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Rocketship Education

Rocketship Mt. Diablo Petition

Submitted to California Department of Education
December 14, 2015

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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 Mt. Diablo fulfills the requirements of Section 47605 of the Act.

Affirmations and Assurances

As the authorized lead petitioner, I, David Kuizenga, hereby certify that the information submitted in this petition for a California public charter school to be named Rocketship Mt. Diablo (the "Charter School" or "RSMD"), submitted to the California Department of Education ("CDE" or the "State") 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 a 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:

- 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)]

- Rocketship Education will be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. California Education Code §47605(b)(5)(O)]

- The Charter School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. California Education Code §47605(d)(1)]

- The Charter School will not charge tuition. [Ref. California Education Code §47605(d)(1)]

- 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)]. As required by law, the Charter School will grant a preference in enrollment for district children.

- The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]

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.

- The California Department of Education will provide special education services for students enrolled in the Charter School to the extent required by law. Specifically, CDE will (A) serve children with disabilities in the same manner as it serves children with disabilities in its other schools; and/or (B) provide the Charter School with an equitable share of state and federal special education funding to support special education instruction or designated instructed and services to students enrolled in the charter school [Ref. California Education Code Section 47646 and 20 U.S.C. 1413]

- The Charter School will meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations §11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]

- 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)]

- The Charter School will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.

- 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.

- 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)]

- 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)]

- 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)]

- 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 State as required by the Education Code.

- 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]

- The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

- The Charter School shall comply with the Public Records Act.

- The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

- The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.

- The Charter School shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum of school days. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960]

- The Charter School shall comply with the non-waived portions of California Education Code and State Board Title 5 Regulations.

June 17th, 2015

Lead Petitioner **Date**

INTRODUCTION/FOUNDER

The organizers of RSMD are pleased to submit this charter school petition with the goal of closing the achievement gap in the Mt. Diablo community. RSMD will accomplish this by providing an excellent education to all students in the Mt. Diablo community, especially those students that may not otherwise have access to an excellent school. In the process of developing this charter petition, the petitioners held meetings with local families and community leaders in Mt. Diablo, conducted research around the need for a charter school program like RSMD, and collected signatures from parents "meaningfully interested" in enrolling their children at the proposed school.

Rocketship Historical Background

In 1999, officials from Santa Clara University asked Father Mateo Sheedy, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in San Jose, to recommend children from his parish for the Juan Diego Scholarship program. Father Mateo conducted an exhaustive search to find candidates who could attend and succeed at this four-year college, but he was unable to find a single qualified student. He was appalled that, of the hundreds of children in his parish, none had received the education necessary to attend Santa Clara 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 the parish needed to have an alternative to their neighborhood district school. Father Mateo's vision brought a full K-12 alternative path to downtown San Jose through the following schools: Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary School (K-5), Sacred Heart Nativity School (6-8), and Downtown College Preparatory (9-12).

In its first year of operation, Rocketship Education's first school, Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary School became the highest ranked low-income elementary school in Santa Clara County and the seventh ranked school in California. This caused an enormous demand from parents in other parts of Santa Clara County for Rocketship Education to open additional schools. Based on the success of Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary School, the founders decided to expand its nonprofit public benefit corporation, Rocketship Education, to serve other schools in the most troubled neighborhoods. Rocketship Education has taken the successful model pioneered at Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary School and translated it into the critical systems necessary for successful replication. Rocketship Education provides each Rocketship school with systems and support for Curriculum, Finance, Legal, Online Technology, and Human Resources. By capturing the best practices from Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary School, Rocketship Education allows each Rocketship Education school 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 which drive student achievement.

The Rocketship Education model is fundamentally different from other elementary schools in four important ways:

1. High expectations
2. Personalized learning for each student
3. Teachers as professionals

4. Deep parent and community involvement

High Expectations and An Extended School Day
Our typical students will be financially disadvantaged English Learners who arrive at Kindergarten 1.5 years behind their peers. By operating our school from approximately 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day, we give our students the extra time to catch up academically. In order to catch up, we expect students to make more than one year of growth for each year at RSMD. At graduation, they will leave RSMD at or above grade level. Extensive educational research proves that such progress is fully achievable: high-quality teachers are the key (Sanders and Rivers, 1996; Haycock, 1999)[1].

Personalized Learning for Each Student
Rocketship Mt. Diablo will focus on each child and their specific needs and learning characteristics/modalities. Our objective every day is to get the right lesson to the right child at the right time. We assume that every child, especially the children in the neighborhoods we serve, will have unique learning needs that must be addressed individually. The Rocketship model combines traditional classroom instruction with blended learning, which enables highly personalized instruction through online adaptive technology, small group instruction and tutoring.

RSMD's school model is a full Response to Intervention (RtI) model, providing three tiers of intervention for students in need of additional assistance. Bi-monthly interim assessment results are analyzed to identify students who are failing to make adequate progress in reaching their goals. For each student in this category, the classroom teachers and school leaders work to identify necessary classroom modifications, areas to target in our in-class curriculum, guide the selection of online curricula and lessons within the Learning Lab, and then select specific goals and instructional methods and curricula for Individualized Learning Specialists (ILS) to assist these students in the Learning Lab as well. The first tier of intervention is in the classroom. Guided reading groups and small group instruction are used to deliver these more personalized learning objectives during normal classroom instruction. During Learning Lab and personalized learning time, a student's interim assessment results are used to create a specific online intervention program for that student by the school leadership and the teacher. The second tier of intervention is comprised of supplemental, small-group tutoring sessions. In tutoring sessions, students who are failing to make adequate progress towards their goals will receive regular small-group intervention with a group of students with similar needs. If classroom modifications, tutoring sessions and other interventions fail to help a student make adequate progress, the student enters the Rocketship Education Student Success Team (SST) Process and, if necessary, the Special Education IEP process. This allows the student to receive personalized attention and the services of specialists. Providing these three levels of intervention allows Rocketship Education to serve the most struggling students more effectively than traditional elementary schools.

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[1] Haycock, K. (1999). *Good Teaching Matters: How Well-Qualified Teachers Can Close the Gap.* Washington D.C.: The Education Trust.; Sanders, W. L., & Rivers, J. C. (1996). *Cumulative and residual effects of teachers on future student academic achievement*. Knoxville, TN: Tennessee Value-Added Research and Assessment Center, p. 9.

Teachers as Professionals

At RSMD our teachers are the most critical ingredient for success. As such, we believe that it is critically important that they are valued and treated as professionals in a manner that further elevates the incredibly important and challenging profession of teaching. We accomplish this in three ways. First, all teachers receive intensive coaching and professional development. This ensures they have the skills and support to advance in the classroom and pursue opportunities for professional growth such as Lead Teacher, Assistant Principal or Principal should they so desire. Second, we reward teachers for performance through a merit pay structure that incentivizes excellence and typically compensates teachers at a level that is substantially higher than surrounding public schools. Third, our teachers team with each other such that students have a teacher each day that focuses primarily on humanities instruction, which is the purposeful integration of English Language Arts instruction (i.e. writing, speech, reading, phonics, phonemic awareness, etc.) with social studies and science instruction and are exchanged with a teacher that is focused primarily on math instruction that again is purposefully integrated with science instruction. This team teaching approach allows them to develop deep subject matter knowledge and an ability to diagnose and intervene with even the most struggling students.

Deep Parent and Community Involvement

Rocketship deeply values and proactively approaches the creation and maintenance of relationships with our students' families as well as the greater communities in which our schools are located. Rocketship has existing relationships with organizations based in the Mt. Diablo Unified School District, including local parent groups, parishes, preschools, community centers, and neighborhood service programs, and will seek opportunities to strengthen these relationships while building new partnerships in close proximity to RSMD.

In order to achieve our extremely high expectations, it is crucial that our families help us to motivate their students to do their homework, come to school alert and prepared, and reinforce the values that students learn as Rocketeers. Our teachers do home visits with every family during the first half of the year, and we strongly encourage 80%+ parent attendance at our monthly community meetings. We also have many special events (parent-family meetings) during the year to engage families (often on Saturdays or week-nights in order to include entire families and navigate our families' busy work schedules and lives) like school-wide trips to college campuses, local parks and museums, and on-campus science, reading, and math nights.

We make efforts to choose Principals and Office Managers who are bilingual in neighborhoods where Spanish is the dominant language in order to make the school a more welcoming place. Moreover, each of our school campuses is named by the parents and families of the school in order to ensure that the school, and especially the name of the school, is representative of the culture and influences of the local community. For more information on how RSMD will ensure high-levels of parent participation, please see our section "Outreach Initiatives" as well as Element D below.

We imagine a future for the hundreds of children served by Rocketship Mt. Diablo in which they can enter middle school ahead of their peers, take advantage of advanced classes in middle and high school, and go on to attain a four-year college education. We believe that parents,

empowered by their experience with RSMD, will be relentless advocates for these children's success. We hope to see hundreds of qualified applicants for great four-year universities when our first class of Kindergarteners from this campus will graduate from high school. We hope that, twenty years after Father Mateo's fruitless search, it will be the number of scholarships—not the number of qualified students—that will be the primary question of concern for neighborhoods in Concord, Contra Costa County, and beyond.

Founder

Preston Smith, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Rocketship Education

Before starting Rocketship Education, Preston was the Principal of L.U.C.H.A. Elementary School, a small school within Alum Rock. He founded L.U.C.H.A in collaboration with neighborhood families in 2004 to provide parents with an excellent school focused on high academic achievement and parental involvement. In 2006, after three years of operation, L.U.C.H.A. received an API score of 881 and was the fourth ranked high-poverty (50% free and reduced meals) elementary school in California. Before founding L.U.C.H.A, Preston taught 1st grade for three years at Clyde Arbuckle Elementary School, the first two as a Teach for America (TFA) corps member. In 2003, Preston was named "Teacher of the Year" at Arbuckle and was also nominated as one of six finalists for TFA's Sue Lehmann Award, given to TFA corps members with the highest classroom academic gains in the nation. Preston graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Rocketship Education Leadership Team

Lynn Liao, Chief Program Officer

Lynn Liao is responsible for all talent management, leadership development, and recruitment and selection. Lynn joins Rocketship from The Broad Center for the Management of School Systems where she co-founded and led the growth of The Broad Residency, a national program to attract and support emerging business leaders to join urban school systems. Under her leadership, the program graduated over 200 Residents, 90% who remain in K-12 education. She most recently served as managing director of network services. The goal of network services is to strengthen and leverage the power of the Broad Center's network of participants and graduates through career services and connecting network members to facilitate knowledge sharing and advance reforms. Prior to joining The Broad Center, Lynn served as a director at The Broad Foundation and was responsible for the Foundation's portfolio of investments in district and national principal leadership programs. She also served as the Foundation's liaison with districts including New York City, San Diego and Philadelphia supporting their work on district redesign and restructuring. Liao has a bachelor's degree in political economy from the University of California, Berkeley and an MBA and Masters in Education from Stanford University.

