILSs) and it is supervised by our School Leaders (the Principal and Assistant Principals). ILSs create a positive student culture in the Learning Lab, motivating and supporting students to reach their individual learning goals. They actively guide students on all computer programs and ensure that the educational software used in the Lab effectively meets the needs of students. As mentioned above, ILSs also tutor leveled small groups of students on literacy and/or math skills.

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 similar support and professional development as classroom teachers on campus.

For more details on the responsibilities and qualifications for various staff roles at Rocketship, please see Element E below. For further description of our student schedule, please see Section H.

### ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAMS (OLPS)

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 teach content. 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 the 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 DreamBox, Lexia Core5 and myON. Other programs, such as i-Ready and ST Math, utilize more extensive diagnostic assessments or pre-tests to gauge a student's level and assign appropriate instructional lessons. 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. Several of our current programs, including i-Ready, ST Math and myON, allow teachers to assign lessons, reorder objectives or select books for students to see in their online portals. While ST Math & myON allow these customizations for classes, i-Ready allows for an even higher level of assignability, allowing teachers to modify instruction for groups of students or even individual students. 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. Teachers can also customize features such as when a student can access online instruction, assessments or games within the programs. Through these insights, teachers can ensure our programs are highly focused and continually benefiting student outcomes.

As described above, students may engage with OLPs during any of the instructional blocks, including Humanities, STEM, and the Learning Lab.

## SCHOOL DAY AND INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES

### SCHOOL DAY

Students start the day with Launch, often times with parent participation and observation, where Schools Leaders and teachers engage all students on building their social emotional learning skills. Students spend about half of the day in a Humanities block and a quarter of the day in a STEM block, with separate teachers who specialize in their respective subjects. Students receive large group instruction, experience small group and team learning, and receive targeted intervention from their classroom teacher. Students rotate into the Learning Lab for adaptive online learning, additional small group instruction, team learning, and targeted intervention. In addition to a daily recess block at each grade-level, every Rocketeer has regular access to physical education. On days where students are not in P.E., they engage in enrichment activities selected by school leaders with parent input to meet the unique needs of each community.

### INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES

Rocketship Fuerza will have at least 175 days of instruction and for each fiscal year offer, at a minimum, the following number of minutes of instruction:

- to pupils in transitional kindergarten 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.

The number of 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>6</sup> We will offer the same or greater number of instructional days as the District. All components of the day counting towards instructional minutes are led by credentialed teachers who utilize curricular resources aligned to CA CCS to guide their instruction.

We expect a significant number of our students to arrive at Rocketship below grade level, and so we aim to provide students with maximal time to make the progress that they need to catch up. Therefore, we extend the school day beyond the required number of instructional minutes. During our extended school day students engage in independent and small group learning in the Learning Lab and participate in P.E. or other Enrichment activities. While the exact bell times vary by school, many of our schools currently run from approximately 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The table 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>6</sup> We define instructional minute as minutes spent under the direct supervision of a certificated teacher.

### Rocketship Daily Minutes

	Instructional Minutes				Non-instructional Minutes		Total Daily Minutes
	Humanities	STEM	Launch/Social Emotional Learning	*Total Daily Instructional Minutes	Learning Lab	P.E./ Enrichment	
<b>TK</b>	175-180	85-90	40	<b>305-310</b>	85-90	40	<b>435</b>
<b>K</b>	175-180	85-90	40	<b>305-310</b>	85-90	40	<b>435</b>
<b>1</b>	180-185	90-95	40	<b>310-315</b>	90-95	40	<b>445</b>
<b>2</b>	185	90-95	40	<b>315-320</b>	90-95	40	<b>450</b>
<b>3</b>	185	90-95	40	<b>315-320</b>	90-95	40	<b>450</b>
<b>4</b>	190	95	40	<b>325</b>	95	40	<b>460</b>
<b>5</b>	190	95	40	<b>325</b>	95	40	<b>460</b>

\*Total Instructional Minutes reflect total instructional time; different cohorts may experience slight differences in the allocation between Humanities and STEM blocks, which is reflected in this chart.

For a sample full day at Fuerza, please see full bell schedule (attached as Appendix 5)

### 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 STEP assessment developed by the University of Chicago, 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 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (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 bi-monthly interim assessments, Rocketship holds two 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 challenge groups. 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 and 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 one student within the challenge group, the modified instruction should be able to positively impact the student achievement of all students within this group.

## GOAL SETTING AND PROGRESS

After teachers analyze the data from diagnostic interim assessments during quarterly 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.

**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, progression in STEP reading levels, and letter/sound mastery. Each teacher defines his/her 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.

**Online Learning Programs.** Each student also sets individualized Online Learning Program (OLP) goals for the week, which focus on individual progress during computer-based learning time. Students track progress in their OLP Logs, which are kept in the Lab for fall semester. In the spring semester, as a reflection of their ownership of their progress, students in grades two through five begin to keep track of their own OLP Logs. In addition to helping students build a habit of showing quality work, OLP Logs help the Individualized Learning Specialists (ILSs) hold students accountable for their independent work. The OLP Log can also help build communication between classroom and online learning when teachers guide students in setting weekly/daily goals and check students’ Logs weekly for quality work. (See Appendix 7 for example OLP goals.)

**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 greatest progress on OLPs (e.g. lessons passed in iReady), 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.

**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 6 for a sample report card.)

## DATA TRACKING TOOLS

We use various tools to track and manage data, several of which are described below.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</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

**Illuminate.** The Illuminate platform provides educators with easy access to assessment items, and supports the scoring and data capture of assessments. Through Illuminate, educators can select standards-aligned assessment questions, create their own assessments, deliver them to students, and easily score them using the program. These digital resources ensure that educators can effectively measure the progress of their students and modify their approach as needed.

**Schoolzilla.** Rocketship also uses the cloud-based Schoolzilla data warehouse and reporting system to collect and organize student achievement, enrollment, and attendance data. Rocketship partners with Schoolzilla to build toolkits and user-friendly reports and dashboards that translate simple data into actionable information that educators can use to modify their instructional approaches. Schoolzilla incorporates data from state assessments, student assessments in Illuminate, and a broad set of other data systems across the organization to allow educators to access and understand the needs of their students in real time. Through the use of Schoolzilla, a teacher can quickly gain an understanding of which students have mastered a particular standard, and the next day group them differently for small group instruction, to re-teach to students who have not yet gained mastery.

Schoolzilla dashboards facilitate communications between teachers and ILSs, by providing more timely status updates of a student's progress, and by enabling teachers to easily specify remediating content and activities during tiered interventions that are targeted to meet the student's specific learning needs. At the end of Tier II RtI sessions, further described above, tutors can leave notes on student progress and highlighting things to discuss during common planning time, which occurs daily with ILS staff and teachers within a grade level. Additionally, content from Schoolzilla's RtI tab is automatically linked and integrated with the student's Individualized Learning Plan.

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 Schoolzilla to create data displays for each class that show which students fall into each quartile.

Our objective is for Schoolzilla to be a continually-updated repository of student assessment data which is sourced from online learning programs, benchmark assessments, formative assessments given by teachers, data gathered from tutoring, CCSS assessments (i.e. Smarter Balanced), and more.

In addition to data entry, Schoolzilla provides educators with both high-level and detailed comparisons of student achievement. Comparisons can be made by school, by grade, by standard, and by month.

**DIBELS.** DIBELS is a web-based platform designed to support schools in engaging in data-based decision making within an RtI framework. Rocketship utilizes the curriculum-based measurements (CBMs) provided via DIBELS as one of the assessment tools in the universal screening process that indicates which students are candidates for Tier 2 and Tier 3 academic

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greater efficiency and effectiveness. We may at times alter our data analysis tools and will notify our authorizer if we plan any changes that may be sufficiently significant to require the need for a material revision to our charter.

interventions. Once identified students are placed in intervention, Rocketship utilizes DIBELS as our ongoing progress monitoring system, administering weekly CBMs to all students participating in Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading interventions. The data yielded by these weekly progress monitoring assessments is then utilized to make instructional decisions for each student in intervention (for example, students who have met their annual progress monitoring goal may exit back to Tier 1, and students who are not making sufficient progress may receive a more intensive and individualized level of intervention).

## SPECIAL POPULATIONS

### AT-RISK STUDENTS

#### RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION: OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a data-based instruction and intervention model designed to efficiently identify at-risk 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 RtI model contains seven 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. **Multiple Tiers of Support:** the service delivery model of providing a graduate sequence of intensifying interventions in order to match services to student need
3. **Evidence-Based Interventions:** the implementation of interventions and supports which are supported by empirical evidence to have positive academic and/or behavioral outcomes for the student population with which they are being implemented
4. **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
5. **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.
6. **Treatment Integrity:** the systematic monitoring of the implementation of interventions in order to ensure that they are implemented as intended to enable appropriate and legally defensible decision-making
7. **Problem-Solving:** the dynamic and systematic 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, RtI 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).

All of the individual programs necessary for implementing RtI exist in current practice. All necessary funding, programs, access to training, and staffing are currently available under existing law. The components of the RtI model are further described below.

## RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION AT ROCKETSHIP

Rocketship has adopted an RtI framework to serve our at-risk students. Our model encompasses each of the seven essential RtI 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.

**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 curriculum that are implemented as a component of our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model.
- **Tier 2- Supplemental, Small Group Supports:** 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 often will make a referral for 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 utilizes a suite of evidence-based intervention resources to support students across all tiers of intervention. These include (but are not limited to):

- Academic Interventions: Systematic Instruction in Phonics and Phonemic Awareness (SIPPS), HELPS fluency routines, Seeing Stars and On Cloud 9 (Lindamood Bell), Sound Partners
- Behavioral/Social-Emotional Interventions: Check-in/Check-out (CICO), individual counseling, functional behavior assessments and positive behavior intervention 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 STEP assessment (further described above) is also utilized to monitor the progress of students participating in reading comprehension intervention. The progress of students participating in Check-in/Check-out (CICO) is tracked daily by CICO coordinators.

**Data-Based Decision Making.** Rocketship's four to six week data cycles support the data-based decision making component of our RtI 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.

**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 evaluatory; 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 RtI 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 8.

Transparency is an important component to the RtI framework. We regularly communicate with parents throughout the entire process, beginning with a written notification that their child has been selected to participate in RtI interventions. For a sample parent notification letter, please see the Rocketship RtI Playbook in Appendix 8.

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## 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 RtI program to high-achieving students (i.e. guided reading groups, advanced Singapore Math resources, 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 subgroups is students who are performing above grade level. All students, including high-performing students, will receive targeted small group Guided Reading instruction and small group skills instruction in both the Humanities and Integrated Mathematics blocks. 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 Integrated Mathematics teachers also differentiate math centers, homework, and daily review exercises by difficulty level. Each student also receives personalized attention during 1:1 conferences during Writer's Workshop.

**Daily Enrichment.** The Learning Lab is an additional space where high-performing students can read a variety of leveled literature and use adaptive software that challenges 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 with good gains are not starting to fall back.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Rocketship Fuerza will comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving 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, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Furthermore, Rocketship Fuerza will comply with authorizer guidelines, and all California laws pertaining to special education students.

### OVERVIEW

Rocketship's commitment to eliminate the achievement gap extends to all students, including students with unique learning and behavioral needs. The mission of the Integrated Special Education (ISE) department within Rocketship Public Schools is to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education within the least restrictive environment. Towards this end, we develop rigorous, 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-based best practices in order to create individualized plans that support students with disabilities in working to their full potential. We believe that all students are best-served within an inclusive model, and our service delivery model is grounded in team-based decision making. We approach educational programming for our students from a positive, strength-based perspective. Our ISE staff members serve as 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 in becoming experts in their children's needs and educational programs.

Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep operates as a Local Educational Agency (LEA) under the El Dorado County Charter Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) pursuant to Education Code Section 47641 (a). All of Rocketship's existing California charter schools are members of the El Dorado SELPA.

As an LEA, Rocketship Fuerza will be solely responsible and liable, the same as a school district, for providing special education and related services. As an LEA 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 forms and information systems 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.

Rocketship Fuerza 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, he or she is considered with all others for enrollment at Rocketship Fuerza. Disability or non-disability status is not a factor for enrollment or acceptance. Admission is based solely on availability of student enrollment space in a “general education” classroom.

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## INTEGRATED SPECIAL EDUCATION (ISE)

**ISE Model.** An Integrated Special Education (ISE) approach requires schools to align educational services for students with special education needs within existing structures (grade levels, groupings, etc.) rather than through special and segregated programs. 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 instructions 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 typically developing 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 designed 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 (UDL) framework
- Homogenous small group reading instruction using texts at students individual instructional levels
- Modified homework and independent classwork
- Visual supports, such as visual schedules or visual behavior supports



- Assistive technology supports
- Testing accommodations

We believe these supports benefit all learners, and the close collaboration between general and special education professionals to serve any student who is experiencing learning challenges will help us meet our goal of helping every student to reach 1.5 years of achievement in each grade. For sample materials on general and special education collaboration and the UDL framework, please see Appendix 8.

***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 evidence-based curricula to support the implementation of SAI services, although each child's program is individualized based on his or her identified needs.

At Rocketship, qualified 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, and physical therapy services 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 written up in the IEP, agreed to, and 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 many related service providers, including speech language pathologists, school psychologists, and occupational therapists. Other low incidence related services, including vision services, adapted physical education, 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 Agency.*** In some exceptional cases, when a student may require a placement in a more restrictive setting, the IEP team may consider a referral to a non-public school(NPS). If a parent places students at a non-public school, private school or residential facility, Rocketship will immediately inform the SELPA. We currently have one Rocketship student enrolled in a NPS.