Andy Stern, Chief Business Officer

Andy Stern is the Chief Business Officer of Rocketship Education, responsible for centralizing and automating all non-academic school and organizational functions including Operations, Human Resources, Finance, Accounting, Payroll, Compliance and Legal. Andy's background includes broad capabilities that will be very helpful to us in our next phase of growth having worked as a CFO for a number of years in several fast-growing companies in the high-technology industry. He has also shown a passion for public education having been a teacher for

5 years at San Francisco State University and as the President of the San Mateo High School Foundation, a public high school with demographics similar to Rocketship schools.

Genevieve Thomas, Integrated Special Education Director, National Team
Genevieve Thomas has had various roles within special education over almost a decade. She was looking for an environment to develop a program that truly supported the needs of all learners and was delighted to find this opportunity with Rocketship. Genevieve hopes to one day see Rocketship expand to Washington, as they just passed a charter law there recently. Genevieve has many passions, but when forced to choose, she is caught between finding new ways to be active in the outdoors, and finding ways to improve educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

Adam Nadeau, Vice President of Achievement
Adam Nadeau is currently the Vice President of Achievement of Rocketship Education. He most recently was the founding principal of Rocketship Nashville NE Elementary, which opened this past July for 450 students in grades Kindergarten through 4th grade, and previously held the same role at two Rocketship campuses in San Jose after teaching upper elementary Humanities at Rocketship's first school, Mateo Sheedy. A Nashville native, Adam taught pretty much everything in every grade across elementary and middle schools for eight years prior to joining Rocketship.

Rocketship Education Board of Directors

Frederick J. Ferrer—Board President
Frederick is the CEO of the HealthTrust, which has invested over $100M in organizations focused on making Silicon Valley the healthiest region in the country. Before joining the HealthTrust, Ferrer was executive director of Estrella Family Services for nineteen years, overseeing their early education and family services to 300 children from infancy through seventh grade as well as Estrella’s Kids to Camp program which sent over 700 low-income youth to summer camp. Fred is an adjunct professor at Santa Clara University, a commissioner on the FIRST 5 Commission of Santa Clara County and is involved with many other organizations focused on child development.

Alan Crites—Board Treasurer
Alan Crites is a retired business professional with over thirty years of experience spanning a diverse range of business sectors. As CEO of Vendavo, Inc., an enterprise software business, Al led the development of the company from its infancy to over 300 employees and a prestigious list of major customers. As a General Partner at InterWest Partners, a venture capital partnership, he helped to develop a range of successful businesses across the healthcare, information technology and retail sectors. And, as a Division General Manager at General Electric Company, he led a large organization as part of a diversified multinational company. He is a graduate of Michigan State University, and holds an MBA from Harvard Business School.

Alex Hernandez—Board Secretary
Alex is partner and Vice President of the Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF). He leads CSGF's "next generation" CMO investments as well as those for portfolio members located on the west coast. Mr. Hernandez is a former Regional Superintendent at Aspire Public Schools

and joined CSGF in July 2010. Previous to managing Aspire's largest region, Mr. Hernandez worked with ICEF, a CMO in Los Angeles, and Portland Public Schools as a Broad Resident. Prior to that, Mr. Hernandez worked for several years with JP Morgan and Disney Ventures. He is a graduate of Claremont McKenna and has an MBA and Masters of Education from Stanford University.

Alex Terman—Board Member
Alex was a founding employee and Chief Operating Officer of Leadership Public Schools (LPS), a non-profit charter management organization with five schools in the Bay Area. Prior to joining LPS, Mr. Terman worked in business and corporate development roles at America Online and Bain & Company and served as a John Gardner Fellow in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

Mary C. Herald—Board Member
As the current Executive Vice President of Human Resources and Education at Sephora, Mary Herald has helped the organization grow from a start-up to a market leader over the past 15 years. She oversees 11,000 U.S. employees and over 300 stores in numerous countries, providing a strong foundation for long-term, sustainable growth. Before joining Sephora, she also served as the Vice President of Stores at Williams-Sonoma and the Divisional VP of Factory Retail at Coach. A graduate of the University of Michigan's Executive Education Program, she also received her B.A. in Philosophy from the College of William and Mary.

Deborah McGriff—Board Member
Deborah McGriff leads NewSchools' Academic Systems Initiative, and contributes to investment strategy and management assistance for portfolio ventures, including charter management and school turnaround organizations. Deborah has been committed to transforming the lives of underserved urban school students for almost four decades. In 1993, Deborah became the first public school superintendent to join Edison Learning (formerly Edison Schools). There, she held numerous positions at the company, including President of Edison Teachers College, Executive Vice President of Charter Schools, and Executive Vice President of several external relations functions. Prior to joining Edison Learning, Deborah served as the first female General Superintendent of Detroit Public Schools. Crain's Detroit Business named her Newsmaker of the Year for 1992. Before that, she was the first female Assistant Superintendent in Cambridge, Massachusetts and the first female Deputy Superintendent in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She was a teacher and administrator in the New York City Public Schools for more than a decade. Deborah is former President of the Education Industry Association. She currently serves on the board of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, where she also is an executive committee member, as well as founder and national board member of the Black Alliance for Educational Options. She also serves on the advisory boards of the National Council on Teacher Quality and of the Program on Education Policy and Governance at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, as well as the Technical Working Group for a national evaluation of the Federal Charter Schools Program being led by WestEd. Deborah is also a member of the Review Board for the Broad Prize in Urban Education. Deborah holds a bachelor's degree in education from Norfolk State University, a master's degree in education with a specialization in reading

pedagogy from Queens College of the City University of New York, and a doctorate in Administration, Policy and Urban Education from Fordham University.

Timothy R Sheehy—Board Member

Timothy R. Sheehy is President of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce. Founded in 1861, MMAC advocates for improving the business climate through better public policy, facilitates economic development through the expansion and attraction of capital investment and jobs, and provides the region's best business network helping members grow their companies. MMAC's dues paying membership in greater Milwaukee provides over 300,000 jobs, and supports a strong quality of life. Prior to being named President in 1993, he was responsible for governmental affairs, economic development and other MMAC operations. He serves in leadership positions on two MMAC subsidiaries as a board member of the Milwaukee Development Corporation, and as president of the Regional Center, LLC. Sheehy chairs the American Chamber of Commerce Executives, the Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation, and TechStar Holding, Inc. He serves on the boards of Milwaukee College Preparatory, the Milwaukee Partnership Academy, PAVE, Wisconsin Policy Research Institute, Schools That Can Milwaukee, Milwaukee Charter School Advocates, Milwaukee Succeeds, School Choice Wisconsin, Teach for America, and as the treasurer of Summerfest. Prior to joining MMAC, Sheehy worked as a legislative assistant to F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. in Washington D.C. He is a recipient of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Congressional internship, a Ford Foundation Fellow on Regional Sustainable Development, a graduate of the Institute of Organization Management, and a Certified Chamber of Commerce Executive. Sheehy graduated from the University of Wisconsin- Madison with a B.S. in political science and was a member of the UW's baseball team.

June Nwabara—Board Member

June is a nine year partner at Starbucks Coffee Company and currently serves as Regional Director of Operations. She leads store operations within TN overseeing 92 stores. She manages a team of district managers to create and maintain the Starbucks Experience for partners and customers. Her expert qualifications allows her to inspire and challenge partners to drive for excellence in customer experience and business operations. Through partner engagement, her team works together to develop operational plans to deliver on strategic priorities and objectives. June is results oriented and consistently establishes connections with others facilitating attainment of exceeding goals in a highly productive and professional work environment.

She and her team do volunteerism with numerous organizations throughout TN including but not limited to Hands on Nashville, National Civil Rights Museum, Habitat for Humanity to name a few. Prior to joining Starbucks, June spent thirteen years with Darden Restaurants and held numerous positions including General Manager, Divisional Training Manager and Director of Operations. She restored profitability and success to several restaurants and reduced turnover through improved consistency of caring and fairness principles in personnel practices. As GM, she was one of fourteen chosen to sit on the President's Council. She left Darden late 2005 and joined Starbucks January 2006. June holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism from Michigan State University. She currently serves on the Executive Board of Directors with Hands on Nashville.

Louis Jordan—Board Member

Louis Jordan retired from the Starbucks Coffee Company in early 2013 where he held the position of SVP, Corporate Finance since 2009. At Starbucks, Louis was responsible for a number of Finance functions, including: Marketing, Category and Global Pricing, Real Estate and Store Development, Global Supply Chain, Digital Ventures, Global Planning and Reporting and Treasury and Risk Management. Prior to joining Starbucks, Louis spent six years at Nike where he served as Chief Financial Officer of Nike Inc.'s Global Retail and Digital Commerce operations, and had Finance responsibility for Nike-owned retail first quality stores, factory stores and digital commerce activities worldwide. Before Nike, Louis held Finance management positions at a number of Fortune 500 companies including Gap, Citibank, DuPont, Dun & Bradstreet and Duracell. Louis holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Westmar College and a Master of Arts degree from Brown University. He received his MBA in Finance from the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University. Louis currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Indiana University Foundation, Causeit.com and Summer Search Seattle. In addition he is a member of the Kelley School of Business Dean's Advisory Council and on the Advisory Board of the Kelley School's Johnson Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. A Philadelphia native, Louis resides principally in Seattle, Washington. Since 2006, as co-owner of Tympany vineyards in northern California's Alexander Valley, Louis has produced an estate-grown Bordeaux style wine, offered commercially under the Tympany brand.

Greg Stanger—Board Member

Greg Stanger brings to Rocketship a broad range of financial leadership experience with high-growth Internet companies. He has served as CFO for oDesk, Chegg and Expedia. He has also been a venture partner at Technology Crossover Ventures and was formerly a corporate development executive at Microsoft. Greg has served on the boards of directors of many successful companies, including Netflix, Kayak, drugstore.com, NexTag, and Expedia. He is currently a trustee of the Yosemite Conservancy. Greg holds an MBA from the University of California at Berkeley and a Bachelor of Science degree from Williams College.