***Educationally Related Mental Health Services.*** As an LEA for the purposes of special education, Rocketship is responsible for the provision of Educational Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) for any student who requires this related service in order to access and benefit from his or her educational program. Rocketship conducts ERMHS assessments and develops recommendations for ERMHS provision in accordance with state regulations and SELPA guidelines. ERMHS services are provided by a combination of Rocketship school psychologists

and contracted NPAs, depending on the recommendations of the IEP team and needs of the individual student. See Appendix 8 for additional information regarding ERMHS procedures.

**Transportation.** Rocketship will provide transport 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. A transportation assessment will guide the determination.

**Supports for Students with Moderate to Severe Learning Needs:** Rocketship's flexible and supportive approach to special education reduces the need for separate "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 differences. 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 disabilities who need 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 7.) 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.

If a student enrolls in Rocketship Fuerza with an existing IEP, the Charter School will notify the District and/or the SELPA within five days.

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

- 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 (SST), 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 current SST Handbook, please see Appendix 7.)
- Tier 2 and 3 behavior and academic interventions, further described above, delivered to students identified as needing them through the universal screening process

Students who do not respond to targeted pre-referral interventions that are 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. Rocketship doesn't have an explicit rule regarding the exact time frame during which interventions must be implemented before special education evaluation is considered, as this timeline will likely vary depending on the need of the individual student participating in intervention. However, as a general rule, if a student has participated in two cycles of interventions that have been implemented with fidelity, and the student has not demonstrated adequate responsiveness to those interventions, the SST or intervention team may consider whether a referral for special education evaluation is appropriate.

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 Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) governs the identification, evaluation and implementation of special education services. Interventions within the general education program shall implemented before referral for a special education evaluation. (Cal. Ed. Code Section 56303). Rocketship also recognizes the requirement to proceed without delay in the initiation of an evaluation when the 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 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 school team then schedules a formal 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. Rocketship Fuerza will also notify the District and/or SELPA of the assessment request within five days of receipt. 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 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.

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, 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.<sup>8</sup> 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 assessments are also conducted 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.

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<sup>8</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.

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 Individualized Education Plan 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 (ITP) 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 assessment is 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, 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 Individualized Education Program (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 a member 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 7 for more information on 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 typically developing peers, 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 him/her or others, the IEP team develops a positive behavior intervention plan (PBIP) 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 PBIP, 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.

In the event that a student may transfer 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.

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 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 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits discrimination based on a disability.

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 IDEIA, a referral for assessment under the IDEIA 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 and 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 he/she review 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 assessments (i.e. CELDT/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.

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## CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) STUDENTS

Because the majority of current Rocketship students are English Language Learners (ELLs), 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 ELL 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 ELL students with disabilities.

The results of the Home Language Survey and state-mandated language assessments (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

Our ISE team is typically comprised of a Program Director, Program Specialist, School Psychologist, Education Specialists (mild to moderate and moderate to severe), 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. In order for us to build teacher capacity, Rocketship utilizes the partnership with a local BTSA Induction Program to help ISE teachers to expand and deepen their teaching knowledge and skills and complete the requirements for a California Clear Credential.

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/SPED 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 (UDL)
- Co-teaching models and best practices
- Assistive technology, including augmentative communication devices
- Behavior assessment, analysis, and planning
- Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI)
- 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. For sample special education professional development materials, please see Appendix 7.

## 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 (CAC) 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 parental 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. 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 Charter 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 SPED 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 SPED 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.

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## ENGLISH LEARNERS

At Rocketship, we serve a significant number of English learners (ELs).<sup>9</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 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 assure 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 Rocketship. If a student's HLS shows a response other than English to the first three questions, he/she 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.

State and federal laws require that schools administer a state test of English language proficiency. Pursuant to California law, we will administer the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) or ELPAC 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 CELDT/ELPAC administration.<sup>10</sup> For more details on these classifications, please see below.

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<sup>9</sup> Legal guidelines clarify that an English learner (EL) is a TK-12 student who, based on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), has not developed listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiencies in English sufficient for participation in the regular school program.

<sup>10</sup> The 30-day requirement applies to students who are entering a public school in California for the first time or

CELDT/ELPAC scores will be placed in the student's cumulative file.

The CELDT/ELPAC will be used to fulfill state and federal requirements for annual English proficiency testing.<sup>11</sup> The purpose of the CELDT/ELPAC is to (1) identify new students who are ELs, in transitional 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 FEP status. Rocketship will notify all parents of the CELDT/ELPAC testing requirements and of CELDT/ELPAC results within 30 days of receiving results from the publisher.

### CLASSIFICATION OF INITIAL FLUENT ENGLISH PROFICIENT

A student's initial CELDT/ELPAC score determines whether he /she is classified as an English learner, and whether he or she is eligible to be classified as Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP). If the student is eligible for IFEP status, he or she is marked as "TBD" and evaluated for reclassification at the end of the academic year.

Our criteria for classifying a student as IFEP follow California State guidance and are as follows:

#### ***In Grades TK-1:***

- On the initial ELPAC assessment, the student earns an overall score of Early Advanced (Level 4) or Advanced (Level 5). The student's Listening and Speaking domain scores must each be Intermediate (Level 3) or higher.

#### ***In Grades 2-5:***

- On the initial ELPAC assessment, the student earns an overall score of Early Advanced (Level 4) or Advanced (Level 5). The student achieves Intermediate (Level 3) or higher on domain scores for Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

### RECLASSIFICATION AS RECLASSIFIED FLUENT ENGLISH PROFICIENT

In general, English Language Learners are no longer classified as "ELL" 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 Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP).

Our reclassification policies and procedures are developed in accordance with the reclassification

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who have not yet been CELDT-tested. All other students who have indicated a home language other than English will continue with annual CELDT testing based upon the date last tested at the prior school of enrollment.

<sup>11</sup> The CELDT is the state-mandated language assessment at the time of this writing. We understand that the State is planning to transition to the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) within the next several years. We will comply with all state laws and regulations regarding the implementation of the ELPAC as the successor language assessment.

criteria outlined in the California Ed 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 between May and June. Rocketship's Analytics Team will generate a spreadsheet of ELL 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 ELL 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 (i.e. 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 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.

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

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

The State Board of Education has adopted the California English Language Development (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 CA 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 CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics. The CA ELD standards are designed to provide challenging content in English language development for ELLs to gain proficiency in a range of rigorous academic English language skills.

Our instructional materials for ELD instruction will be prepared by Rocketship's Achievement Team, a specialized group of teachers and Principals, in the same manner as our core content instruction, as described in the Curriculum and Instruction section of this petition above.

**ELD Standards.** We design our English language instruction to encompass all three parts of the CA 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 ELLs. 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 CA ELD standards in tandem with the CA 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 ELLs; 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 ELLs in discussions to develop content knowledge.

*Designated instruction* is protected time during the regular school day where teachers use the CA ELD standards to develop critical language skills that ELLs 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 ELLs 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 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
- 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
- **Bridging:** 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 students will be 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 ELLs 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, ELLs 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, ELLs 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), which includes a multi-day professional development workshop. GLAD focus on vocabulary development, graphic organizers, oral language, interactive displays, and several other strategies that have been proven to be highly effective with ELL students. Our teachers have four prioritized GLAD strategies: graphic input chart, pictorial input chart, expert groups, and process grids.

Rocketship teachers will also employ Specially Designated Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies in their classrooms, which are meant to be beneficial for all students, not just English learners. These strategies may include:

- **Vocabulary development:** Teachers will introduce new vocabulary words while introducing a new concept.
- **Guided interaction:** Teachers will structure lessons so that students work together to understand what they are learning.
- **Metacognition and authentic assessment:** Teachers will model and explicitly teach thinking skills and use a variety of activities to check for understanding.
- **Explicit instruction:** Teachers will utilize direct teaching methods to teach concepts, academic language, reading comprehension, text patterns, vocabulary, writing, and

- decoding skills needed to complete classroom activities.
- Meaning-based context and universal themes: Teachers will incorporate meaningful references from students' everyday lives and create classroom environments that provide authentic opportunities to learn the English language.
- Modeling, graphic organizers, and visuals: Teachers will regularly utilize a variety of visual aids, graphic organizers, diagrams, summaries, and charts to help ELs easily recognize essential information and its relationship to supporting ideas.

All Rocketship teachers will be Crosscultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) certified or in the process of obtaining CLAD or BCLAD certification.

## 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.

Rocketship Fuerza will establish an English Language 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* - though never required - 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 recruitment, selection, retention, and professional development, further described below.

### RECRUITMENT

Effective recruitment and rigorous selection are the first components to ensuring that our teachers and school leaders are well-equipped to drive student achievement.

We develop a broad pipeline of educators and principals by cultivating candidates through diverse channels such as local college career fairs, Teach for America, referral programs for our current teachers, and use of social media and webinars. We hold open houses for candidates to visit our schools and get to know us. We aim to hire exceptionally well-qualified candidates, with a focus on those who have connections to our students' experiences and communities. Throughout our recruitment process, we build excitement for the meaningful work that we are doing to transform education and eliminate the achievement gap.



Additionally, we are committed to building capacity from within. In recent years, we have increased our support for instructional hourly staff members who have potential and interest in moving into full-time teaching roles through our Rising Teachers program. We believe in providing opportunities for all staff to develop and advance. Furthermore, staff members in these positions have accumulated deep knowledge of Rocketship culture and practices that can translate into success in the classroom. This source of teacher talent also brings great diversity to our staff body, as candidates are often from our local school communities.

Once we develop a strong teacher candidate pool, the recruitment team screens resumes and passes teaching candidates to principals for hiring. This process enables the principals to have pre-screened, high-quality candidates for their schools with the support of Rocketship's central office. At the same time, principals are empowered to select and staff their own schools, ensuring that they hire candidates that are a good match for their school.

### 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. 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 educations 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 three 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.

**Yearly.** In addition to summer training, Rocketship schools dedicate at least 200 hours throughout the school year for staff professional development. We dismiss students two and a half 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 at each school, targeting the areas of development they see as most beneficial to the staff, personalizing supports for teachers. 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.

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 E partners with several outside professional development organizations and higher education institutions to conduct in-depth professional development in various content areas. These organizations have included Project GLAD, the Santa Clara County Office of Education, Doug Lemov with Uncommon Schools, and Lucy Calkins. 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.

## 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 causes 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 (i.e. speaking into an earpiece that the teacher wears during instruction), model instruction, and engage in co-observations with the teacher (i.e. 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.

## TEACHER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

Our teachers are evaluated based on the four measures described below. Each of these was developed with the goal of promote transparency, consistency, and communication.

***Student Achievement.*** Teachers are evaluated based on both absolute and growth metrics. Absolute metrics evaluate 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.

***Parent Metrics.*** Teachers are also evaluated on the percentage of home visits completed and the percentage of parents completing 30 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 Rubric.*** This rubric was designed to provide greater clarity and consistency in scoring teacher performance. The rubric includes the following areas:

- Domain 1: Intellectual Prep and Culture of Mastery
- Domain 2: Culture of Excellence
- Domain 3: Student Habits: Love of Learning and Pride
- Domain 4: Environment of Excellence

(For a copy of the rubric, please see Appendix 9.)

At the beginning of the year, teachers meet with their coaches to review the evaluation components. Coaching occurs regularly throughout the year, as described above. Teachers undergo a mid-year evaluation in January/February and an end-of-year evaluation in May/June.

For sample training materials that provide an overview of our updated talent management process, please see Appendix 9.

## 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 Achievement Team focuses on teacher curricular tools and resources to provide teachers with high quality resources and supports. 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 increased flexible time for planning or to meet personal needs, including early release days once per month instead of after-school professional development. 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.

Our network strives to create a competitive total compensation package that includes a robust set of benefits, retirement savings, opportunities for coaching and development, and a competitive pay. Rocketship has also structured compensation to reward high performance and bolster teacher retention. After their first year at Rocketship, teachers' annual salary increases are based on their performance in their evaluations, outlined above. Our highest performing teachers are eligible for above-average pay increases, often significantly above surrounding districts.

## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS

**Grade Level Lead Program.** In an effort to cultivate strong internal teacher-leader pipelines, Rocketship provides the opportunity for high achieving teachers to become Grade Level Leads (GLLS). As part of this program, teachers engage in monthly sessions that are focused on developing the Instructional Eye as well as leading adults. Content includes strategies for giving and receiving feedback, influencing others, and developing coaching goals for teachers. In addition, to this monthly programming GLLs are provided with additional responsibilities on campus and are responsible for steering specific pieces of their campuses' visions. Specifically, GLLs are responsible for steering data-driven instruction, facilitating grade-level meetings on culture and operations, project management of grade-level events, and serving as a staff liaison within the school.

We look for candidates who have instructional expertise in the grade level and content area, a history of strong classroom culture and student results, and strong data analysis skills. GLLs are able to gain experience and development as an instructional leader of other adults through

monthly centralized after-school professional development sessions, role-specific coaching from their school leader, joint observations, and periodic peer feedback. Our GLLs are able to authentically consider and prepare themselves for potential future roles as school leaders.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Rocketship also has a comprehensive development system for its Principals and Assistant Principals. (Qualifications and responsibilities for these roles are further described below in Element E.) These school leaders receive ongoing professional development centered on key levers, which include data-driven instruction; coaching and observation; 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.

Our Principals all spend approximately ten hours each month receiving professional development from Rocketship's centralized Schools Team. Our Assistant Principals receive approximately two hours of professional development directly from the Schools Team and also get regular training and support from Principals. Members of the Schools and Achievement Teams also attend meetings between school leaders and teachers to provide feedback on meeting facilitation and coaching. School leaders also do monthly school walk-throughs with the Schools and Achievement Teams.

## ANNUAL GOALS AND ACTIONS IN THE STATE PRIORITIES

In accordance with the Local Control Funding Formula ("LCFF") requirements, the table below provides a description of Rocketship's annual goals for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Education Code Section 52052, to be achieved in the applicable state priorities, as described in Education Code Section 52060(d), and specific annual actions to achieve those goals.