Arra Yerganian—Board Member

Arra Yerganian brings broad senior management experience to San Francisco based, One Medical Group, the nation's leading network of primary care providers. As Chief Marketing Officer, he is responsible for curating the voice, tone, and personality of this successful Benchmark Capital & Google Ventures backed pre-IPO company. Over the course of his 25-year career, Arra has held key leadership roles in marketing, sales, and general management at a range of customer-focused companies like Procter & Gamble, the Dial Corp., Lennar Homes, and most recently University of Phoenix, where he also served as Chief Marketing Officer. Arra received a B.S. degree from Boston University and upon graduation earned the Scarlet Key distinction for academic excellence and campus leadership, and completed an Executive Education Program in Strategic Marketing Management at the Harvard Business School. He also serves as a board advisor to xAd, the largest mobile location advertising firm, and is a member of M50. He is an active volunteer and Board Chair Emeritus of the Silicon Valley American Red Cross, a trustee at the St. Andrew Armenian Church and a board member of the on-line Armenian Virtual College. Arra and his wife, Taline, have three children and make their home in San Jose, California.

Current Rocketship Schools

Currently, Rocketship Education operates nine elementary schools in San Jose, CA. As of the end of the 2013-2014 school year, Rocketship schools had an average Academic Performance Index (API) of 841 and ranked in the **Top 5%**[2] of all public school networks serving predominantly low income students in California.[3]

		2014 Results		
School Name	**Year Foun ded**	**API**	**Math Proficient/ Advanced**	**ELA Proficient / Advanced**
Rocketship Mateo Sheedy	2007	893	92%	69%
Rocketship Si Se Puede	2009	832	74%	53%
Rocketship Los Sueños	2010	805	73%	47%
Rocketship Discovery Prep	2011	787	64%	49%
Rocketship Mosaic	2011	837	77%	53%
Rocketship Brilliant Minds	2012	849	74%	65%
Rocketship Alma Academy	2012	904	88%	74%
Rocketship Spark	2013	872	86%	68%
Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep	2014	N/A	N/A	N/A

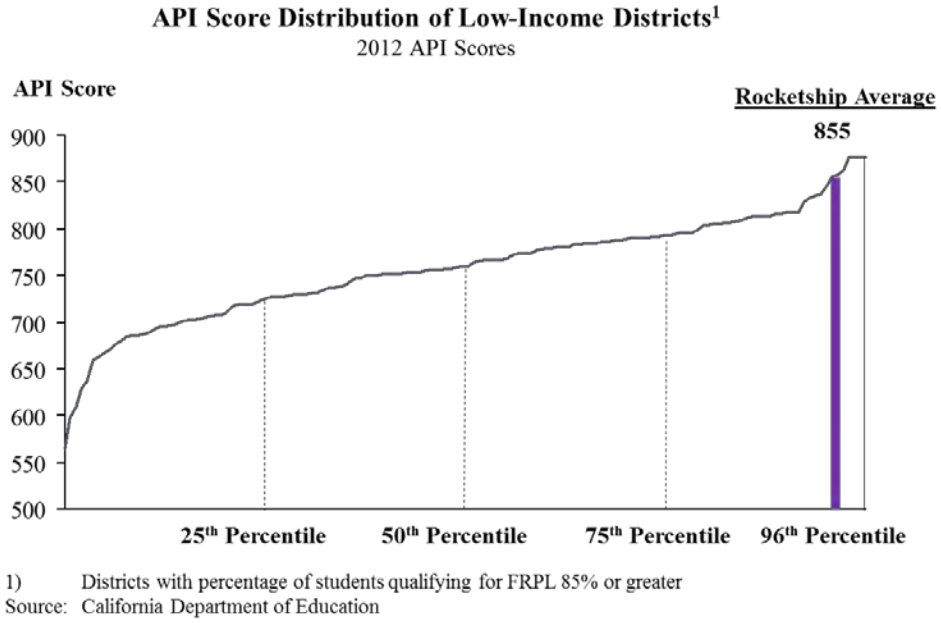
In the past seven years, our students consistently excelled on their path to college and career success. Rocketship's success and parent demand have allowed us to grow from one school serving less than 200 students to a network of nine schools serving more than 5,000 students in San Jose.

Over the past three years, Rocketship has performed in the top five percent of all California school districts serving predominantly low-income students on the California Standards Test

[2] CA schools serving > 70% FRL
[3] Because of the shift to Common Core, the most recent API data for CA and surrounding districts is from the 2012-13 school year. However, Rocketship schools still administered the CST in 2013-14, and compiled results with an independent auditor, so the most recent data for the Rocketship network is from 2013-14.

(CST) (see Figure B-1 below).[4] Every year from 2008 to 2014, Rocketship's California schools have collectively exceeded the Academic Performance Index (API) standard for excellence of 800 on the CST, demonstrating a clear record of success in the past seven years in advancing student learning.

Figure B-1: API Performance of Low-Income School Districts



Since our first school, Rocketship Mateo Sheedy, opened in August 2007, we have not only advanced both student achievement and learning, but also increased educational equity in California. Our commitment to educational equity reflects the reality that it is "not simply about equal access and inputs, but ensuring that a student's educational path, curriculum, instruction, and schedule be personalized to meet her unique needs, inside and outside of school."[5] Below, we 1) highlight how high-need subgroups succeed at Rocketship; 2) explain how our high-need students outperform their peers at nearby district schools; 3) demonstrate that we are closing achievement gaps between high-need students and wealthy students; 4) share data about our schools' sustained excellence over four years; 5) show that our students make one and a half years of growth in their learning each year; 6) demonstrate that our schools outperform district and statewide averages; and 7) explain how we will track our students' progress to enroll and persist through college once they graduate from Rocketship.

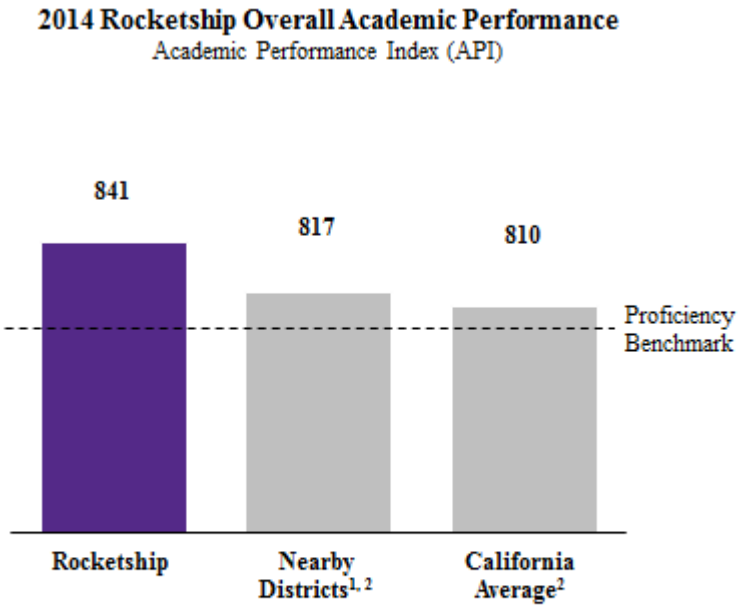
[4] Defined as districts serving 70 percent or more students qualifying for free and reduced lunch meals. Data are not yet publicly available for other school districts for 2012-2013.

[5] Wolf, M.A. (author); Partoyan, E., Schneiderman, M., & Seltz, J. (eds). (2010). Innovate to Educate: System (Re)Design for Personalized Learning, A Report from the 2010 Symposium. Washington, DC: Software &Information Industry Association, p. 6.

Rocketship outperforms nearby districts and all California students, despite serving a higher percentage of low income students

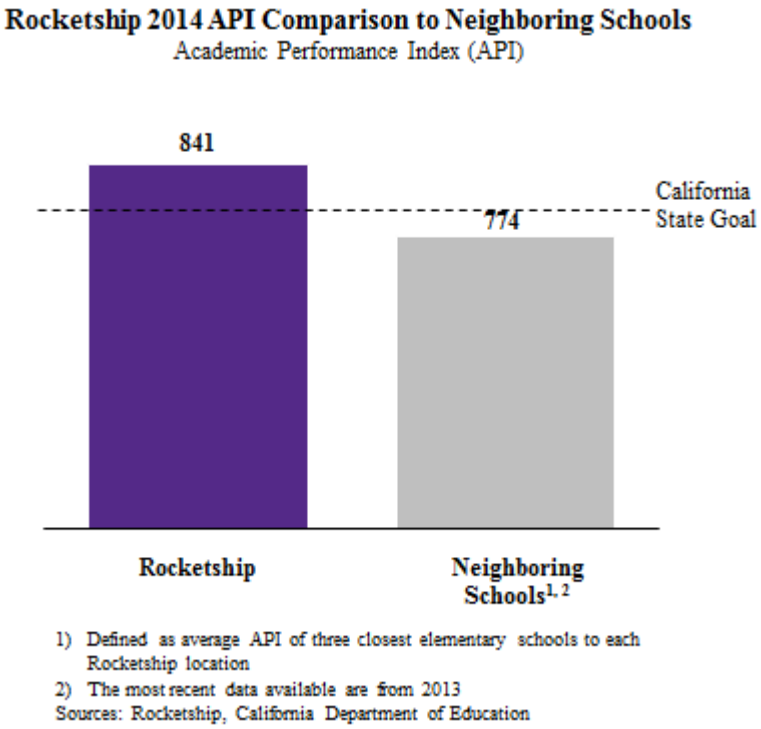
Figure B-2 highlights Rocketship student success with an 841 Academic Performance Index compared to all California students at 810, and nearby district students at 817 (aggregate average of elementary schools in Alum Rock Unified, San Jose Unified, and Franklin-McKinley School Districts) on the California Standards Test (CST) in 2013. The API is measured on a 1000-point scale and the bar for excellence set for schools across the state to meet is 800, which is equivalent to "proficient".

Figure B-2: Rocketship 2014 API Comparative Performance



1) Nearby districts includes aggregate average of elementary schools in Alum Rock Unified, San Jose Unified and Franklin-McKinley school districts
2) The most recent data are from 2013
Sources: Rocketship, California Department of Education

Figure B-3: Rocketship 2014 API Comparison to Neighboring Schools

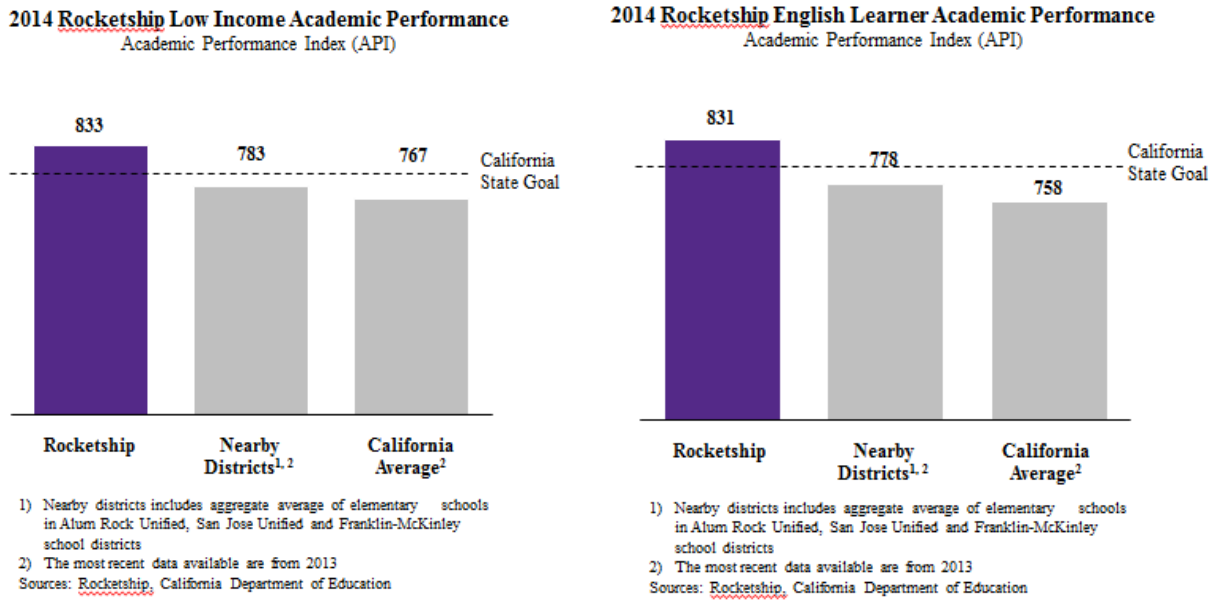


Low-Income, Limited English Proficiency, Special Education, and racial subgroups succeed at Rocketship

As part of our mission, Rocketship seeks to educate and graduate the most underserved, high-need students. In fact, we are proud of the fact that we have never expelled a student for any reason. As a network of open enrollment public charter schools, we do not provide preference to any student based on demographics. However, we aim to serve those students who otherwise would have limited access to a high quality education. We locate our schools in neighborhoods with high poverty and other indicators of need. We recruit our students from the surrounding neighborhoods. Rocketship's target student population is low-income, special education, English Learners (EL) and other "at-risk" students. In California, Rocketship's nine schools serve 58 to 69 percent EL students[6] where the EL percentage is 25 percent for the surrounding Santa Clara County. Rocketship serves a low-income student body in which 85 percent qualify for Free or Reduced Price Meals/Lunch (FRL), in a county where 39 percent of students qualify for FRL. Figure B-4 indicates successes for our low income students and English Learners as measured by recent California API data. Our students vastly outperform subgroups from local districts by more 50 points and outperform the state subgroups by more than 65 API points.

[6] Data for Rocketship Fuerza, our newest school, is an estimate. Data for the other eight schools is based on 2013-14 reporting.

Figure B-4: Low Income and ELL API Comparative Performance

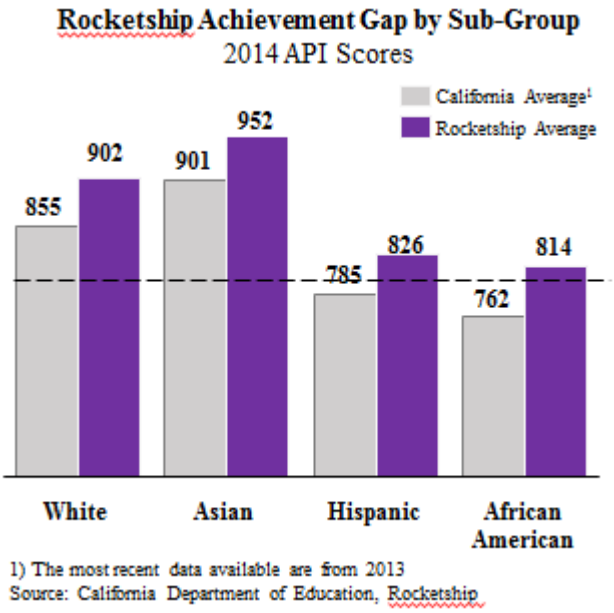


In addition to low-income and EL students, Rocketship is closing the achievement gap for Integrated Special Education (ISE) students. Rocketship has steadily improved results for ISE students in ELA from 30% of students scoring basic or above in 2011-12 to 39% in 2012-13 and then 49% last year. This progress has happened while the number of students served has more than tripled over the past three years. In math, Rocketship has maintained about 60% of students scoring basic or above and has increased the number of students scoring proficient from 28% in 2011-12 to 37% in 2013-14.

Rocketship is also closing the achievement gap for racial subgroups. In 2012-2013, the average API for Hispanic students in the state of California was 785, under the target proficiency benchmark of 800. However, at Rocketship, the average API for Hispanic students (who comprise 84 percent of total Rocketship students) was 826.[7] Our Asian, African American, and White students also outperform the state average and the state proficiency benchmark.[8] See Figure B-5 for the data supporting this analysis. As part of our Rocketship Mt. Diablo proposal, we look forward to continuing to contribute to the work in Concord of closing the achievement gap between Rocketship Hispanic students and the state's highest performing racial subgroups.

[7] Rocketship data are from 2013-14, the most recent year available. In 2012-13, the API for Rocketship's Hispanic students was 817.
[8] Asian students represent 11 percent, African American students represent 2 percent, and White students represent 2 percent of Rocketship students.

Figure B-5: Rocketship Achievement Gap by Sub-Group

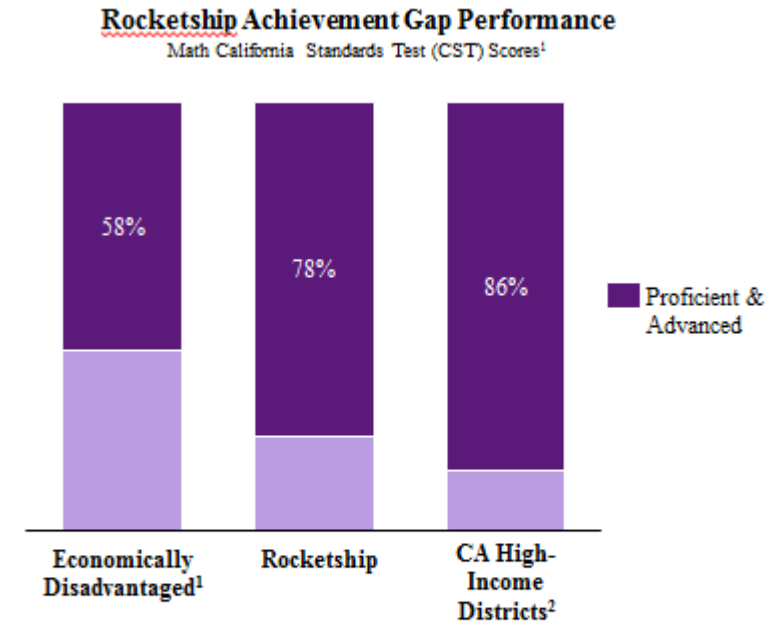


Rocketship is closing the gap between high-need students and wealthy students

Comparing our students to those in more wealthy districts, it is clear that we are closing the achievement gap. Figure B-6 indicates that on the 2014 CST in mathematics our students performed within eight percent of high-income students:[9] 86 percent of California's high-income district students scored proficient and advanced; Rocketship students achieved 78 percent proficient and advanced.

[9] High-Income Districts are defined as 10 elementary districts with the lowest percent of students eligible in the Free or Reduced Price Meal Program. (Districts with less than 100 students are excluded). Most recent data for comparison areas is from 2013.

Figure B-6: Math CST Proficiency, Comparison to Wealthy Districts



1) Based on most recent available data, 2013-14 for Rocketship and 2012-13 for others
2) Based on Economically Disadvantaged subgroup results
3) Defined as 10 elementary districts with the lowest percent of students eligible in the Free or Reduced Price Meal Program. Districts with less than 100 students are excluded sample

Note: Includes students in grades 2 – 5
Sources: Rocketship, California Department of Education

Rocketship performance over more than six years demonstrates sustained academic excellence

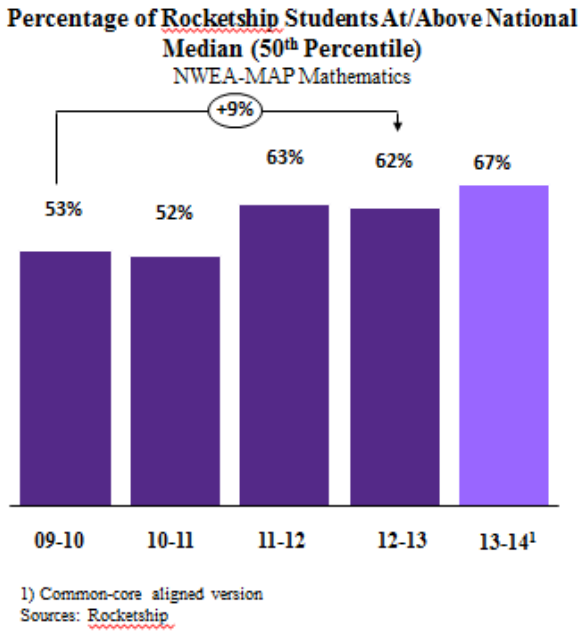
Every year from 2008 to 2014, Rocketship's California schools, as a group, have exceeded the Academic Performance Index standard for excellence of 800 on the CST. In addition, given the rapidly changing context for standards and assessments, we made the decision several years ago that all of our students take the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) test three times a year to measure individual student progress, in addition to actively participating in the California Standards Test and its Common Core State Standards (CCSS) aligned successor, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. We highly value the individual-level student data this provides. The NWEA-MAP test is "built on 30 years of research and refinement, and adapts to the child in real-time as the test progresses for a pinpoint picture of learning achievement and readiness."[10] Looking at MAP data gives us a clear picture of the progress our students have made over the last four years, because the bar for proficiency does not change from year to year.