Additionally, Rocketship Fuerza has a comprehensive Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for the 2017-18 school year and continues to annually update the plan in accordance with California laws. The goals and actions described below are subject to modification as our LCAP is updated annually, without need for material revision of the charter petition.

State Priority 1 – Basic Services	
The degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned (E.C. §44258.9) and fully credentialed, and every pupil has sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials (E.C. § 60119), and school facilities are maintained in good repair (E.C. §17002(d))	
Subpriority A: Teachers	
<b>Goals to Achieve</b>	Rocketship will identify, attract, and build the capacity of teachers, leaders, and classified staff, in order to support students and families. 100% of students, and

<b>Subpriority</b>	100% of subgroups of students, will be exposed to teachers that are innovative, culturally competent, and deliver instruction that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. 100% of teachers will be appropriately assigned and credentialed.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Ensure all classroom teachers hold a valid CA Teaching Credential as defined by the CA Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CCTC) and appropriate EL authorization.</p> <p>Subject all new teacher candidates to a rigorous hiring process, which includes paper screening, interviews, and reference checks.</p>
<b>Subpriority B: Instructional Materials</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	100% of Rocketship students, including 100% of student subgroups, will have access to a range of current instructional strategies and CCSS-aligned materials that serve different styles, paces, and preferences.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>All instructional materials prepared and purchased (i.e. scope and sequence maps, Visions of Excellence, unit plans, objective plans, daily lesson plans, modules, curricula) will be aligned to state standards as described in this charter petition.</p> <p>Rocketship will also allocate part of its budget for classroom libraries rich in nonfiction text and for additional classroom technology.</p>
<b>Subpriority C: Facilities</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	School facilities will be maintained in good repair, as defined by California Education Code §17002.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Maintain and update facilities as needed to provide a safe, clean learning environment.</p> <p>Address safety hazards immediately and refer general needs items to the Board for review and prioritization.</p>
<b>State Priority 2 – Implementation of Common Core State Standards</b> Implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency.	
<b>Subpriority A: CCSS Implementation</b>	
<b>Goals to</b>	All Rocketship curricula will be aligned to the CCSS. The School will ensure that

<b>Achieve Subpriority</b>	100% of students, including 100% of student subgroups, engage in rigorous, motivating, personalized learning experiences that integrate collaboration, communication, creativity, and the use of technology.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Rocketship's Achievement and Schools Teams, in collaboration with School Leaders, will plan and prepare CCSS-aligned intellectual preparation and unit planning materials as described in this charter.</p> <p>Rocketship's Achievement and Schools Teams will plan and prepare professional development sessions on implementing the CA CCSS.</p>
<b>Subpriority B: EL Students and Academic Content Knowledge</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All English Learners will access a CCSS-aligned curriculum. Rocketship will provide specific support for struggling students in English Learner and other subgroups.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Analyze data and monitor English Learner progress in academic content knowledge to provide timely interventions.</p> <p>Require all staff (teachers and school leaders) to receive training in CCSS-aligned best practices in curriculum and instruction highlighting needs of all subgroups.</p> <p>Train teachers in best practices to improve academic achievement among ELs, including the strategies as described in this charter.</p>
<b>Subpriority C: EL Students and English Language Proficiency</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	100% of ELs make progress to become proficient in English.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Align curriculum to ELD standards.</p> <p>Analyze data and monitor EL progress in language development and provide timely interventions. Conduct ongoing assessments with special attention to fluency and correctness in reading, writing, speaking.</p> <p>Train teachers in best practices to improve English language proficiency among ELs. Provide professional development for teachers and administrators on how to scaffold the CCSS for access for ELs. Provide training on integrated/designated ELD instruction and targeted interventions.</p>

**State Priority 3 – Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation.

**Subpriority A: Achieving/Maintaining Parental Involvement**

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Parents will be an integral part of the Rocketship community and will participate in the governance and operation of the school. Parents will view Rocketship as receptive to their input and involvement.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Hold elections and develop other selection processes for parent service on the SSC, ELAC, and Regional Advisory Board as described in this charter.</p> <p>Solicit parent feedback through annual (or more frequent) Parent Surveys.</p> <p>Conduct regular Advisory Board, SSC, and ELAC meetings as described in this charter.</p> <p>Conduct regular community meetings.</p> <p>Fully incorporate parents into the LCAP process each year.</p>

**Subpriority B: Promote Parent Participation**

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Parents will feel welcome and encouraged to participate in classroom and community events.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Welcome and encourage parental volunteerism by keeping parents informed of volunteer opportunities, parent educational offerings, and informational/ community meetings.</p> <p>Provide translation services for school newsletters, parent meetings, and parent-teacher conferences as needed.</p>

**Subpriority C: LCAP**

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship will consult with parents on LCAP goals, actions, outcomes, and metrics.
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Conduct parent meetings to consult with parents (including non-Board and non-Leadership Council parent members) during the LCAP development process. Conduct parent survey to gather feedback.

**State Priority 4 – Student Achievement**

Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

A. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) statewide assessment

B. The Academic Performance Index (API)

C. Percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy UC/CSU entrance requirements, or career technical education

D. Percentage of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and/or English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC)

E. EL reclassification rate

F. Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher

G. Percentage of pupils who participate in and demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the Early Assessment Program (E.C. §99300 et seq.) or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness

#### Subpriority A: CAASPP

##### Goals to Achieve Subpriority

Rocketship students will exceed the average performance levels of students in schools with similar demographics in the District on state assessments.

##### Actions to Achieve Goal

Implementation of the CCSS aligned curriculum and instructional strategies.

Teachers will receive training on the CA Common Core Standards.

Student support structures (differentiated instruction, online learning programs, ILSs)

Curriculum designed to support ELs and other struggling subgroups.

Implementation of assessment software that mimics the online testing format and rigor of the CAASPP.

ISE services as described in this Charter.

Analyze student CAASPP test scores and other diagnostic results and adjust instruction to ensure proficiency in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics.

#### Subpriority B: API

##### Goals to Achieve Subpriority

Rocketship Fuerza will meet all state requirements for academic performance school wide and for all subgroups, including Hispanic students, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, EL students, and students with disabilities.

##### Actions to Achieve Goal

Monitor all students to assure they are making expected progress.

School staff members work with classroom teachers to ensure all students are



	receiving the necessary supports.
<b>Subpriority C: EL Proficiency Rates</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	100% of EL students will make progress toward EL proficiency each year.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Monitor EL students to assure they are making expected progress.</p> <p>Use the new CCSS ELD standards to guide instruction of EL students.</p> <p>Train teachers in SDAIE and GLAD strategies.</p>
<b>Subpriority D: EL Reclassification Rates</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship Fuerza EL students will become proficient in English and reclassified such that they are no longer designated as English learners.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Classroom teachers and ILSs provide scaffolded supports to EL students to help them to become proficient in English and to become reclassified.</p> <p>Students continue to be monitored classroom teachers after becoming reclassified. Teachers give individualized instruction with focused English Language support.</p> <p>Train teachers in SDAIE and GLAD strategies.</p>

#### **State Priority 5 – Student Engagement**

Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- A. School attendance rates
- B. Chronic absenteeism rates
- C. Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3))
- D. High school dropout rates
- E. High school graduation rates

#### **Subpriority A: Student Attendance Rates**

<b>Goals to Achieve</b>	Rocketship Fuerza will maintain a high average daily attendance rate, school
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<b>Subpriority</b>	wide and for all subgroups.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Monitor attendance reports.</p> <p>Educate parents and students about the importance of daily attendance.</p> <p>Provide a safe and engaging learning environment for all its students and families, including those of the various subgroups enrolled.</p> <p>Hold conferences with parents of students who regularly miss school.</p>
<b>Subpriority B: Student Absenteeism</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship will have no chronic absenteeism (defined as missing 10% or more of school days) for reasons other than illness or approved leave.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Incorporate social-emotional curricula as outlined in this petition.</p> <p>Conduct regular community and culture-building events.</p>

<b>State Priority 6 – School Climate</b> School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable: A. Pupil suspension rates B. Pupil expulsion rates C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness	
<b>Subpriority A: Pupil Suspension Rates</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship Fuerza will minimize pupil suspension rates by implementing various methods to help students who are struggling school wide and for all subgroups.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Utilize Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports framework as outlined in this charter.</p> <p>Social-emotional curriculum incorporated into instructional plans.</p> <p>Tiered interventions for struggling students.</p> <p>Community events/parent engagement opportunities to foster a sense of belonging and dedication to the school</p>

Subpriority B: Pupil Expulsion Rates	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship Fuerza will minimize pupil expulsion by implementing various methods to support students who are struggling.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Utilize Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports framework as outlined in this charter.</p> <p>Social-emotional curriculum incorporated into instructional plans.</p> <p>Tiered interventions for struggling students.</p> <p>Community events/parent engagement opportunities to foster a sense of belonging and dedication to the school.</p>
Subpriority C: Other Measures	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Parents are satisfied with the relationship they have with their child's teachers.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Regular parent-teacher conferences.</p> <p>Regular communication between teachers and parents (i.e. phone calls, emails, notes home)</p> <p>Parent participation in school events.</p>

<b>State Priority 7 – Course Access</b> The extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, including programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students (classified as EL, FRPM-eligible, or foster youth; E.C. §42238.02) and students with exceptional needs. "Broad course of study" includes the following, as applicable: Grades 1-6: English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board. (E.C. §51210) Grades 7-12: English, social sciences, foreign language(s), physical education, science, mathematics, visual and performing arts, applied arts, and career technical education. (E.C. §51220(a)-(i))	
<b>Goals to Achieve Priority</b>	Rocketship Fuerza will provide all students including all subgroups access to a broad course of study.
<b>Actions to</b>	Provide all students with instruction in English, mathematics, social sciences,

<b>Achieve Goal</b>	<p>science, visual and performing arts, health, and physical education (PE).</p> <p>Provide teachers with professional development in elevating student achievement and engagement, cultural competency, and proficiency.</p>
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<b>State Priority 8 – Other Student Outcomes</b> Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.	
<b>Subpriority A: English</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All students, including all subgroups, will become competent readers, writers, and speakers of the English Language.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Use CCSS to guide ELA/Literacy instruction.</p> <p>Utilize a variety of instructional strategies (i.e. phonics, reading comprehension instruction, guided reading, Writer’s Workshop) as described in Element A of this petition.</p> <p>Provide supports to EL students, students with disabilities, and other struggling subgroups.</p> <p>Systematically monitor progress of all students.</p>
<b>Subpriority B: Mathematics</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All students, including all subgroups, will acquire mathematical skills.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Use CCSS to guide Mathematics instruction.</p> <p>Utilize a variety of instructional strategies as described in Element A of this petition.</p> <p>Provide supports to EL students, students with disabilities, and other struggling subgroups.</p> <p>Systematically monitor progress of all students.</p>
<b>Subpriority C: Social Studies</b>	

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All students will develop an awareness of social studies in order to achieve civic competence—the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Social Studies will be incorporated into ELA/Literacy instruction.</p> <p>Nonfiction block will include social studies texts.</p> <p>EL students will receive scaffolded language support.</p> <p>Teachers and service providers will provide other necessary supports and interventions to struggling subgroups.</p>
<b>Subpriority D: Science</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All students, including all subgroups, will understand science concepts and scientific thinking.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>NGSS-aligned science concepts will be incorporated into ELA/Literacy instruction, particularly during the nonfiction block.</p> <p>NGSS-aligned science concepts will be incorporated into Mathematics instruction.</p> <p>NGSS-aligned science concepts will be explicitly taught throughout the school day.</p> <p>Teachers and school leaders will participate in NGSS trainings and workshops.</p> <p>Teachers will utilize NGSS-aligned assessments as the standards are progressively implemented.</p> <p>EL students will receive scaffolded language support.</p> <p>Teachers and service providers will provide other necessary supports and interventions to struggling subgroups.</p>
<b>Subpriority E: Arts</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All students, including all subgroups, will have frequent opportunities to practice visual and performing arts both in their regular classrooms and in enrichment classes.

<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<p>Offer at least two enrichment subjects to students.</p> <p>Enrichment teachers participate in professional development and school wide data analysis to ensure rigor and effectiveness.</p> <p>Incorporate visual and performing arts activities and projects into the school day.</p>
<b>Subpriority F: P.E.</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Students, including all subgroups, will receive physical education instruction each week.
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	Schedule PE classes amounting to an average of 200 minutes of PE every two weeks.

## ELEMENTS B & C: MEASURABLE STUDENTS 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 school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school’s educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both school-wide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607. –California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(B).

**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. –California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(C).

### ELEMENT B: MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(B), the following table describes Rocketship Fuerza’s measurable outcomes and corresponding methods of assessment that align with the state priorities, and goals and actions to achieve the state priorities, as identified in Element A of this charter.