In aggregate, our schools demonstrate sustained success in improving student learning outcomes and ensuring our students achieve at high levels. As demonstrated in Figure B-7 below, at the

[10] *Achievement Gaps: An Examination of Differences in Student Achievement and Growth*; Northwest Evaluation Association; accessed September 10 at http://www.nwea.org/sites/www.nwea.org/files/409_AchivGapStudyFinallowres_111006a.pdf

end of the 2009-2010 school year, more than 50 percent of our students performed above grade level in math as measured by the NWEA MAP test. Over the past four years, we have increased that number to 67 percent achieving above grade level.[11] This nine percentage point increase in students at grade level, during a time of sustained organizational growth, is an indicator of our ability to make a difference for the students who most need access to a high quality education. For the 2013-2014 school year, we transitioned to the common-core aligned version and saw a five percent increase. By enrolling at-risk populations and preparing them for college- and career-success as measured by our student achievement metrics, we are indeed closing achievement gaps.

Figure B-7: Percentage of Rocketship Students above Grade Level in Math over time



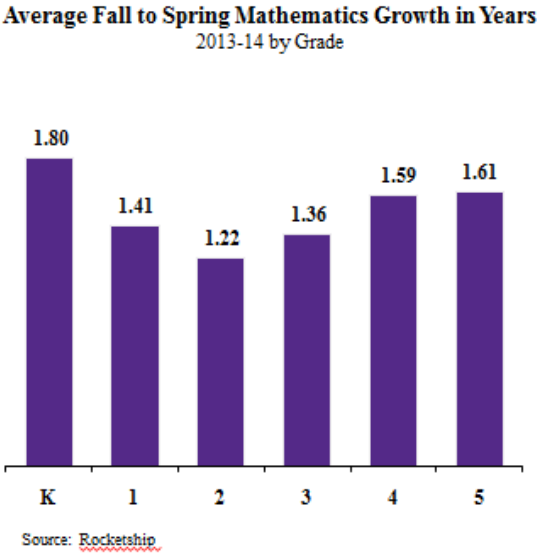
Rocketship students advance more than one grade level per year in both math and ELA

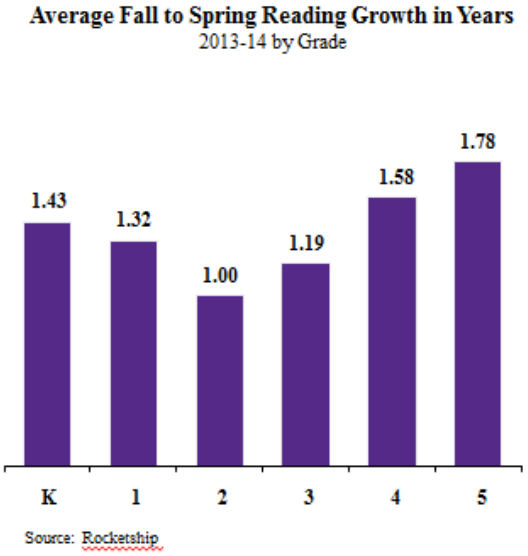
Many students enter our schools behind grade level, regardless of whether they join our schools at pre-k or 5th grade, with only 17 percent of our students at grade level upon entry. The challenge to bring all of our students above grade level by the end of grade five is not one we take lightly. Of the seven Rocketship schools operating in 2012-2013, according to NWEA MAP, six schools attained our targeted average one and a half-year grade level student growth in reading and all seven schools achieved average one and a half-year grade-level student growth in math. In 2013-2014 school year, we transitioned to the common-core aligned version, and still four of our nine schools averaged at least one and half-years of students growth in math and one school averaged more than one and half-years of students growth in reading. From fall to spring

[11] In 2013-14, we administered the common-core aligned version of the test and had 67% of students above grade level.

of last year, Rocketship students grew on average on the MAP math test by 1.5 grade levels – 50 percent more than their peers across the country – and 1.3 years on the reading test. In addition, Rocketship has an immediate and substantial impact on new students, who averaged to 1.8 years of growth in math and 1.5 years on the reading test. The charts below highlight the impact Rocketship has on students at all grade levels in both subjects.

Figure B-8: Average Fall to Spring Growth for Rocketship Students by Grade, 2013-14





Outreach Initiatives

Rocketship Education and the leaders of RSMD intend to collaborate with a variety of organizations in the Mt. Diablo district as well as organizations serving families within Contra Costa boundaries. Outreach will began in November of 2015 and we will focus on new and existing partnerships with parent groups, non-profit organizations and other organizations that serve the community. Outreach consists of, but is not limited to, informing stakeholders about Rocketship, discussing potential opportunities for collaboration and identifying support for recruitment of students. RSMD will put forth best efforts to ensure neighborhood families know about the school and have the opportunity to submit interest forms.

Because Rocketship Education schools' mission is to close the achievement gap, school leaders look for ways to contact local families during the enrollment process who are in greatest need and may be least likely to hear about new educational opportunities. Rocketship goes to great lengths to train and deploy Parent Leaders and to work with already existing Parent Groups to inform the community of our schools' mission and to spread the word that seats are available. Some of these Parent Leaders have children enrolled at current Rocketship schools or have relationships with families who are familiar with Rocketship schools. Rocketship believes these parents are best equipped to connect with prospective families because they have lived the Rocketship experience. These Parent Leaders are trained to convey information about the school program to families in selected low-income neighborhoods identified by Rocketship in collaboration with community organizations and leaders. Neighborhoods chosen for targeted outreach include those that are near the RSMD site, those identified as socioeconomically

distressed according to census tract analysis, and those near schools either undergoing Program Improvement or with both a Free/Reduced Meal population above 50 percent and a Free/Reduced Meal API below 775. Rocketship puts forth best efforts to select and work with Parent Leaders who speak Spanish, Vietnamese or other languages that many local residents may speak as a first language. Rocketship also puts forth best efforts to train Parent Leaders with knowledge of the Rocketship Integrated Special Education Program (special education) in order to communicate Rocketship's commitment to serving all students to prospective families, with a goal of RSMD enrolling a special education population reflective of special education populations at local district schools.

Parent Leader activities include educating and engaging families 1:1 at:

- Apartment complexes and residences (door-to-door)
- Community organizations and non-profits
- Sunday mass
- Youth sports leagues
- After-school programs
- Head Starts and preschools
- Community and holiday events
- Nearby businesses including grocery stores or flea markets
- Homework or tutoring centers
- Community meetings about the school that are publicly noticed to all owners and occupants living within a 1,000-foot radius of the school.

Rocketship leaders will begin the development of a specific plan to conduct regular information sessions at neighborhood locations and will seek opportunities to partner with the local school district to provide additional information sessions at a location of their choosing. Furthermore, Rocketship looks forward to partnering with these organizations in our work to eliminate the achievement gap:

- Contra Costa County School Leaders and Staff
- Local Parishes
- Local Pre-Schools/Services
- Local Community Centers
- Contra Costa Health Services
- Healthy and Active Before 5
- Contra Costa Child Care Council
- Monument Crisis Center
- Monument Impact
- First Five Contra Costa

- Contra Costa Youth Center
- Catholic Charities
- Cambridge Learning Center
- Shelter Inc.
- Local Public Library Branches
- Local Flea Markets
- After School and Neighborhood Service Programs
- Concord Police Dept.
- NETO
- Monument Business Community
- Delta Young Life

Please see Appendix-G for a copy of Rocketship Mt. Diablo's Outreach Plan.

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 Statement and Vision Statement

Mission Statement

Rocketship Mt. Diablo will eliminate the achievement gap by graduating our students at or above grade level in Literacy and Math.

Goals

- RSMD students will graduate RSMD at or above grade level.
- RSMD students will become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.
- RSMD students will develop a deep love of learning.
- RSMD 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.
- RSMD will encourage our alumni both to become leaders in their community and help others achieve their goals.

Vision Statement

RSMD 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.

Annual Goals and Actions in the State Priorities

RSMD plans to create a comprehensive Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) by July 2016. We will reevaluate our LCAP in year 1 after engaging with stakeholders, including parents, students, and staff. Below please find, in accordance with the Local Control Funding Formula ("LCFF") requirements, a description, for the Charter School, of annual goals for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Education Code Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in Education Code Section 52060(d) 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.

RSMD plans to create a comprehensive Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and will engage the following stakeholders in the planning process:

- Teachers
- Principals
- School personnel
- Pupils

Rocketship Educations monitors and assesses all students, including students identified as Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Students with Disabilities, and racial/ethnic subgroups through our assessment suite. Specific actions that support pupil subgroups include:

- English Learners: Extensive teacher professional development on Guided Language Acquisition Design and infusion of the ELD framework throughout the curriculum.
- Students with Disabilities: High fidelity implementation of Response to Intervention model, robust Tier II and Tier III evidence-based interventions and regular progress monitoring through AIMSweb.

As 85% of Rocketship Education students are identified as socioeconomically-disadvantaged (SED), our entire school model is designed to meet the needs of students in this subgroup. Our personalized learning model targets SED students of all performance levels to provide differentiated instruction in the classroom and learning lab. Further, we provide an array of enrichment offerings and subsidized field trips to provide SED students with a well-rounded education.

As RSMD has yet to enroll any students, our LCAP plan reflects our general approach to goal-setting and progress-monitoring. This plan will be updated to reflect RSMD's student population and the preferences of parents, students, and staff who will be consulted as part of the LCAP engagement effort. Our LCAP will address specific goals and actions for any student subgroup of 30 or more.

The proposed RSMD goals and accompanying actions in accordance with LCAP requirements are as follows. These goals and actions are subject to modification once a full LCAP plan is developed in July 2016, without need for material revision of the charter petition, and they will be updated annually.