State Priority 1 – Basic Services		
The degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned (E.C. §44258.9) and fully credentialed, and every pupil has sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials (E.C. § 60119), and school facilities are maintained in good repair (E.C. §17002(d))		
Subpriority A: Teachers		
Goals to Achieve Subpriority	Rocketship will identify, attract, and build the capacity of teachers, leaders, and classified staff, in order to support students and families. All students will be exposed to teachers that are innovative, culturally competent, and deliver instruction that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. All teachers will be appropriately assigned and credentialed.	
Measurable Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 100% of teachers are appropriately assigned.</li> <li>2. 100% of teachers are appropriately credentialed.</li> </ol>	
Actions to Achieve Goal	Methods of Assessment	Person(s)

		<b>Responsible</b>
Ensure all classroom teachers hold a valid CA Teaching Credential as defined by the CA Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CCTC) and appropriate EL authorization.	Personnel records, including documentation of required assessments, coursework, and credentials consistent with CCTC.	RPS Human Resources (HR); Principal
Subject all new teacher candidates to a rigorous hiring process, which includes paper screening, interviews, and reference checks.	Successful completion of a rigorous interview process that incorporates feedback from Rocketship's Recruitment Team and multiple stakeholders including school leaders, other teachers, and parents.	RPS Recruitment Team; HR; Principal
<b>Subpriority B: Instructional Materials</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All Rocketship students, including all subgroups, will have access to a range of current instructional strategies and CCSS-aligned materials that serve different styles, paces, and preferences.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	100% of Rocketship students have access to up-to-date, standards-aligned instructional materials in their classrooms	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>All instructional materials prepared and purchased (i.e. scope and sequence maps, Visions of Excellence, unit plans, objective plans, daily lesson plans, modules, curricula) will be aligned to state standards as described in this charter petition.</p> <p>Rocketship will also allocate part of its budget for classroom libraries rich in nonfiction text and for additional classroom technology.</p>	<p>Annual review (and other periodic reviews as necessary) of standards-aligned materials by Rocketship's Achievement Team, Schools Team, and school leaders.</p> <p>Annual budget review and allocation.</p>	RPS Achievement Team, Schools Team, school leaders
<b>Subpriority C: Facilities</b>		



<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	School facilities will be maintained in good repair, as defined by California Education Code §17002.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Exemplary rating according to Annual Facility Inspection Reports, with no deficiencies or extreme deficiencies.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Maintain and update facilities as needed to provide a safe, clean learning environment.	Annual Facility Inspection; daily spot checks; regular walkthroughs by custodial staff.; facility inspection checklists prepared by Business Operations Manager	RPS Facilities Team; RPS Schools Team; Principal; Business Operations Manager
Address safety hazards immediately and refer general needs items to the Board for review and prioritization.	Annual Facility Inspection; regular facility inspections to screen for safety hazards; facility inspection checklists prepared by Business Operations Manager	RPS Facilities Team; RPS Schools Team; Principal; Business Operations Manager

## **State Priority 2 – Implementation of Common Core State Standards**

Implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency.

### **Subpriority A: CCSS Implementation**

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All Rocketship curricula will be aligned to the CCSS. The School will ensure that 100% of students, including 100% of students in all subgroups, engage in rigorous, motivating, personalized learning experiences that integrate collaboration, communication, creativity, and the use of technology.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All instructional materials in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics are aligned to CA CCSS.</li> <li>2. All teachers receive at least five hours in professional development specifically on CCSS implementation.</li> </ol>	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s)</b>

		<b>Responsible</b>
<p>Rocketship's Achievement and Schools Teams, in collaboration with School Leaders, will plan and prepare CCSS-aligned intellectual preparation and unit planning materials as described in this charter.</p> <p>Rocketship's Achievement and Schools Teams will plan and prepare professional development sessions on implementing the CA CCSS.</p>	<p>Annual review (and periodic reviews as necessary) of curriculum to ensure that all instruction is standards-aligned.</p> <p>Professional development calendar reflecting specific CCSS-implementation sessions.</p>	RPS Achievement Team; RPS Schools Team; School Leaders
<b>Subpriority B: EL Students and Academic Content Knowledge</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	100% of English learners will access a CCSS-aligned curriculum. Rocketship will provide specific support for struggling students in English learner and other subgroups.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rocketship EL Students perform at levels of proficiency equal to or exceeding the local school district on annual CAASPP tests.</li> <li>2. 100% of students, including 100% of subgroups, have access to CCSS-aligned instruction and materials.</li> <li>3. 100% of teachers receive professional development on scaffolding CCSS instruction for ELs.</li> <li>4. 100% of teachers receive training in best practices to improve English language proficiency.</li> </ol>	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Analyze data and monitor English Learner progress in academic content knowledge to provide timely interventions	Baseline, formative, and interim assessment data in all subjects, and Smarter Balanced assessment results; EL student cumulative folders	Principal; teachers
Require all staff (teachers and school leaders) to receive training in CCSS-aligned	Professional development schedules.	RPS Achievement Team; School

best practices in curriculum and instruction highlighting needs of all subgroups.  Train teachers in best practices to improve academic achievement among ELs, including the strategies as described in this charter.		Leaders
Provide professional development for teachers and administrators on how to scaffold the CCSS for access for ELs.  Provide a broad range of high-quality, standards-aligned instructional resources that facilitate ELs' access to core curriculum and expand their knowledge of the world. Provide curriculum and unit development aligned to both CCSS and ELD standards.	Professional development schedules.  Annual inventory of instructional materials and assessments.	RPS Achievement and Schools Teams; School Leaders
<b>Subpriority C: EL Students and English Language Proficiency</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All Rocketship students make progress to become proficient in English.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>		
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Align curriculum to ELD standards.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily plans.	RPS Achievement Team; Principal; teachers
Analyze data and monitor English Learner progress in language development and provide timely interventions. Conduct ongoing assessments with special attention to fluency and correctness in reading, writing, speaking.	CELDT/ELPAC results.  Results from other interim assessments as described in this charter.	RPS Achievement Team; RPS Analytics Team; School Leaders; teachers
Train teachers in best practices to improve English language proficiency among ELs. Provide professional development for	Professional development schedules	RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders

teachers and administrators on how to scaffold the CCSS for access for ELs. Provide training on integrated/designated ELD instruction and targeted interventions.		
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<b>State Priority 3 – Parental Involvement</b> Parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation.		
<b>Subpriority A: Achieving/Maintaining Parental Involvement</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Parents will be an integral part of the Rocketship community and will participate in the governance and operation of the school. Parents will view Rocketship as receptive to their input and involvement.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parent service on the regional advisory board, as prescribed by this charter and Rocketship policies.</li> <li>2. Parent service on the School Site Council, as prescribed by this charter and Rocketship policies.</li> <li>3. Parent service on the English Language Advisory Council, as prescribed by this charter and Rocketship policies.</li> <li>4. Parent participation in community meetings.</li> <li>5. Parent responses on the annual Parent Survey indicate satisfaction with their relationship with Rocketship teachers, staff members, and community.</li> </ol>	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Hold elections and other selection processes for parent service on the SSC, ELAC, and Regional Advisory Board as described in this charter.	Membership rosters.	RPS Board of Directors; RPS Growth & Community Engagement Team; RPS Schools Team School Leaders
Solicit parent feedback through annual (or more frequent) Parent Surveys.  Conduct regular Advisory Board, SSC, and ELAC meetings as described in this	Parent Surveys.  Meeting minutes.  Attendance rosters	RPS Growth & Community Engagement Team; RPS Schools Team School Leaders

charter. Conduct regular community meetings.	at school events.	
<b>Subpriority B: Promote Parent Participation</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Parents will feel welcome and encouraged to participate in classroom and community events.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Percentage of parents attending an average of at least one school event per month: maintain above 35%</li> <li>2. Parent satisfaction: 85%</li> <li>3. Number of community meetings each year: at least 5 meetings</li> <li>4. Number of parent conferences: at least 3</li> </ol> <p>Note: In accordance with Ed Code 47605(b) and (n), parental involvement shall not be a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School.</p>	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Welcome and encourage parental volunteerism by keeping parents informed of volunteer opportunities, parent educational offerings, and informational/ community meetings	Parent participation logs Attendance roster at school events	RPS Growth & Community Engagement Team; RPS Schools Team School Leaders
Provide translation services for school newsletters, parent meetings, and parent-teacher conferences as needed.	Translated documents provided to parents.	School Leaders; Office Manager
<b>Subpriority C: LCAP</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship will consult with parents on LCAP goals, actions, outcomes, and metrics.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Input from parents representative of all student subgroups, including Hispanic, Asian, and Special Education, on LCAP goals generated during in-person community meetings, SSC meetings, and LCAP take-home survey.	

<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Conduct parent meetings to consult with parents (including non-Board and non-Leadership Council parent members) during the LCAP development process. Conduct parent survey to gather feedback.	Annual LCAP. Parent meeting minutes. Parent Survey.	RPS Growth & Community Engagement Team; RPS Schools Team School Leaders

#### **State Priority 4 – Student Achievement**

Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

A. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) statewide assessment

B. The Academic Performance Index (API)

C. Percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy UC/CSU entrance requirements, or career technical education

D. Percentage of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and/or English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC)

E. EL reclassification rate

F. Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher

G. Percentage of pupils who participate in and demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the Early Assessment Program (E.C. §99300 et seq.) or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness

#### **Subpriority A: CAASPP**

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship students will exceed the average performance levels of students in schools with similar demographics in the local school district on state assessments.		
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	CAASPP Proficiency Rates:		
		2018-19	
		ELA	Math
	CAASPP Overall	31	44
	CAASPP EL	31	44
	CAASPP SED	31	44

<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Implementation of the CCSS aligned curriculum and instructional strategies.</p> <p>Teachers will receive training on the CA Common Core Standards.</p> <p>Student support structures (differentiated instruction, online learning programs, ILSs) Curriculum designed to support ELs and other struggling subgroups. Implementation of assessment software that mimics the online testing format and rigor of the CAASPP. ISE services as described in this Charter.</p>	<p>Review of yearly, unit, and daily planning and preparation materials.</p> <p>Review of assessment materials.</p> <p>Professional development schedules.</p> <p>Collaborative meetings among school leaders, teachers, and other service providers (i.e. ILSs, Education Specialist)</p>	<p>RPS Achievement Team; RPS Schools Team; School Leader; Education Specialist</p>
<p>Analyze student CAASPP test scores and other diagnostic results and adjust instruction to ensure proficiency in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics.</p>	<p>Interim standards-aligned benchmark assessments.</p> <p>CAASPP results.</p>	<p>RPS Achievement Team; RPS Schools Team; RPS Analytics Team; School Leaders</p>
<b>Subpriority B: API</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	<p>Rocketship Fuerza will meet state requirements for academic performance school wide and for all subgroups, including Hispanic students, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, EL students, and students with disabilities.</p>	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<p>Rocketship Fuerza meets state target of the statewide measure that will be established by State Board of Education that will replace API, school wide and for all subgroups.</p>	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>

<p>Monitor all students to assure they are making expected progress.</p> <p>School staff members work with classroom teachers to ensure all students are receiving the necessary supports.</p>	<p>Continuous monitoring of student growth, including all subgroups, using regular benchmark assessments and NWEA MAP or another nationally normed formative assessments, which are aligned to CCSS.</p>	<p>School Leaders; Teachers</p>
<b>Subpriority C: EL Proficiency Rates</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	EL students will make progress toward EL proficiency each year.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	English learner progress indicator: 72.8%	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Monitor EL students to assure they are making expected progress.</p> <p>Use the new CCSS ELD standards to guide instruction of EL students.</p> <p>Train teachers in SDAIE and GLAD strategies.</p>	<p>Reading, Writing, and Math formative assessments, CELDT or ELPAC scores.</p> <p>Student progress reports.</p> <p>Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.</p>	<p>RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; teachers</p>
<b>Subpriority D: EL Reclassification Rates</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship Fuerza EL students will become proficient in English and reclassified such that they are no longer designated as English learners.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Reclassification rate increases by one percentage point per year above the average for the next three years (i.e. Year 1 = average rate + 1; Y2 = avg. rate + 2; Y3 = avg. rate + 3)	



<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Classroom teachers and ILSs provide scaffolded supports to EL students to help them to become proficient in English and to become reclassified.</p> <p>Students continue to be monitored classroom teachers after becoming reclassified. Teachers give individualized instruction with focused English Language support.</p> <p>Train teachers in SDAIE and GLAD strategies.</p>	<p>Reclassification statistics. Formative assessments in reading, writing, math.</p> <p>CELDT/ELPAC</p>	<p>RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; teachers</p>

#### **State Priority 5 – Student Engagement**

Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- A. School attendance rates
- B. Chronic absenteeism rates
- C. Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3))
- D. High school dropout rates
- E. High school graduation rates

#### **Subpriority A: Student Attendance Rates**

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship Fuerza will maintain a high average daily attendance rate, school wide and for all subgroups.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	ADA rates are at least 95%, school-wide and for all subgroups.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Monitor attendance reports.	Monthly attendance reports.	RPS Operations Team; School Leaders; Business Operations

Educate parents and students about the importance of daily attendance.	Parent outreach materials.	Manager; Office Manager
Provide a safe and engaging learning environment for all its students and families, including those of the various subgroups enrolled.	Satisfaction surveys.  Community meetings.	RPS Schools Team; School Leaders
Hold conferences with parents of students who regularly miss school.	Parent conference records	Principal; teachers
<b>Subpriority B: Student Absenteeism</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship Fuerza will have no chronic absenteeism (defined as missing 10% or more of school days) for reasons other than illness or approved leave.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Student chronic absenteeism < 10.0%	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Incorporate social-emotional curricula as outlined in this petition. Conduct regular community and culture-building events.	Review of instructional plans and materials.  Bell schedules.	RPS Schools Team; School Leaders; Teachers

#### **State Priority 6 – School Climate**

School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

A. Pupil suspension rates

B. Pupil expulsion rates

C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness

#### **Subpriority A: Pupil Suspension Rates**

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship Fuerza will minimize pupil suspension rates by implementing various methods to help students who are struggling school wide and for all subgroups.
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<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Suspension rates lower than surrounding district schools with similar demographics, school-wide and for all subgroups.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Utilize Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports framework as outlined in this charter.</p> <p>Social-emotional curriculum incorporated into instructional plans.</p> <p>Tiered interventions for struggling students.</p> <p>Community events/parent engagement opportunities to foster a sense of belonging and dedication to the school</p>	<p>PBIS team meetings.</p> <p>Instructional plans/bell schedule.</p> <p>Collaborative meetings involving teachers, school leaders, and service providers.</p> <p>Annual School Accountability Report Card.</p>	<p>RPS Schools Team; School Leaders; Teachers</p>
<b>Subpriority B: Pupil Expulsion Rates</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship Fuerza will minimize pupil expulsion by implementing various methods to support students who are struggling.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Rocketship Fuerza will maintain an annual expulsion rate of less than 1%, school-wide and for all subgroups.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Utilize Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports framework as outlined in this charter.</p> <p>Social-emotional curricula are incorporated into instructional plans.</p> <p>Tiered interventions for struggling</p>	<p>PBIS team meetings.</p> <p>Instructional plans/bell schedule.</p> <p>Collaborative meetings involving teachers, school leaders, and service providers.</p> <p>Annual School Accountability Report Card.</p>	<p>RPS Schools Team; School Leaders; Teachers</p>

students.		
Community events/parent engagement opportunities to foster a sense of belonging and dedication to the school		

### State Priority 7 – Course Access

The extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, including programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students (classified as EL, FRPM-eligible, or foster youth; E.C. §42238.02) and students with exceptional needs.

“Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable: Grades 1-6: English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board. (E.C. §51210) Grades 7-12: English, social sciences, foreign language(s), physical education, science, mathematics, visual and performing arts, applied arts, and career technical education. (E.C. §51220(a)-(i))

<b>Goals to Achieve Priority</b>	Rocketship Fuerza will provide all students, including all subgroups, access to a broad course of study.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of students, including 100% of students in all subgroups, receive instruction in English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, and health.</li> <li>100% of students, including all subgroups, are provided PE classes 200 minutes every two weeks.</li> </ol>	
Provide all students with instruction in English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, and physical education (PE).	Bell schedule.  Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	RPS Schools Team; RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders
Provide teachers with professional development in elevating student achievement and engagement, cultural competency, and proficiency.	Professional development schedules.	RPS Achievement Team; RPS Schools Team; School Leaders

### State Priority 8 – Other Student Outcomes

Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.		
<b>Subpriority A: English</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All students, including all subgroups, will become competent readers, writers, and speakers of the English Language.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	CAASPP Proficiency Rates 2018-19 (from LCAP):	
	CAASPP Overall	31
	CAASPP EL	31
	CAASPP SED	31
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Use CCSS to guide ELA/Literacy instruction.</p> <p>Utilize a variety of instructional strategies (i.e. phonics, reading comprehension instruction, guided reading, Writer's Workshop) as described in Element A of this petition.</p> <p>Provide supports to EL students, students with disabilities, and other struggling subgroups.</p> <p>Systematically monitor progress of all students.</p>	<p>Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans, as well as formative and interim assessment data.</p> <p>CAASPP and CELDT/ELPAC.</p>	<p>RPS Schools Team; RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; Teachers</p>
<b>Subpriority B: Mathematics</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All students, including all subgroups, will acquire mathematical skills.	

<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	CAASPP Proficiency Rates 2018-19 (from LCAP):	
	CAASPP Overall	44
	CAASPP EL	44
	CAASPP SED	44
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Use CCSS to guide Mathematics instruction.</p> <p>Utilize a variety of instructional strategies as described in Element A of this petition.</p> <p>Provide supports to EL students, students with disabilities, and other struggling subgroups.</p> <p>Systematically monitor progress of all students.</p>	<p>Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans, as well as formative and interim assessment data.</p> <p>CAASPP.</p>	<p>RPS Schools Team; RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; Teachers</p>
<b>Subpriority C: Social Studies</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	<p>All students will develop an awareness of social studies in order to achieve civic competence—the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life.</p>	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School provides standards-aligned instructional materials with focus on nonfiction and vocabulary study in social studies</li> <li>2. School provides standards-aligned professional development with focus nonfiction and vocabulary study in social studies</li> <li>3. 100% of full-time teachers have appropriate credentials</li> </ol>	

<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Social Studies will be incorporated into ELA/Literacy instruction.</p> <p>Nonfiction block will include social studies texts.</p> <p>EL students will receive scaffolded language support.</p> <p>Teachers and service providers will provide other necessary supports and interventions to struggling subgroups.</p>	<p>Yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.</p>	<p>RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; teachers</p>
<b>Subpriority D: Science</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All students, including all subgroups, will understand science concepts and scientific thinking.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School provides standards-aligned instructional materials</li> <li>2. School provides standards-aligned professional development</li> <li>3. 100% of full-time teachers have appropriate credentials</li> </ol>	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>NGSS-aligned science concepts will be incorporated into ELA/Literacy instruction, particularly during the nonfiction block.</p> <p>NGSS-aligned science concepts will be incorporated into Mathematics instruction.</p> <p>NGSS-aligned science concepts will be explicitly taught throughout the school day.</p> <p>Teachers and school leaders will participate in NGSS trainings and workshops.</p>	<p>Yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.</p> <p>NGSS-aligned unit assessments.</p> <p>CST for Science for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students (as applicable under CAASPP testing requirements)</p>	<p>RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; teachers</p>

<p>Teachers will utilize NGSS-aligned assessments as the standards are progressively implemented.</p> <p>EL students will receive scaffolded language support.</p> <p>Teachers and service providers will provide other necessary supports and interventions to struggling subgroups.</p>		
<b>Subpriority E: Arts</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All students, including all subgroups, will have frequent opportunities to practice visual and performing arts both in their regular classrooms and in enrichment classes.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	100% of students, including 100% of students in all subgroups, will receive at least two enrichment courses during the week.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Offer at least two enrichment subjects to students.</p> <p>Enrichment teachers participate in professional development and school wide data analysis to ensure rigor and effectiveness.</p> <p>Incorporate visual and performing arts activities and projects into the school day.</p>	<p>Yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.</p> <p>Bell schedule.</p>	RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; teachers
<b>Subpriority F: P.E.</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Students, including all subgroups, will receive physical education instruction each week.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	100% of students attending school, including all subgroups (with the exception of students excused for medical reasons) participates in an average of 200	



	minutes of PE every two weeks.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Schedule PE classes amounting to an average of 200 minutes of PE every two weeks.	Bell schedule	RPS Schools Team; School Leaders

## ELEMENT C: ASSESSMENT MEASURES

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 to better understand their 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 leveled reading assessments, cumulative math assessments, and writing checklists, which can be compared to the baseline assessments from the beginning of the year. These will be year-end leveled reading assessments, cumulative math assessments, and writing checklists.

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's current assessments are as follows:

- State-mandated Assessments (summative)—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 each spring. Additionally, the California Standards 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 and federal measurements as they evolve and replace API and AYP. The ELPAC (formerly CELDT) will be administered to English Learners annually.

- Leveled Reading Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)—All students in grades K-5 will be assessed regularly throughout the year using the STEP Literacy assessment.
- 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.
- Mathematics Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)—Throughout the year, student progress in mathematics will be measured using formal and informal formative assessments. Some of these assessments will be teacher-developed based on Common Core State Standards, and others may be taken from a math program if we choose to purchase one. Students will be assessed at the beginning of math units to identify students in need of extra challenge or support. Ongoing assessment will take the form of teacher observations, assignments, and performance-based assessments involving problem-solving. At the end of each unit, student understanding and mastery will be measured through performance tasks or formal assessments. Teachers will create these assessments or select them from curriculum resources.
- Standardized Assessments in Language Arts & Mathematics (interim)—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 assure they will be prepared for Smarter Balanced Assessments.
- Science Assessments (formative, summative)—We will assess student progress toward the Next Generation Science Standards using unit assessments from the science program we choose. 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. There will also be assessments at the end of transdisciplinary units such as project rubrics, written checklists, and/or performance tasks.
- Social Studies Assessments (formative, summative)—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.
- Social Emotional Learning Assessments (formative, summative)—Teachers will explore and develop tools, some of which will be aligned the RULER Approach and Kimochis curriculum, to identify and support students’ social-emotional growth.

## USE AND REPORTING OF DATA

Rocketship will utilize Schoolzilla 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 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 Authorizer 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 AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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

*- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(D)*

In accordance with Education Code section 47604, all Rocketship campuses will be operated by Rocketship Education, Inc. (RSED), a California non-profit public benefit corporation with 501(c)(3) status, doing business as Rocketship Public Schools (RPS). All staff will be employees of Rocketship. Rocketship will be governed by a Board of Directors (“the Board”) pursuant to its corporate bylaws as adopted, and as subsequently amended from time to time, which shall be consistent with this charter. (Rocketship’s Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are attached as Appendix 10.)

Rocketship will operate autonomously from the Alum Rock Unified School District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services. Pursuant to California Education Code Section 47604(c), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of Rocketship, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the charter school as long as the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rocketship Education, d/b/a Rocketship Public Schools is a non-profit network of public elementary charter schools that has exclusive responsibility for charter schools in California and does not function as a Charter Management Organization.

Rocketship Public Schools does not operate as a parent organization and never been an entity under criticism from the Financial Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) because of conflicts of interest, misuse of public funds, lack of transparency and in some cases outright fraud/misappropriation of funds.

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 functional expertise in each of the areas that comprise the complexity of school management.

Rocketship is focused on easing the administrative burden of our schools so they can focus exclusively on instruction and student achievement. We do this by centralizing a full range of school services. The Central Office Expense Allocation Fee directly supports the operations of our schools, much like a District supports the operations of the schools it supports. In addition, our Achievement Team and our Schools Team are part of Rocketship’s centralized Network Support Team. Those teams are charged with developing the instructional vision, supports, mentoring, and professional development of our school leaders and teacher across all schools.

The current support that Rocketship administration staff provides includes the following:

- High-quality support via centralized Schools Team and Achievement 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)

These critical support services are comprehensive and support many academic and most non-academic obligations under state law, charter petitions, and memorandum of understandings established with authorizers. The staff is overseen by a Senior Leadership Team (SLT), which is a group of department leaders with deep and diverse functional expertise. For bios of our current SLT members, please see Appendix 10.

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## 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 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 (3) and up to twenty-five (25) members. Board members serve for staggered terms of two years. This staggering of terms will create a natural flow for future elections and ensure that the Board does not experience full turnover at once. For bios of our current Board members, please see Appendix 10.

The Board will be comprised of the following individual officers:

- 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 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.

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

Rocketship complies with Education Code section 47604(b) that states that the “governing board of a school district that grants a charter for the establishment of a charter school formed and organized pursuant to this section shall be entitled to a single representative on the board of directors of the nonprofit public benefit corporation.

## 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 school charter;
- Participation as necessary in dispute resolution;
- Monitoring overall student performance;
- Evaluation of Rocketship Principals;
- Monitoring Rocketship’s performance and taking necessary action to ensure that the 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.

Rocketship will update the District on any changes to the Rocketship 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 Rocketship any of those duties with the exception of those listed in the Bylaws as non-delegable. The Board, however, retains ultimate responsibility for the performance of those powers or duties so delegated. Where the Board has formally taken action to delegate authority to staff, changes must:

- Be in writing;
- Specify the designee;
- 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, with the presence of a quorum as required by the Brown Act.

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. The Executive Committee shall comply with the Brown Act and the Rocketship Conflict of Interest Code.

Moreover, Rocketship agrees to comply with the requirements of the Brown Act, the Public Records Act, Government Code Section 1090 et seq. and the Political Reform Act to the same extent as if the Charter School were a non-charter California public school district. Rocketship also has adopted the Fair Political Practices Commission Model Conflict of Interest Code, pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 2, Section 18739, including the formal designation of reporters and reporting categories and the forms to be filed thereunder, and requires all designated Charter School employees and governing board members to comply therewith. Please see Appendix 10 for a copy of 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 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 manned by a Rocketship staff member, is available within the jurisdictional boundaries of the District for every meeting. The notice and agenda of each meeting will provide for public comment from each physical and teleconference location. Board teleconferencing locations are comfortably furnished, offices or school conference rooms that are wired and equipped with highly specialized two-way video communication technology. As a matter of practice, to date, Rocketship has held most of its Board meetings in San Jose, where 10 out of the 12 Rocketship-operated charter schools in operation are located. However, members of the Board and the public may choose to participate at any one of the other three (3) meeting sites located in the following authorizing districts: Franklin-McKinley School District, Redwood City Unified School District, and Mt. Diablo Unified School District (CA Department of Education).

Further, Rocketship will add an additional teleconference meeting location in the 2018-2019 school year to serve the Antioch Unified School District, as Rocketship is opening a new school in Antioch in 2018-19. Rocketship is very excited about expanding into the East Bay, and will continue to add additional teleconference meeting locations in the 2019-2020 school year to ensure access in other authorizing school districts.

The Board will also hold special meetings as necessary, including for the consideration of pupil expulsion, the development of the LCAP, and other 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.

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.

The Rocketship Board participates annually in professional training regarding topics such as board governance, compliance with the Brown Act, strategic planning, and conflicts of interest rules.

## REGIONAL ADVISORY BOARDS

Rocketship is governed by a single Board of Directors, and we believe it is critical that strong local partnerships inform our growth and maximize our impact in each of the communities we serve. To achieve this goal, the Board of Directors will put in place an advisory board consisting of a diverse group of parents, teachers, and civic and business leaders committed to closing the achievement gap by fall 2018-2019. By implementing an East Bay- Regional Advisory Board, we will ensure that Fuerza parents have representation and participation in local issues of the Board.

The Regional Advisory Board will consist of three (3) to twelve (12) members. At all times, at least 50% of the membership of the Board will be populated by parents of current Rocketship students.

In regions with fewer than six (6) schools, each school will have one representative, elected from the school's School Site Council or equivalent body. The remainder of the Advisory Board will be made up of local civic and business leaders appointed by Rocketship Regional Director/VP. The Board of Directors will appoint an Advisory Board Chair, who will serve on the Board of Directors.

The primary responsibility of the Advisory Board is to serve as a formal structure giving voice to Rocketship student, family, and community needs. The Advisory Board may provide advice and counsel to Rocketship's Regional Director/Vice President; provide meaningful input to the Board of Directors on topics such as plans and strategies for local growth, model improvement, and staff development; build local partnerships to enhance the quality and sustainability of Rocketship schools; and speak at local events, political forums, and site visits.