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	
Goal to achieve Subpriority	100% of core teachers will be appropriately assigned and hold a valid CA Teaching Credential with appropriate

	English learner authorization as defined by the CA Commission on Teaching Credentialing.
Actions to achieve goal	All core teacher candidates screened for employment will hold valid CA Teaching Credential with appropriate English learner authorization; RSED Human Resources will annually review assignment and credential status.
Subpriority B – Instructional Materials	
Goal to achieve Subpriority	100% of pupils will have access to standards-aligned materials and additional instructional materials as outlined in our charter petition.
Actions to achieve goal	All instructional materials purchased will be aligned to CA Common Core State Standards and aligned with our charter petition. We will purchase additional classroom libraries rich in non-fiction texts. We will purchase additional classroom technology.
Subpriority C – Facilities	
Goal to achieve Subpriority	All school facilities will be maintained in good repair.
Actions to achieve goal	Regular general cleaning by custodial staff will maintain campus cleanliness; Annual and monthly facility inspections will screen for safety hazards.
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	
Goal to achieve Subpriority	RSMD will implement a Common Core aligned academic program.
Actions to achieve goal	RSMD teachers will receive at least 5 hours of professional development based on CCSS and the associated RSMD "focus standards" as outlined in this charter.
SUBPRIORITY B – EL STUDENTS & ACADEMIC CONTENT KNOWLEDGE	
Goal to achieve Subpriority	100% of EL students will access academic content knowledge through the implementation of the CCSS.
Actions to achieve goal	EL students participate in English Language Arts/Literacy instruction with appropriate instructional support. Teachers receive training in Guided Language Acquisition Design.
SUBPRIORITY C – EL STUDENTS & ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY	
Goal to achieve Subpriority	30% of EL students will be reclassified after three years of enrollment at RSMD.
Actions to achieve goal	EL students participate in English Language Arts/Literacy instruction with appropriate instructional support. All teachers will participate in professional development regarding ELD standards and appropriate strategies for support and intervention, as outlined in detail in this charter.
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	
Goal to achieve priority	Parents are engaged in their students' learning and actively participate in school decision making.
Actions to achieve goal	RSMD will hold a minimum of 3 parent conferences a year and a minimum of 4 community meetings for parents to weigh in on critical school decisions.
STATE PRIORITY #4— STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT *Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:* ***A.*** *CA Assessment of Student Performance and Progress 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 –* ***N/A*** ***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 –* ***N/A*** ***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 –* ***N/A***	
SUBPRIORITY A – *CA Assessment of Student Performance and Progress statewide assessment*	
Goal to achieve priority	Rocketship students will exceed the average performance levels of students in schools with similar demographics in the local school distirct on the Common Core Assessments.
Actions to achieve goal	Implementation of the CCSS aligned curriculum and instructional strategies and teachers will assess students throughout the year. Teachers will receive training on the CA Common Core Standards. Additionally, we will implement assessment software that mimics the online testing format and rigor of the CAASPP.
SUBPRIORITY B – API	
Goal to achieve priority	RSMD will meet or exceed State-wide academic performance index ("API"), or other interim State performance measure, growth target school wide and for all subgroups.
Actions to achieve goal	Implementation of the CCSS aligned curriculum and instructional strategies and teachers will assess students throughout the year.
SUBPRIORITY D – EL progress towards proficiency	
Goal to achieve priority	50% of students in CELDT levels 1-3 will move at least 1

	CELDT level annually.
Actions to achieve goal	EL students will receive in class instructional support which includes 1-on-1 teacher support, small group work, usage of SDAIE and ELD instructional strategies, GLAD instructional strategies, and additional English Learner instructional best practices as outlined in the charter.
SUBPRIORITY E – EL RECLASSIFICATION RATES	
Goal to achieve priority	30% of students will be reclassified after three years of enrollment at RSMD.
Actions to achieve goal	EL students will receive in class instructional support which includes 1-on-1 teacher support, small group work, use of SDAIE and ELD instructional strategies, GLAD instructional strategies, and additional English Learner instructional best practices as outlined in the charter.
STATE PRIORITY #5: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT ***A.*** *School attendance rates* ***B.*** *Chronic absenteeism rates* ***C.*** *Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3)) –* ***N/A*** ***D.*** *High school dropout rates –* ***N/A*** ***E.*** *High school graduation rates –* ***N/A***	
SUBPRIORITY A – SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RATES	
Goal to achieve priority	At least 95% attendance as measured by ADA.
Actions to achieve goal	RSMD will provide a safe and engaging learning environment for all its students and families, including those of the various subgroups enrolled. RSMD will provide unique enrichment center opportunities and field trips to engage students and encourage high attendance.
SUBPRIORITY B – STUDENT ABSENTEEISM RATES	
Goal to achieve priority	RSMD will have truancy rates less than those of surrounding district schools with similar demographics.
Actions to achieve goal	Parents will be made aware of the school's attendance policy (see Appendix A-29). RSMD will provide a safe and engaging learning environment for all its students and families, including those of the various subgroups enrolled.
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	
Goal to achieve priority	RSMD suspension rates will be lower than surrounding district schools with similar demographics.
Actions to achieve goal	Teachers will be trained in Positive Behavioral Intervention

	and Supports as outlined in this charter.
SUBPRIORITY B – PUPIL EXPULSION RATES	
Goal to achieve priority	RSMD will maintain an annual expulsion rate of less than 1%.
Actions to achieve goal	Teachers will be trained in Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports as outlined in this charter.
SUBPRIORITY C – OTHER MEASURES	
Goal to achieve priority	70% of parents are satisfied with the relationship they have with their child's teachers.
Actions to achieve goal	RSMD will regularly conduct aparent survey. Families will be encouraged to complete the survey. Teachers will conduct home visits and other parent teacher conferences. RSMD will provide additional support staff during high-traffic periods of arrival and dismissal to ensure school safety.
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))*	
Goal to achieve priority	Annually, 100% of students, including all student subgroups, unduplicated students, and students with exceptional needs, will have access to and enroll in all core and non-core content areas available.
Actions to achieve goal	All academic content areas, curriculum, and technology will be available to all students, including student subgroups, at all grade levels.
STATE PRIORITY #8—OTHER STUDENT OUTCOMES *Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.*	
SUBPRIORITY A – ENGLISH	
Goal to achieve priority	RSMD will outperform nearby district schools with similar demographics.
Actions to achieve goal	The RSMD literacy model will have a heavy focus on phonics, fluency and vocabulary. As part of a Balanced Literacy approach, all students will participate in Guided Reading to ensure they receive instruction targeted at their skill level. Writing will be taught through a workshop model. Additional information can be found previously in Element A, as well as Appendices A-2, A-3 and A-4 of this charter.

SUBPRIORITY B – MATHEMATICS	
Goal to achieve priority	RSMD will outperform nearby district schools with similar demographics.
Actions to achieve goal	In addition to emphasizing basic skills and computational fluency, teachers will focus on developing students' number sense and algebraic reasoning abilities. Students will be challenged to reason and communicate mathematically. Additional information can be found previously in Element A, as well as Appendices A-5 and A-6 of this charter.
SUBPRIORITY C – SOCIAL SCIENCE	
Goal to achieve priority	All students will participate in Social Studies.
Actions to achieve goal	Social Studies instruction will be embedded in Literacy instruction through the use of thematically integrated, standards-based Understanding by Design (UbD) units. Additional information can be found previously in Element A, as well as Appendix A-7 of this charter.
SUBPRIORITY D –SCIENCE	
Goal to achieve priority	RSMD will outperform nearby district schools with similar demographics.
Actions to achieve goal	Science instruction will be embedded in both Humanities and Math instruction through the use of thematically integrated, standards-based Understanding by Design (UbD) units. Additional information can be found previously in Element A, as well as Appendix A-7 of this charter.
SUBPRIORITY E –VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS	
Goal to achieve priority	All students will participate in Visual and Performing Arts.
Actions to achieve goal	Arts will be integrated into the Humanities block, and or Enrichment courses. Additional information can be found previously in Element A, as well as Appendix A-7 of this charter.
SUBPRIORITY F –PHYSICAL EDUCATION	
Goal to achieve priority	All students will participate in Physical Education.
Actions to achieve goal	All students will have an opportunity to learn about different methods of exercise including team and individual sports.
SUBPRIORITY G –LIFE SKILLS	
Goal to achieve priority	Students, including all subgroups, will receive feedback on their demonstration of Rocketship Core Values.
Actions to achieve goal	Rocketship teachers will be trained on the Rocketship Core Values and evaluate students against those values.

Targeted School Population – Whom the School is Attempting to Educate

RSMD is designed to serve Mt. Diablo students who are or may be at risk of achieving below basic proficiency on past and current state exams and/or district assessments. RSMD will attract children of Mt. Diablo families who are seeking an alternative to their current educational

system, who desire an innovative educational approach, and who share the vision of RSMD. RSMD anticipates that it will enroll primarily students from Mt. Diablo schools which have undergone program improvement ("PI") in conjunction with the Federal No Child Left Behind regulations as well as a Free/Reduced Meal population above 50%. Based on an analysis of the demographics of elementary schools located in Mt. Diablo School District, our target population is approximately 50% English Learner ("EL") and at least 70% Free and Reduced Lunch ("FRL").