The Advisory Board will meet regularly, and members will attend certain designated Board meetings each year.

## PARENT PARTICIPATION



We understand that a parent 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 school and the community as they promote their children's educations. 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 school. Parents can become members of the Advisory Board (further described above) or become involved with the School Site Council or English Language Advisory Committee (further described below).

We also encourage our families to complete at least 20 partnership hours each school year. Partnership activities vary widely and can include assisting in classrooms, translating documents, providing administrative assistance, participating in community and family meetings attending advocacy events, and assisting in special school events. As further explained in this petition, partnership hours are not required and are not a condition for admission or continued enrollment at a Rocketship school.

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, Rocketship Fuerza holds meetings specifically designed to help parents understand the components of the LCAP and to discuss the best ways for the school to use LCFF funds to serve students in alignment with the state priorities. Rocketship Fuerza also has 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) which, in accordance with Ed Code § 52852, will be comprised of the following:

- The school Principal;
- School personnel, at least 50% of which are classroom teachers;
- Parents of students attending the school, or other community members selected by parents.

The number of parents/parent-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 Ed Code § 64001, the SSC will be responsible for participating in the development of a Single School District Plan for student achievement ("the SSD Plan").

The SSD Plan is a blueprint to improve the academic performance of all students through the coordination of all educational services at the school. The SSD Plan must address how federal funds provided to the school will be used to improve the academic performance of all students. In developing the SSD Plan, 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 district priorities; qualitative and quantitative student

achievement data; and other performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional program. The SSC will review and update the SSD Plan annually. All updated SSD Plans must be approved by the Rocketship Public Schools Board of Directors. Additionally, the SSC will participate in the development and approval of the school's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), which governs how the school will spend its state categorical funding.

Beyond fulfilling its legal obligations as described above, 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 parents (i.e. through trainings 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 Parent 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 parent engagement.

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

#### ENGLISH LEARNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Under Ed Code § 52176(b), all schools with more than 20 students of limited English proficiency ("English learners," or "ELs") shall establish a school level advisory committee on which parents/guardians of such students constitute membership in at least the same percentage as their children represent of the total number of students in the 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.

Schools may designate, for this purpose, an existing school level advisory committee (i.e. SSC), or subcommittee of such an advisory committee, if the advisory committee, or subcommittee where appropriate, meets the criteria stated above. At Rocketship, we try to have our SSC and ELAC overlap to the extent desired by the school and possible under the law.

In accordance with Ed Code §52176, 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 SSD and LCAP.

Additionally, the ELAC shall assist the school in the development of:

- The school's needs assessment.
- The school's annual language census.
- 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 PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent 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 parent involvement are:

- Enlisting parent 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 strong 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 Rocketship Fuerza
- Encouraging each Rocketship Fuerza family to complete at least 20 volunteer hours at the school per year: As described above, Rocketship Fuerza parents will be encouraged to volunteer at the schools to help tighten the link between the families and the school as well as assist Rocketship Fuerza teachers and staff with various school operations. However, in accordance with Ed Code 47605(d)(2)(B)(iv), parental involvement is NOT required for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, any Rocketship charter school. Pursuant to Ed Code 47605(n), the Charter School will affirmatively notify current and prospective parents of this during the application and enrollment process and at the beginning of every school year.

## ELEMENT E: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS

*Governing Law: The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school. -- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(E)*

Rocketship 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 47605(d)(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 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 a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. Rocketship will maintain current copies of all teacher credentials, and they will be readily available for inspection and monitoring.

Rocketship Fuerza 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 includes leading Rocketship Fuerza in all aspects of its day to day operations and working with the RPS 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 school. The Principal sets the vision for the school and ensures that the 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.

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Foster a rigorous and college preparatory environment that ensures high levels of student

- achievement annually through the relentless use of data to drive and refine instruction
- Manage, support, and develop other members of the school leadership team including the Assistant Principals and Office Manager
- Manage self and others in a manner that creates a healthy, high-achieving environment where staff feel challenged, supported, and valued and there is open communication about professional growth and future career opportunities
- Foster a school culture and environment of constant reflection and professional growth so that all staff continues to emerge as leaders within Rocketship and quickly assume leadership positions within the organization
- Foster Rocketship school culture where students, educators, and members of the school community demonstrate Rocketship's beliefs, values, and behaviors
- Create a school community that fully involves parents in student achievement through multiple outlets including home visits, regular community meetings and parent/family meetings, and also empowers them to become active advocates for their Rocketeer's education and achievement
- Promote collaborative problem solving and open communication between educators, students, and families
- Develop classroom educator practice and leadership through direct observation, coaching, and training (4+ teachers)
- Design and lead staff meetings
- Oversee and/or contribute to the design and implementation of staff professional development and collaborative planning time
- Lead the execution of community meetings and events
- Lead and/or support other school site and network-wide initiatives as needed to foster strong school culture, academic excellence, and network growth
- Provide leadership toward, creative and positive data driven behavioral innovations and instruction for high risk students, their teachers and their families

**Qualifications:**

- 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, TB test and fingerprinting
- BA from accredited university
- Valid teaching credential

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

Rocketship Fuerza has two Assistant Principals, focused full-time on the implementation of Rocketship Fuerza'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 school. The Assistant Principal leads two primary streams of work: teacher coaching and professional development (PD). 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.

***Responsibilities:***

- Foster a rigorous and college preparatory environment that ensures high levels of student achievement annually through the relentless use of data to drive and refine instruction
- Ensure over a year's worth of progress for all Rocketeers annually through rigorous coaching and PD
- Drive student achievement results through regular 1:1 coaching sessions with select staff members
- Oversee the implementation of a rigorous and highly personalized curriculum in classrooms of coached educators
- Oversee and supervise the ILSs and the Learning Lab
- Promote collaborative problem solving and open communication among teaching staff members
- Ensure Rocketship school culture where students, educators, and members of the school community demonstrate Rocketship's beliefs, values, and behaviors
- Manage self and others in a manner that creates a healthy, high-achieving environment where staff feel challenged, and also fully supported/valued
- Lead and/or contribute to the design and implementation of weekly staff professional development and collaborative planning time
- Identify, celebrate, codify, and share instructional best practices across the school and network
- Implement and share educator coaching and development best practices with other members of the school leadership team
- Assist in the management of school-based Integrated Service Education (ISE) program
- Collaborate with the Education Specialist at each site to ensure that teachers are receiving the necessary support and professional development to maximize the delivery of instruction in a full-inclusion model
- Have a lasting impact on the design of network professional development resources

***Qualifications:***

- Have achieved made significant gains with their students for at least the past year or years;
- Espouse Rocketship Fuerza'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
- Valid Teaching Credential

### CORE CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Rocketship defines core classes as English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. All other classes offered will be considered non-core classes. In passing the Charter Schools Act, it is the intent of the Legislature that charter schools be given flexibility in credentialing with regard to non-core, non-college preparatory courses.

Rocketship Fuerza shall comply with Education Code Section 47605(l), which states:

*Teachers in charter schools shall be required to hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. These documents shall be maintained on file at the charter school and shall be subject to periodic inspection by chartering authority.*

All core teachers will have or be working toward CLAD certification or a CCTC 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.

**Responsibilities**

- A full day of teaching, primarily within the academic areas in which they focus their teaming;
- Mentoring and instructional advice for their peers, especially other educators, to help them develop the skills needed to progress as educators.

**Qualifications:**

- Demonstrated mastery of classroom skills including classroom management, planning, assessment and instructional practice;
- Hold a valid teaching credential;
- Demonstrate the potential to make significant gains for students.
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

Teachers receive competitive, performance-based salaries, which are often higher than surrounding districts by 10% or more.

Teachers assigned to a TK classroom will have been issued at least one credential by the CTC and shall, by August 1, 2020, 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 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.

**Responsibilities**

- Ensure that all students realize the academic goals outlined both within their IEPs and by Rocketship and realize at least one year's worth of progress
- Collaborate with school personnel, parents, and other service providers for the purpose of improving the quality of student outcomes, developing solutions and planning curriculum
- Coordinate referral and assessment procedures and facilitate the coordination of IEP team meetings and the implementation of special education services (Speech, Occupational therapy, etc.)
- Evaluate students' abilities in basic academics for the purpose of development of remediation plans and/or assessing student progress
- Provide one-to-one or small group instruction, direct services and push in or pull out intervention as required by IEP



- Provide accommodations and/or modifications to learners with disabilities for assignments and testing as determined by the IEP team
- Draft and write professional and compliant IEPs, as well as finalize the data in SEIS
- Instruct students for the purpose of improving their success in assigned basic academic subject areas of reading, writing and/or math
- Manage student behavior for the purpose of providing a safe and optimal learning environment, develops behavior support plans as needed
- Participates in various meetings (IEP, parent conferences, in service training, staff meetings etc.)
- Provide leadership for ensuring full compliance with legal requirements as prescribed by federal law under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act 1997) and IDEIA (Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act, 2004) and State of California Education Code
- Collaborate with parents as educational partners and provide ability awareness as needed

### *Qualifications*

- Embrace the mission of Rocketship Public Schools
- 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 professional development over the course of the school year to develop one's practice and skills
- Abilities 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 (ILSs) serve as tutors, working closely with a team of teachers to meet the needs of all students at that grade level.

### ***Responsibilities***

- Motivate students to participate in learning activities; create a positive student culture around online learning and small group tutoring; maintain high behavioral expectations for all students
- Ensure that students have access to a positive and productive learning environment by enforcing all campus safety rules and behavior expectations

- Actively “coach” students on all computer programs and ensure that the educational software used in the lab effectively meets the needs of students; perform targeted individual interventions and assist struggling students on computer programs
- Tutor small groups of students on literacy and/or math skills; use Rocketship adopted curricula to deliver lessons which align to students’ goals
- Each ILS works directly with students in group, and individual settings to execute highly structured programs or instructional review
- Interpret and manage online student data generated by multiple educational software programs; monitor student progress using Rocketship’s data management platform and promote individual and group progress within the curricula
- Communicate and collaborate with the teachers at their grade level, and school administrators; participate actively in staff development opportunities as a member of the Rocketship team
- Maintain computer equipment and accessories

### ***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 Education
- Fluency in English
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

### **PARAPROFESSIONAL**

The Rocketship Special Education Paraprofessional position is a full time position that reports to the Rocketship Fuerza Principal. The Paraprofessional will work under the supervision of a certificated ISE Teacher who will provide weekly oversight, training and direction.

### ***Responsibilities***

- Implementation and recording of data for individualized instructional programs and positive behavior support plans
- 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 the lunch area

### ***Qualifications***

- A team player who is detail-oriented, resourceful and able to manage his/her responsibility

with confidence and discretion

- Interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy
- Willingness to implement positive behavior support plans
- Passion for working with young children
- Experience working with young children in a school setting
- Experience working with students with disabilities (desired)
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required
- Copy of High School Diploma or equivalent
- Provide ONE of the following: transcripts showing at least 2 years of college coursework (48 units) or issuance of an Associate's or Bachelor's degree; copy of Associate's or Bachelor's Degree; copy of Passing Score Report for Rocketship's approved paraprofessional assessment

## OFFICE MANAGER

The Office Manager is responsible for daily operations at Rocketship Fuerza. The Office Manager reports to the Principal.

### ***Responsibilities:***

- Recording attendance
- Primary responsibility for input of Free and Reduced Lunch information into the student database
- Managing the office
- Overseeing purchases of materials
- Doing day to day bookkeeping
- Managing the schedules of the Principal
- Serving as first point of contact for Parents contacting Rocketship Fuerza.

### ***Qualifications:***

- Strong organizational skills
- Strong time management skills
- Ability to work both independently and with a team
- Fluency in Spanish is highly desirable
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required
- A.A. degree or equivalent work experience
- 3 plus years in administrative support position preferable
- Experience in school front office preferable
- Proficient with Microsoft Office

## BUSINESS OPERATIONS MANAGER

The primary purpose of the Business Operations Manager (BOM) role is to ensure the school is safe, compliant, efficient, and financially sound. The BOM provides direct services to the school that enables instructional staff to better serve students and families. Ideal candidates will be self-motivated, flexible, and adept at managing change.

### ***Responsibilities***

- Manage food service operations, including managing staff, serving as main contact with

meal vendor, ensuring compliance, conducting local audits, and ensuring meal program financial health

- Own procurement and purchasing for the school site. Work with school to understand needs, place orders, inventory items received, handle returns/exchanges, etc.
- Hire, manage, and evaluate all hourly school support staff, including those working on lunch and arrival/dismissal
- Support the logistical, compliance, and technology side of administration of selected assessments, including NWEA MAP, CAASPP, CELDT, Physical Fitness, and Hearing & Vision testing
- Serve as main owner of school safety processes and compliance, including administering trainings, running drills, and conducting safety audits. Partner with Principal to respond to emergencies
- Manage facilities-related needs, including scheduling/meeting vendors and handling after-hours facilities emergencies
- Provide support for Principal on finance-related topics, including around budgets, cash collection, and invoice approval
- Serve as on-site HR compliance contact, including completion of new hire and benefits paperwork and collect personnel file items
- Serve as on-site IT contact, including managing IT assets, assisting staff with IT issues as able, and serving as main touch point to central IT staff
- Manage arrival and dismissal
- Manage start-of-year logistics around move-in (most relevant for new schools)
- Own free/reduced-price lunch application process, including validating forms and running income verification process
- Run weekly and monthly attendance reports, serve as main point of contact for PowerSchool administrator for needs related to compliance reporting

### **Qualifications**

- Minimum 2 years of relevant experience, with school-based experience preferred
- Managerial experience preferred but not required
- Strong PC-based computer skills, and ability to quickly adapt to new computer programs and software
- Experience in a fast-paced, highly analytical, entrepreneurial environment – with ability and desire to help shape a new role and flexibly shift responsibilities over time as the role and department evolve
- High tolerance for ambiguity, changing work priorities and deadlines, and a willingness to take on responsibilities and to prioritize work on multiple projects
- Excellent interpersonal communication skills, including on sensitive topics
- Skill at communicating respectfully and empathetically with student families. Spanish language proficiency preferred but not required
- Team-player attitude and strong customer-service orientation
- Demonstrated ability to be detail-oriented, organized, and resourceful
- Ability to proactively manage multiple critical deadlines and quickly and confidently adapt in a fast-paced environment, independently following through on completion of tasks and responsibilities
- Skill at building strong 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
- Passion for Rocketship’s mission, matched with a strong work ethic
- Belief that all students can achieve academic success
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required
- Bachelor’s degree required

## **SUPPORT STAFF**

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.