Mt. Diablo School District 2013-14

School	Enrollment	% Free Meals	% English Learners	PI Year	2013 API
All Mt. Diablo Elementary Schools	*16128*	*46.8*	*29.1*	*Year 3*	*831*
Cambridge Elementary	683	96.8	79.5	Year 5	757
Bel Air Elementary	508	95.3	53.1	Year 5	759
Shore Acres Elementary	537	94.8	74.9	Year 5	725
Rio Vista Elementary	510	92.7	61.4	Year 5	735
Meadow Homes Elementary	896	92.5	81	Year 5	725
Fair Oaks Elementary	401	85.3	55.4	Year 5	722
Ygnacio Valley Elementary	523	82.2	56.6	Year 5	777
Wren Avenue Elementary	549	75.8	43.5	Year 1	767
Sun Terrace Elementary	559	74.6	45.1	Year 2	670
El Monte Elementary	476	65.3	35.3	Year 1	797
Delta View Elementary	694	56.8	34.3	Not in PI	814
Westwood Elementary	388	49	26	Not Title 1	778
Silverwood Elementary	467	45	20.6	Not Title 1	850
Mountain View Elementary	397	44.6	22.4	Not Title 1	825
Gregory Gardens Elementary	386	42.2	23.1	Not Title 1	823
Woodside Elementary	435	38.6	24.8	Not Title 1	866
Ayers Elementary	410	32.9	17.1	Not Title 1	818
Hidden Valley Elementary	785	32.4	16.6	Not Title 1	860
Pleasant Hill Elementary	677	24.8	13	Not Title 1	887
Valhalla Elementary	581	20.3	11	Not Title 1	869
Monte Gardens Elementary	582	19.4	14.8	Not Title 1	928
Highlands Elementary	654	19.3	11.3	Not Title 1	876
Bancroft Elementary	485	16.7	16.9	Not Title 1	883
Strandwood Elementary	657	12.2	8.2	Not Title 1	938
Sequoia Elementary	575	11.3	10.8	Not Title 1	946
Mt. Diablo Elementary	820	8.4	5	Not Title 1	923
Valle Verde Elementary	462	8	6.9	Not Title 1	923
Walnut Acres Elementary	583	5.8	7.5	Not Title 1	935
Eagle Peak Montessori	215	3.7	6	Not Title 1	913

Note: Excludes Sunrise Elementary (special education).
Sources: CDE DataQuest (http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/)
Ed-Data (http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/)

At-Risk Students Entering Kindergarten

A significant amount of research has been done on the readiness for Kindergarten of at-risk students. Much of the focus on programs like Headstart has been on how to raise the preparedness of our Kindergartners. The U.S. Department of Education's Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten 1998-99 ("ECLS-K") examined directly the set of skills that most Kindergartners have upon starting school. It compared these to the skills of children with one or more risk factors. The risk factors considered were:

1. Single-parent family
2. Mother has less than high-school education
3. Family has received welfare or food stamps
4. Parents' primary language is a language other than English

Families in the District's past PI schools are approximately 82% qualified for Free and Reduced Meals, which is highly correlated to factor 3. They also may have a primary language other than English (approximately 56%). Inner-city families are also significantly more likely to be single-parent families with less than a high school education. Nationwide, about 16% of Kindergartners have two or more risk factors, which we believe will be the case for the majority of RSMD Kindergartners. As shown in Zill and West's analysis of this dataset, children with two or more risk factors were most likely to fall into the bottom quartile in reading readiness (47%) vs. just 9% in the top quartile. (Zill and West, 2001)[12].

We anticipate that our average student will be 1.5 years behind the average American student through the analysis above. Our average student is between one and two years behind and we use the average of 1.5 years behind as our overall expectation of their achievement upon entry. We believe that students who score proficient or its equivalent on achievement tests are at grade level and operating at about the 50th percentile. Students scoring advanced are about one grade level ahead and operate at roughly the 76th percentile or better, while students who are below basic are roughly one grade level behind and in the third quartile and students who are far below basic are approximately two grade levels behind and in the fourth quartile. We believe that a focused intervention program like Rocketship can move students up approximately one quartile in achievement each year in school (a 25 percentage point gain).

To that end, at Rocketship, we actively participate in the Transitional Kinder program that has recently been funded by the State of California. RSMD intends to serve approximately 50 students in Transitional Kinder at RSMD in the 16-17 school year.

[12] Zill, N. and West, J. (2001). "Entering Kindergarten: A Portrait of American Children When They Begin School. Findings from the Condition of Education", Washington D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics.

RSMD Enrollment

Students enrolling in RSMD shall meet the state guidelines for minimum age as defined by California Education Code §48000 – §48002.

During its first year of operation, RSMD will serve TK-5th grade. If there is demand from the community, Rocketship also reserves the right to add a 6th grade class in Year 2 and beyond.

At full enrollment, RSMD anticipates a total school enrollment of 600-700 students. To absorb expected attrition, we will continuously enroll vacated spaces to maintain the enrollment numbers. We believe that this is a critical choice as traditional neighborhood schools also regularly enroll students (new to the community, recently moved, etc.) throughout the school year and we want to ensure that we participate equitably in this enrollment of new students as well. Moreover, we want to ensure that we are able to contribute to the academic outcomes of students and families throughout the community, regardless of whether they enroll with RSMD in the initial grades like Kindergarten or later in upper grades like 4th and 5th grade. Attrition will be primarily driven by families leaving the area and is similar to existing Rocketship Education schools and other high-performing charters in the area.

Educational Philosophy: What it Means to be an Educated Person in the 21st Century

Rocketship Education combines traditional classroom instruction with blended learning, which enables highly personalized instruction through online adaptive technology and tutoring in order to meet the needs of all students, including those with disabilities or who are English Language Learners; a parent engagement strategy that allows for advocacy on behalf of all children and their education; and a leadership development program that creates sustainable careers for highly effective educators.

Closing the achievement gap depends on building, executing, and scaling a revolutionary school model that encompasses the following beliefs:

- **Excellent teachers and leaders create transformational schools:** Rocketship invests deeply in training and development to ensure teachers and leaders have a profound impact on students and communities.
- **Every child has a unique set of needs:** Rocketship is rethinking the traditional school model, allowing each child to learn in their own way with a combination of traditional instruction, technology and tutoring
- **Engaged parents are essential in eliminating the achievement gap:** Rocketship develops parent leaders in our schools and communities to become powerful advocates for their children.

The goal of RSMD is to provide an environment in which children will develop into confident, self-motivated, competent, productive and lifelong learners. Vested with these skills, these children will become responsible young adults. Students will possess the habits, skills, and confidence necessary to succeed in school and beyond, as contributing citizens of the 21st century.

Specifically, RSMD believes that an educated person in the 21st century should possess the academic and life skills listed below. Each Rocketship Education charter school seeks to impart these skills by the time that a student has completed the Rocketship Education program.

Academic Skills

- Critical Thinking: the set of skills required to succeed at higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy, including the analysis of data, synthesis of information and evaluation of arguments.
- Problem Solving: building on a foundation of strong critical thinking, problem solving involves using insight and creativity to solve complex problems such as applying familiar strategies in multiple or unfamiliar contexts.
- Meta-Cognition: the ability and disposition to explore the thinking and learning process, explain how and why a particular strategy was chosen, and to explain the rationale behind a particular viewpoint, including supporting one's claims with evidence.

Specifically:

- Students will read at or above grade level.
- Students will develop both a computational and a conceptual understanding of math.
- Students will be inspired to be inquisitive and self-motivated life-long learners.
- Students will communicate effectively through excellent listening, speaking, writing, and multi-lingual skills.
- Students will possess creative, logical, and critical thinking skills enhanced through art, science, and technology.
- Students will comprehend and use technology as a tool for learning and communication.
- Students will have confidence in adapting to new situations and be receptive to learning.
- Students will be eager to synthesize and act upon new information.
- Students will find, select, evaluate, organize and use information from various sources and disciplines of thought. They will be able to make logical connections among them.

Non-cognitive/Critical Life Skills

- Sense of Self: an understanding of one's own strengths, abilities, emotions, and identity that contribute to positive self-esteem and a sense of purpose; this might look like a student self-regulating an emotional response in order to facilitate rather than interfere with a particular task at hand.
- Relationship and Social Skills: understanding and appreciating the emotions and perspectives of others and developing positive relationships among diverse groups including peers and adults; developing the ability to cooperate effectively, resist social pressure, resolve conflicts and seek help appropriately.
- Commitment to Learning: pursuing goals and taking responsibility for academic, social and emotional self-development; having a sense of curiosity, interest and involvement in learning and advocating for one's own learning at Rocketship and beyond.

Specifically:

- Students accept responsibility for personal decisions and actions.

- Students develop self-confidence and a willingness to take risks in a safe learning environment.
- Students learn concentration, perseverance, and independent working skills by setting personal goals and by self-assessment.
- Students develop an appreciation for the richness of shared knowledge that flows from the culturally diverse environment of California.
- Students are inspired to have empathy and courtesy for others.
- Students work both cooperatively and independently.

How Learning Best Occurs

Every child possesses a wide range of learning skills. RSMD believes that learning best occurs when students are taught a comprehensive curriculum through innovative instructional design that promotes learning in a challenging and exciting way, and most importantly when students are taught to love reading and become proficient readers (Walberg, 1981)[13].

The unique RSMD culture is fostered from the beginning of each school year as a RSMD staff member makes a home visit to every RSMD family. These home visits are incredibly powerful and ensure that a positive relationship is created between the families and RSMD staff. Once the relationships between teachers and families are established through home visits and parent commitments, the RSMD staff is able to continue this personal flow of information with each family to ensure even higher academic success may be realized throughout the school year.

Learning Best Occurs When There is a School-wide Expectation of High Achievement

At RSMD, every teacher will strive to make more than a year's growth with each of his or her students. We believe that many of our at-risk and EL students will come to school 1.5 years behind, because of a lack of English or literacy habits at home[14]. We provide additional interventions with the goal of graduating students at or above grade level. High expectations are an important part of a school culture and lead to higher student achievement.[15] RSMD teachers will be evaluated and compensated based in part on their abilities to meet these rigorous student achievement goals.

Learning Best Occurs When the Curriculum is Personalized

RSMD believes that personalized learning should be a core component of all 21st century schools. The RSMD school model is a full Response to Intervention model, providing three tiers of intervention for students in need of additional assistance. The first tier of intervention is in the classroom. Bi-monthly interim assessment results are analyzed to identify students who are failing to make adequate progress. Guided reading groups and other small groups will often be used to deliver these more personalized objectives during normal classroom instruction. Students not making significant gains will also receive personalized instruction in addition to

[13] Walberg, H. J. (1981). A psychological theory of educational productivity. InF. H. Farley &N. Gordon (Eds.), *Psychology and education* (pp. 81-110). Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education.
[14] Zill, N. & West, J., 2000
[15] Cotton, 1989

guided reading such as small group skills instruction. At current Rocketship Education schools, the second tier of intervention occurs in small group intervention, where a tutor will work daily with a group of students with similar needs. If classroom modifications and tier II tutoring interventions fail to help a student make adequate progress, the student will receive tier III interventions and will enter the RSMD Student Support Team process and if necessary, the Special Education IEP process. Providing these three levels of intervention will allow RSMD to serve the most struggling students more effectively than traditional elementary schools.

Learning Best Occurs When Students Have Extra Time to Practice

RSMD will offer all students the opportunity to participate in our Learning Lab daily. The purpose of the Learning Lab is to provide students with additional practice in Literacy and Math at exactly their current level of instruction.

The Learning Lab is a combination of a computer lab and tutoring center. The Learning Lab has a full-set of leveled books where students can read independently at their "just right" level (the top of their independent reading level) as well as at computers running online programs that allow students to access instruction at exactly their current level of understanding.