### ***Responsibilities***

- Arrange setup and cleanup for food items, supplies, equipment, and food preparation and serving areas
- Maintain cafeteria records and reports as required for the purpose of meeting local, state, and federal guidelines
- Supervise and monitor students during assigned recess and lunch periods
- Implement all site playground rules and safety regulations
- Report any unsafe playground conditions, including equipment, to administrators immediately
- Ensure a safe and effective arrival/dismissal for all students before and after school hours
- Utilize appropriate disciplinary procedures and techniques in accordance with the school site discipline plan
- Attend staff meetings and in-service trainings as deemed necessary for the position

### ***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 Public Schools
- Basic fluency in English
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

## ELEMENT F: HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

*“The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a record summary as described in Section 44237.”*

*-California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(F)*

Please see Appendix 11 for a detailed description of sample Rocketship Fuerza health and safety policies on Fingerprinting and Background Checks; Tuberculin Examinations; Safe Facilities; Emergency Plans; Immunizations/Physical Exams; Communicable, Contagious, or Infectious Disease Prevention; Administration of Medications; Drug-Free Workplace; Smoke-Free Environment; First Aid CPR, and Health Screening (vision/hearing/scoliosis); and Exposure Control Plan for Blood Borne Pathogens; policies on Sexual Harassment and Complaint Procedures; and policies on the role of staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters. Rocketship may revise and create additional policies and procedures as the need occurs and to stay in compliance with changes to local, state and federal laws and regulations. The following provides a brief summary of relevant current Rocketship health and safety policies and procedures.

### FINGERPRINTING/BACKGROUND CHECK

Rocketship requires applicants to disclose criminal or other sanctions imposed on them as a consequence of reported child abuse or other action(s) that resulted in harm to children.

Rocketship Public Schools requires fingerprinting and background checks (also known as “criminal records summaries”) for all its employees, including all employees who will work at Rocketship Fuerza, as required by state or local law prior to beginning employment at Rocketship. All prospective employees must abide by all applicable laws and agree to abide by the policies of Rocketship, including the submission of fingerprints and the approval for Rocketship or its designee to perform background checks.

The fingerprinting and background checks conducted with the Department of Justice will be required for all new employees before the beginning of each school year. These will also be required of Rocketship employees who leave Rocketship and are then rehired. This requirement is a condition of employment.

Rocketship reserves the right to require new fingerprinting and background checks for existing employees at any time. If Rocketship receives information that an employee has at any time engaged in conduct that caused or is likely to cause physical, emotional, or educational harm to children (either through their direct contact with children or otherwise), Rocketship will conduct an investigation and may require another fingerprinting and background check for that employee.

Rocketship will comply with Education Code 44830.1 with regards to hiring employees who have been convicted of a violent or serious felony.

Rocketship will comply with the requirements of Education Code 44237 that each employee of the Charter School shall furnish the school with a criminal record summary.

Rocketship will also comply with all state requirements regarding background checks on volunteers.

#### ROLE OF STAFF AS MANDATED CHILD ABUSE REPORTERS

All non-certificated and certificated staff will be mandated child abuse reporters and will follow all applicable reporting laws and the procedures described in Rocketship's Mandated Reporter Policy, including new training requirements recently enacted pursuant to CA Ed Code 44691. Additionally, pursuant to Education Code Section 44691, all employees must provide proof of completing the required training within the first six weeks of the school year or within the first six weeks of that person's employment.

#### TB TESTING

Rocketship will follow the requirement of Education Code Section 49406 in requiring tuberculosis testing of all employees.

#### 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 California law, Rocketship Fuerza 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 school does not have a nurse, a volunteer trained in accordance with this policy, 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. Rocketship Fuerza will store the epinephrine auto-injectors in a secure but accessible, well-marked, unlocked location.

#### VISION/HEARING/SCOLIOSIS

Rocketship shall adhere to Education Code Section 49450 *et seq.* as applicable to the grade levels served.

#### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Rocketship shall adhere to an Emergency Preparedness Handbook drafted specifically to the needs of the school site. This handbook shall include but not be limited to the following responses: OSHA policy compliance, fire, flood, earthquake, terrorist threats, and hostage situations and shall

be submitted for District receipt and review. This handbook shall include an evacuation plan, and general school safety, injury and illness prevention.

### BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS

Rocketship shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with blood-borne 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 blood-borne 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 maintains accessible records documenting all such compliances. Rocketship Fuerza has ensured the receipt of 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 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.

### COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Rocketship is committed to providing a harassment-free environment. Furthermore, Rocketship will never discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability.



## ELEMENT G: MEANS TO ACHIEVE RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

***Governing Law:** The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted. -- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(G)*

As further described in Element H below, Rocketship shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, ethnicity, or any of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220. Furthermore, Rocketship Fuerza shall strive to achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its students that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the District.

The 2016-17 racial and ethnic demographic data among ARUSD students is shown below.

% Hispanic	% Black/ African American	% White	% Asian	% American Indian/ Alaskan Native	% Filipino	% Pacific Islander	% Two+ Races
78.8	1.3	1.7	11.5	0.2	4.6	0.8	0.9

Source: CDE Dataquest

Element A above presents the official 2016-17 Rocketship demographic data for all schools in the Rocketship Public Schools network. As further described in Element A, our demographic data demonstrates that the Rocketship network has extensive experience serving a diverse range of student backgrounds. The racial and ethnic breakdowns among students in many of our existing schools are reflective of those of the District, as further shown in Element A. As such, Rocketship is well prepared to recruit families to achieve a racial and ethnic balance that is reflective of the District.

Specifically, the means by which Rocketship will strive to achieve a racial and ethnic balance that is reflective of the District's general population are described below. This list is not meant to be exhaustive. Any such strategies will comport with all federal and state laws and Rocketship policies prohibiting discrimination in admissions.

- Printing and distributing materials in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, 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 comprised 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 groups represented in the territorial jurisdiction of the District.
- 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 data-based research into the demographics of the District.

Rocketship shall, as part of its programmatic audit, 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 imbalances.

## ELEMENT H: ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

*Admission policies and procedures, consistent with subdivision (d).  
- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(H)*

Rocketship Fuerza 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.

Rocketship Fuerza 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 Rocketship Fuerza. Rocketship Fuerza 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 his or her parent or legal guardian within the state.

Pursuant to Education Code 47605(d), the school shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all operations, shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any 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, immigration status, 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 or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

Pursuant to Education Code 47605(d)(2)(B)(iv), parental volunteer hours shall NOT be required as a condition for admission or continued enrollment.

### 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. Following the open application period each year, applications shall be counted. Rocketship Fuerza shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School subject only to capacity. In the event that this occurs, Rocketship Fuerza will hold a public random drawing, further described below, to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students (2<sup>nd</sup> year forward) who are guaranteed enrollment in the following school year.

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.

## LOTTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As described above, Rocketship Fuerza will implement a public random drawing in the event that applications for enrollment exceed capacity. In accordance with Ed Code 47605(d)(2)(B), enrollment preferences in the case of a public random drawing shall be allowed in the following order of preference:

1. Siblings of currently enrolled Rocketship Fuerza students
2. Children of staff, teachers and founders of Rocketship Fuerza (not to exceed 10% of total enrollment)
3. Residents of the Alum Rock Union District
4. Other California residents

Public random drawing rules, deadlines, dates and times will be communicated on Rocketship Fuerza's website. Public notice for the date and time of the public random drawing will also be posted once the application deadline has passed. Rocketship Fuerza 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.

Rocketship Fuerza will likely conduct the lottery in the late winter or early spring for enrollment in fall of that year.

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 Rocketship after the open application period and will be placed on the waitlist on a first come-first served basis if all seats are full in a particular grade level.

In no circumstance will a wait list carry over to the following school year. Rocketship will notify all waitlist families when the next year's application becomes available. Students who remain on the waitlist at the end of a given school year will have to submit a new application for the next school year.

## **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.-- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(I)*

The Rocketship Board has a Business Committee, which selects an independent financial auditor and oversees audit requirements.

An annual audit of Rocketship's books and records will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(b)(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 Business 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 applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars.

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 31st of December of each year. The Business Committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Board with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Rocketship Business Committee will then make a recommendation to the Board on whether to approve the audit. By March 15<sup>th</sup>, 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 Principal of Rocketship Fuerza 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.

## 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. These procedures, at a minimum, shall include an explanation of how the charter school will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements that is consistent with all of the following: (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 his or her side of the story. (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. (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. (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 schooldays 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 foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the pupil's educational rights holder, and shall inform him or her of the right to initiate the procedures specified in clause (ii) before the effective date of the action. If the pupil's parent, guardian, or*

*educational rights holder 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).. -- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J)*

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

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

Note that no student shall be involuntarily removed by a Rocketship school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student’s parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student’s educational rights holder, and shall inform him or her of the right to initiate the procedures specified below for suspensions, before the effective date of the action. If the student’s parent, guardian, or educational rights holder initiates the procedures specified below for suspensions, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the School issues a final decision. As used herein, “involuntarily removed” includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to the suspension and expulsion procedures described below.[SKB1]

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

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

In California, in accordance with EC §48900, a student may be suspended or expelled for any of the following acts when it is determined that the student:

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
2. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal/Administrator or designee's concurrence.
3. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code §§ 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
4. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code §§ 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
5. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
6. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.[SKB2]
7. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
8. Possessed or used tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel.
9. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
10. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code § 11014.5.
11. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties. Under Education Code § 48900(k), students in grades K-3 may not be suspended for disruption or willful defiance. No student in grades K-5 may be expelled for willful defiance.
12. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
13. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
14. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code §§ 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code §243.4.
15. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
16. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.

17. Engaged in or attempted to engage in hazing of another. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
18. Aiding or abetting as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, pursuant to this section, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to suspension or expulsion.
19. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of \$1000, with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
20. Committed sexual harassment, as defined in EC § 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in § 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Under EC § 48900.2, this does not apply to students in grades K-3.
21. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. Under EC § 48900.3, this does not apply to students in grades K-3.
22. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated school personnel or volunteers and/or a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting classwork, creating substantial disorder and invading the rights of either school personnel or volunteers and/or student(s) by creating an intimidating or hostile [SKB3] educational environment. Under EC § 48900.4, this does not apply to students in grades K-3.



23. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261 of the Education Code, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel.

Alternatives to suspension or expulsion will first be attempted with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from assigned school activities.

## **II. Suspension Procedures**

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

Suspensions at Rocketship will adhere to the following procedures:

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

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

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

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

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

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

***Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion.***

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five consecutive school days per suspension.

[SKB4] In calculating days of suspension, days served will not include days when school is not in session for students, including but not limited to school closure days, school holidays, spring break, and summer break. If the student leaves school on the day that the suspension was imposed, this day will be counted as part of the suspension if the student was denied class participation prior to 12 noon of that day. The suspension shall terminate at midnight on the day listed as the last day of the suspension.

Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Principal or Principal's designee, the student and the student's parent/guardian or representative will be invited to a second conference to determine if the suspension for the student should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. In such instances when the School has determined a suspension period shall be extended, such extension shall be made only after a conference is held with the pupil or the pupil's parents, unless the pupil and the pupil's parents fail to attend the conference.

This determination will be made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following determinations: (1) the student's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or (2) the student poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

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

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

An expulsion is the permanent dismissal of a student from the Rocketship program. If an expulsion is approved, the parent/guardian has the responsibility to place the student in another school. As required by Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J)(ii), students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer to determine whether the student should be expelled. The procedures herein provide for such a hearing and the notice of said hearing, as required by law.

The full authority of the Rocketship governing Board of Directors ("the Board") to hear and conduct expulsions shall be granted to the Academic Affairs Committee, a committee of the Board. The Academic Affairs Committee shall consist of three board members. The Academic Affairs Committee may expel any student found to have committed an expellable offense as listed above.

Instead of conducting the hearing itself, the Academic Affairs Committee may appoint an neutral and impartial administrative panel of three or more persons, none of whom is a member of the

Board or employed on the staff of the school in which the student is enrolled. The Academic Affairs Committee will pre-appoint a panel of at least five certificated Rocketship staff members, each from different Rocketship school sites. Should any of the persons appointed to the panel be employed by the staff of the school in which the student is enrolled, he/she will recuse him/herself from the proceedings.

#### **IV. Expulsion Procedures**

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

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

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian before the date of the hearing and at least five school days before the hearing or any effective date of any expulsion or involuntary removal. No student shall be involuntarily removed unless the parent or guardian of the student has received this notice of intent at least five days before the hearing or any effective date of expulsion or involuntary removal. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the student. The notice shall include:

- The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
- A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based, along with a summary of the evidence against the student;
- A copy of Rocketship's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
- Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the school to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
- The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
- The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
- The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
- The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses;
- The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian, and shall inform him or her of the right to initiate the procedures specified above, before the effective date of the involuntary removal.
- The student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For purposes of this policy, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspension.

#### **V. Written Notice to Expel**

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

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

#### **VI. Right to Appeal**

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

#### **VII. Expelled Students/Alternative Education**

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

#### **VIII. Rehabilitation and Readmission**

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

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

The decision to admit a pupil who has previously been expelled from another school, school district or charter school shall be in the discretion of the Principal following a meeting with the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. Where applicable, the Principal may also consider

whether the pupil has completed any rehabilitation plan or other improvement measures prescribed by the pupil's previous school. The Principal shall make a recommendation following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's admission is also contingent upon RSED's capacity at the time the student seeks admission.

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

### Services During Suspension

Students suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment or functional analysis, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

### Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, a manifestation determination shall take place. "Change of Placement" includes a recommendation for expulsion or a cumulative removal of more than 10 school days in a school year.

If Rocketship, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team will (a) conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the school had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement; (b) if a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and (c) return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the school agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

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

### Due Process Appeals

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the school believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings.

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

In accordance with 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k)(3), if a parent/guardian disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or if the School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, the parent/guardian or School may request a hearing.

In such an appeal, a hearing officer may: (1) return a child with a disability to the placement from which the child was removed; or (2) order a change in placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement of such child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

#### Special Circumstances

Rocketship personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct. The Principal or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student: a) carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function; (b) knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or (c) has inflicted serious bodily injury, as defined by 20 USC 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

#### Interim Alternative Educational Setting

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## ELEMENT K: STAFF RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Governing Law: *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. -- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(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 Rocketship. Full-time certificated teachers may also 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. Rocketship employees may have access to additional Rocketship-sponsored retirement plans according to policies developed by the Board of Directors.



## ELEMENT L: ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES

Governing Law: *The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the district who choose not to attend charter school. -- Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(L)*

No student may be required to attend Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep. Students who reside within the Alum Rock Unified School District 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 Rocketship Fuerza will be informed on admissions 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: DESCRIPTION OF EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

Governing Law: *A description of the rights of any 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(b)(5)(M)*

No public school district employee shall be required to work at Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep. Employees of the school district who choose to leave the employment of school district to work at Rocketship Fuerza will have no automatic rights of return to the school district after employment by Rocketship unless specifically granted by the school district through a leave of absence or other agreement. Rocketship employees shall have any right upon leaving the school district to work at Rocketship Fuerza that the school district may specify, any rights of return to employment in a school district after employment at Rocketship that the school district may specify, and any other rights upon leaving employment to work at Rocketship that the school district determines to be reasonable and not in conflict with any law.

All employees of Rocketship Fuerza will be considered the exclusive employees of Rocketship Public Schools and not of the school district, unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing. Sick or vacation leave or years of service credit at the school district or any school district will not be transferred to Rocketship Public Schools. Employment by Rocketship Public Schools provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of Rocketship Fuerza.

## ELEMENT N: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

*Governing Law:* *The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter."*

*-California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(N)*

The intent of our dispute resolution process is to (1) resolve disputes within the Charter School pursuant to the Charter School's policies, (2) minimize the oversight burden on the authorizer, and (3) ensure a fair and timely resolution to disputes.

The following process is proposed by Rocketship Fuerza to meet the requirements of Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(N) with the understanding that Rocketship Fuerza may present revisions for District consideration and approval either as part of the MOU or as a revision to this charter.

The staff and governing board members of Rocketship and the District agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section. All parties shall refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process unless otherwise required by law.

All internal Rocketship disputes will be handled internally and will be governed by Rocketship's adopted policies.

In the event of a dispute between Rocketship Fuerza and the authorizer, the staff and Board members of Rocketship and the authorizer agree to first frame the issue in written format ("dispute statement") and refer the issue to the Superintendent of the School District and the Principal of Rocketship Fuerza or designees. In the event that the authorizer believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter under Education Code Section 47607, Rocketship Fuerza requests that this be specifically noted in the written dispute statement, but is aware that the authorizer is not legally bound to do so. Nothing in this section is intended to impair the authority or ability of the authorizer to revoke the charter in accordance with the procedures detailed in Education Code Section 47607.

The Principal and Superintendent shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion (no later than 10 school days from receipt of the dispute statement) to attempt to resolve the dispute. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties shall identify two members from their respective Boards who shall jointly meet with the Superintendent of the District and the Principal(s) of Rocketship Fuerza or designees and attempt to resolve the dispute. The joint meeting shall be held within 15 school days from the informal meeting.

If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and Principal or designees shall jointly identify a neutral, third party mediator. The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and the Principal(s) or designees. Mediation shall be held within 30 school days of the joint meeting. All dates or procedures within this section can be amended by written mutual agreement or necessity due to mediator scheduling. Each party shall bear its own costs of dispute resolution with the cost of the mediator being split equally amongst

the Parties. If mediation fails, either Party will have been deemed to have exhausted the administrative remedies within this charter and may pursue any alternative legal options for resolution.

## ELEMENT O: CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL

*Governing Law: A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the 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(b)(5)(O)*

The following procedures shall apply in the event Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep closes. The following procedures apply regardless of the reason for closure.

Closure of Rocketship Fuerza shall be documented by official action of the Rocketship Board. The action shall identify the reason for closure. The official action will also identify an entity and person or persons responsible for closure-related activities.

The Rocketship Board will promptly notify parents and students of Rocketship Fuerza, the District, Rocketship Fuerza's SELPA, the retirement systems in which Rocketship Fuerza's employees participate (e.g., Public Employees' Retirement System, State Teachers' Retirement System, and federal social security), and the California Department of Education of the closure as well as the effective date of the closure. This notice will also include the name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the students' school districts of residence; and the manner in which parents (guardians) may obtain copies of student records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.

The Board will ensure that the notification to the parents and students of Rocketship Fuerza of the closure provides information to assist parents and students in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board's decision to close Rocketship Fuerza.

The Rocketship Board will also develop a list of students in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the students' districts of residence, which they will provide to the entity responsible for closure-related activities. As allowable by the District, Rocketship Fuerza, shall transfer all appropriate student records to the District and shall otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. If the District will not store student records, Rocketship Fuerza will discuss an alternative arrangement with the District and shall provide a copy for parents/guardians of the student record of their child prior to closure. All transfers of student records shall be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g.

All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred to and maintained by the entity responsible for closure-related activities in accordance with applicable law.

As soon as is reasonably practical, Rocketship shall prepare final financial records. Rocketship shall also have a State Controller-approved firm complete an independent audit within six months after closure. Rocketship shall pay for the final audit. The audit shall be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by Rocketship Fuerza and shall be provided to the District promptly upon completion. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value, an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable and any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation, and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to Rocketship Fuerza.

Rocketship will complete and file any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code section 47604.33.

On closure of Rocketship Fuerza, all net assets of Rocketship Fuerza, including but not limited to all leaseholds, tangible and intangible personal property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by students attending the Charter School, remain the sole property of Rocketship and upon dissolution of the corporation, shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and applicable law upon dissolution. Any district property will be promptly returned upon Rocketship Fuerza closure to the district. The distribution shall include return of any grant funds and restricted categorical funds to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant or state and federal law, as appropriate, which may include submission of final expenditure reports for entitlement grants and the filing of any required Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as well as the return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted.

On closure, Rocketship Fuerza shall remain responsible for satisfaction of all liabilities arising from the operation of Rocketship Fuerza. Rocketship Fuerza will utilize reserve funds to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.

## BUSINESS OPERATIONS

*Governing Law: The petitioner or petitioners shall also 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(g)*

## BUDGETS AND CASH FLOW

Attached, as Appendix 1, please find the following documents:

- 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. Since this charter is being submitted to the District, the District will owe in-lieu property tax payments to the Charter School pursuant to Education Code 47635, which provides, in relevant part:

- 1) 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.
  - a) 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:
    - i) Six percent in August.
    - ii) Twelve percent in September.
    - iii) Eight percent each month in October, November, December, January, and February.
  - iv) 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.
  - v) 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).
- vi) Final adjustments to the amount of funding in lieu of property taxes allocated to a charter school shall be made in February, in conjunction with the final reconciliation of annual apportionments to schools.
  - vii) 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 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 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 2013-14 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 annual update 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 District, 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.
- All attendance reports: 20 day, P-1, P-2 and annual.
- All additional reporting as agreed to, in writing, as part of an MOU between the District and Rocketship.

## 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. The District shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of the Charter School.

## ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

*Governing Law: The manner in which administrative services of the school are to be provided. -- Education Code Section 47605(g)*

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 Public Schools as the predominate provider of administrative services. We do not anticipate purchasing any services from the District, but we will fairly evaluate any offer of services from the District against any other offers for similar services from third party providers. Administrative services which we have experienced to be required for Rocketship include but are not limited to the following:

- Accounting and payroll management
- Cash flow management
- Contracts with charter authorizers
- Real estate financial management
- Securing and managing loans
- Federal grant writing and reporting
- Creation of the student management system used to keep student's daily, periodic, and annual academic results
- Human Resources
- Provide support on academic data analysis as necessary
- Develop best practices for school safety and other school procedures
- Provide ongoing consulting for the management of the Learning Lab
- Teacher recruiting

The Rocketship teams responsible for the above services will be staffed by industry experts who have experience providing services to existing Rocketship schools.

Selection of contractors includes a rigorous screening process. In the case where a contractor is paid for by federal funds, we follow all necessary federal compliance guidelines.



## FACILITIES

*Governing Law: The governing board shall require that the petitioner or petitioners provide information regarding...the facilities to be utilized by the school. -- California Education Code Section 47605(g).*

**Location.** Rocketship Fuerza is located at 70 S. Jackson Ave. San Jose, CA 95116.

**Projected Cost, Type, and Financing Plan.** Rocketship conducts a rigorous facilities acquisition process to open its campuses. Historically, this process has resulted in working with Launchpad Development Company (Launchpad) to acquire the land and build Rocketship's schools.

Each of the facilities housing Rocketship's California schools was completed on-time and on budget, resulted in an average facility cost of ~18% of revenues for the school network for 2014/15 (Bay Area Region), prior to any lease-aid reimbursements available under California Proposition 39.

Rocketship budgets Facility Expenses based on lease payments determined by its real estate development partner based on the cost of each project. The Facility Expense is finalized and agreed to by both parties prior to project financing, and memorialized by an industry-standard lease document. The Facility Expense is comprised of normal and customary components of market rents including; project costs, property management fees, taxes, insurance, and reserves for replacement of capital items. This methodology results in market based rents for Rocketship.

Launchpad's financing plan for the development of the new schools and sites is one of three main options listed below. With these financing options, Launchpad has been able to complete all of its projects for Rocketship on time and within the approved project budget.

- New Market Tax Credits
- Tax Exempt Bond financing
- Bridge financing during the development and construction periods that will be taken out by tax exempt bond financing once the project is complete and has opened.

Launchpad successfully financed four of the ten permanent Rocketship campuses in the Bay Area with New Market Tax Credits, five projects by issuing long term tax exempt bonds, and one project through short term private financing that was ultimately refinanced with bonds. These transactions have resulted in the increased interest of local and national lenders as well as capital markets investors, providing confidence in the ability to finance the construction of new Rocketship schools moving forward.

Access to local school bond and/or parcel tax proceeds would have a clear financial benefit for charter school operators and we hope collective efforts in the future will produce these results. Currently, we know of no school bond or parcel tax proceeds available for capital projects for charter schools. It is our understanding that Prop 1D and Prop 55 state bond monies set aside for charter school capital projects are currently fully allocated and there are numerous charter schools that have been allocated funds but have yet to identify and implement development and financing plans in order to receive the benefit of the funds allocated. Launchpad and Rocketship periodically and strategically maintain working relationships with CSFA; the entity overseeing the

award of and distribution of state bond monies, and the investment bankers that assist CSFA with this distribution and awarding of Prop. 1D and Prop. 55 funds.

In February of 2014, Launchpad financed the debt associated with the Fuerza campus at a favorable interest rate in a public offering of private activity bonds purchased by multiple investors. The bonds will mature in 2044, and Rocketship and Launchpad have entered into a long term lease for use of the campus for the duration of the bonds. The transaction is subject to a February 2013 Ground Lease with a local private property owner, with a lease term that exceeds the duration of the bonds.

## IMPACT ON THE DISTRICT

*Governing Law: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school, any school district where the charter school may operate and upon the school district -- Education Code Section 47605(g).*

Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep is operated by Rocketship, a California nonprofit 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 23701d. 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(c), 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 Public Schools Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are attached as Appendix 11. Rocketship 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 Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep.

Further, Rocketship and the District shall enter into a memorandum of understanding or contract which shall provide for indemnification of the District by Rocketship. 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 Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep.

The corporate bylaws of Rocketship Public Schools and each of its schools shall provide for indemnification of the Rocketship Public Schools and Rocketship Public Schools Board of Directors, officers, agents, and employees, and Rocketship Public Schools and Rocketship Board will purchase general liability insurance, Directors and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

Rocketship Public Schools and the Rocketship Public Schools 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 this charter, the Santa Clara County Office 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 renewal of a charter for a five-year term to begin July 1, 2019. In order to comply with rigorous District charter approval requirements, the Petitioners have attached a comprehensive series of detailed appendices. These appendices, with the exception of the Budget included as Appendix 1, 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. Appendix 1 is fully incorporated into this Petition.

Pursuant to Education Code section 47605(b) the chartering authority should 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. The governing board of a school district shall not deny a petition for the renewal of a charter school unless it makes written factual findings, specific to the particular petition, setting forth facts to support a finding that the charter petition's educational program is unsound, or the charter petitioners are unlikely to succeed, or the charter fails to include the appropriate number of signatures or affirmations, or the charter does not include a reasonably comprehensive description of all of the required elements.

Should this renewal be granted, the petitioner will provide a written notice of the approval and a copy of the petition to the California Department of Education and the California State Board of Education.

Should this petition not be renewed, the Petitioners will file an appeal with the California State Board of Education pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(j)(1), which provides that the county board must then "review the petition pursuant to subdivision (b)" of Section 47605.