Learning Best Occurs When Students Have Purposeful Access to Technology

In the 21st century, it is an expectation that students are able to navigate the demands of technology. Thus, RSMD will offer students the opportunity to purposefully interact with technology in our Learning Lab as well as in the classroom. Students will have access to Online Learning Programs that will provide students with access to content at their level, thus further personalizing their learning opportunities. Moreover, in accessing these programs, students will gain the skills that are necessary in order to navigate computers and technology. In the classroom and Learning Lab, students will have access to foundational programs, which combined with purposeful instruction and integration into the curriculum, will ensure that RSMD students are gaining core competencies necessary in order to be able to purposefully access and use these programs, further preparing them to be highly effective learners, contributors, and citizens in the 21st century.

Learning Best Occurs When Teachers Are Subject Matter Specialists

RSMD will be structured differently from a traditional elementary school. At RSMD, we use a team teaching approach with our instructional staff. This team teaching approach means that teachers have their own instructional home-room; however, students are exchanged between two teachers of the same grade level throughout the day for the purpose of instruction in specific subjects. Students are assigned to a teacher who focuses primarily on literacy instruction that is integrated with social studies instruction and science instruction, and a teacher who is focused primarily on math instruction that is integrated with science instruction. Advantages for elementary schools that follow the team teaching approach include deeper content knowledge, a team structure allowing better collaborative focus, improved teacher retention, easier transition to middle school, and more flexibility in student grouping. We believe that specialization will allow teachers to focus deeply on their subject matter and their students, helping them to intervene with struggling students earlier and more effectively. Teachers will hold multiple subject teaching credentials.

Learning Best Occurs When Teachers Are Highly Motivated

RSMD is constructed to combat the enormous turnover among new teachers that plagues our public schools. It is estimated that 50% of new teachers leave the profession within five years (Ingersoll, 2001).[16] We believe that teachers need a career path which rewards their success both with more responsibility and significantly greater compensation. RSMD has created a career ladder for teachers, which recognizes student performance as a primary factor in advancement. A career ladder like RSMD's has several advantages, including employee retention, succession planning, and better career development.[17] The teacher career path consists of both opportunities to advance in compensation and level of responsibility in the classroom and opportunities to move into leadership positions within the network. A Lead Teacher is a grade-level content expert with outstanding classroom results who can impact an entire grade level of students by driving the instructional planning and use of data for a teaching team. The Assistant Principal is a highly-trained expert in teacher coaching and elementary instructional content, with both outstanding classroom results and leadership abilities responsible for cultivating a strong college preparatory environment of high expectations. In addition to the added level of support and capacity these roles bring to the school as a whole, for the individuals, these positions provide an attractive career path as well as impactful leadership experience. We believe this career ladder will motivate young teachers to make the investment in their teaching and advance to the positions of Lead Teacher and Assistant Principal.

Learning Best Occurs In a Culture of Caring

We believe that specialization will lead to better teachers who will increase the academic progress of our students. We also believe that our implementation of specialization will allow us to care for our students more effectively than a traditional elementary school. The advantage of this structure is that it allows for both content-area teachers to collaborate in identifying instructional best-practices that best meet the needs of the groups of students they share. This collaboration will allow them to detect both academic and emotional problems earlier and divide the work of home visits and other time-intensive interventions with the students that need their help most. In designing our school model, we leveraged J.M. McPartland's Staffing Patterns and the Social Organization of Schools (McPartland, 1992) to determine ways to increase both academic and emotional well-being of students through teacher specialization.[18]

Moreover, at RSMD, the social-emotional development of our Rocketeers is seen as a critical part of their overall development and component in their ability to realize significant levels of student achievement. To that end, RSMD will purposefully include the integration of social-emotional curricula into our community meetings. Through purposeful lessons and instructional strategies, students will be better able to develop the skills necessary to cope with their emotional and behavioral needs. We see parents as critical partners in this important work of developing and sustaining a culture of caring.

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[16] Ingersoll, R. (2001). *Teacher Turnover, Teacher Shortages, and the Organization of Schools*. University of Washington Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy. http://depts.washington.edu/ctpmail/PDFs/Turnover-Ing-01-2001.pdf

[17] CA State Dept of Employee Development, 2003

[18] Please refer to J.M. McPartland's *Staffing Patterns and the Social Organization of Schools* (McPartland, 1992)[18])[18])[18] for research on ways to increase both academic and emotional well-being of students. Paper presented at the meeting of the Society of Research for Adolescents, Washington, DC.

Learning Best Occurs in a Well-Run School

Rocketship Education provides the critical systems and support for RSMD. Rocketship Education trains school staff on how to effectively use the critical systems that allows for the continued successful practices at RSMD. Critical systems include:

- Operations Toolkit for streamlining state reporting and compliance
- Teacher Recruiting
- Teacher Professional Development
- Leadership Development Program
- Budgeting and Financial Management Systems
- Centralized Operations Management including Attendance, Facilities and Maintenance
- Rocketship Education-negotiated vendor contracts for food service, software, computers, curriculum, special education service providers
- Rocketship Education Response to Intervention model including curriculum and staffing
- Full Scope and Sequence for core subject areas
- Rocketship Education integrated UbD units for literacy, mathematics, science and social studies (explained below)
- Systems for many operational issues including attendance, food service management, assessments and assessment data management

In addition to these critical systems, Rocketship Education takes the financial risk of developing new schools and provides the following services during the school development process:

- Removing the challenge and risk of securing adequate and affordable facilities by negotiating with real estate development organizations to acquire leased facilities
- Creation of each school's charter document and collaborating with charter school authorizers to receive approval and develop operating contracts
- Bringing government and philanthropic support to school start-up totaling over $1M

Once a school is operational, Rocketship Education provides on-going support in the following areas:

- On-going training and mentoring for Principal and Assistant Principal
- Operational training for school Business Operations Manager and Office Manager
- Support for real estate, finance, IT, Special Education, and legal issues

Common Core Standards and Aligned Curriculum

The RSMD curriculum follows the California adoption of the Common Core State Standards ("CCSS") for the subject areas of: English/Language Arts (includes Writing), and Mathematics, as well as the state standards for Social Studies, Art and Music and the Next Generation Science Standards. We place most of our emphasis on the subjects of Literacy and Mathematics for our students. Our primary educational goal is to ensure students are at or above grade level in Literacy and Math by the time students leave RSMD in fifth grade. By doing so, we will ensure that students are well-prepared for the rigors of middle school and on the pathway toward college graduation. Students will also take Science, Social Studies, and Arts at all grade levels to broaden their understanding of the world and to create avenues to exercise different facets of

their intelligence. The curriculum at RSMD is aligned with CCSS, such that students will not only achieve the objectives specified in the charter but will also master the academic content standards in core curriculum areas as adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to Education Code Section 60605. Teachers will be encouraged to assist their students in exceeding minimum standards. See Appendix A-1 for the CCSS for Math and ELA.

Rocketship Focus Standards

The CCSS much more rigorously focuses on critical understandings and learnings. Within the context of those standards, the key objectives students are expected to master by the end of their grade levels are listed in Appendix A-2 and A-5 below. In order to identify the key objectives (also referred to as 'focus standards,') we examined the standards in terms of how robust they are in fully preparing our Rocketeers to be successful in middle-school and beyond in addition to examining the level of Bloom's Taxonomy required by each standard. We compared CCSS for each grade level, and made a comprehensive list of all standards for each grade level. From this list, we selected the most rigorous standards as those which are the most important markers of student success. This process allows us to determine which standards are at a high level of cognition, and will therefore require significant time and focus for students to achieve mastery. The intent of the process is not to eliminate standards; rather, all grade-level standards will be addressed in every course. Instead, the intent is to prioritize the focus of instruction, and build units around focus standards, as they are referred to at Rocketship, thus incorporating the other standards into this more meaningful, cognitively complex context. See Appendix A-2 and A-5 for Rocketship's 'focus standards' aligned with the CCSS.

These focus standards are at the core of the academic curriculum and program at RSMD. These standards have gone through a rigorous review process: the staff at Rocketship Education has refined them over the past year using a backwards planning method. The team began by examining the standards from fifth grade and adjusted them as needed based upon Bloom's Taxonomy, previous results to inform where we can further strengthen instruction as a network, feedback from existing middle schools that have accepted graduating Rocketeers that identified their strengths and weaknesses academically, and an evaluation of which standards would best prepare our Rocketeers for sixth grade and beyond. The Rocketship Education staff then backwards mapped these fifth grade focus standards through to kindergarten. This established the foundation of the long-term plans for each grade level throughout the year. Rocketship Education now provides all its schools with a rigorous, standards-based long-term plan to aid with planning for instruction in each grade level.

The development of the long-term plans leads to the teachers establishing four to eight week units that are focused on the instruction of the focus standards in a meaningful and scaffolded manner. Teachers are trained to unpack and prioritize the standards for their courses, and develop standards-based units and lesson plans using that process.

Reading

Reading instruction is comprised of five critical reading components. Our TK through first grade students are instructed through a whole-class Read Aloud, where the teacher deeply models explicit skills instruction and provides guided practice using grade-level texts. Our

Reading Comprehension block in all grades provides an opportunity to practice either new skills or strategies or reinforce what was taught during the Read Aloud block. In addition, students engage in close reading, a skill that is emphasized in the Common Core State Standards. Small, homogenous Guided Reading groups are pulled while other students engage in center activities for spiraled skills or online learning programs. Students also engage in differentiated Language Arts activities. Finally, all students partake in Independent Reading, where they practice reading a self-selected text while the teacher circulates to hold one-on-one conferences.

From experience, we expect that a significant amount of small group time in K-2 will be spent on oral language acquisition and fluency for our EL students, and on phonemic awareness and phonics skills leading to grade-level reading fluency. In grades 3-5, students who are performing at grade-level will have mastered most aspects of oral language, phonics, and phonemic awareness, and we will be focused more on deep vocabulary investigation and comprehension of fiction and non-fiction texts. Across all grade levels, teachers will work vigorously to develop students' reading fluency, which enables them to focus their energies on comprehension of complex texts. Literacy skills are also taught through content area instruction to provide broader support to students in reading, and a struggling student may be pulled for guided reading or targeted tutoring more frequently during blocks of time when their peers are practicing skills on the online learning platforms.

We are firm believers in the findings of the National Reading Panel ("NRP").[19] The NRP reviewed all of the available high quality research with measurable results and a study size and student composition indicating that they could be generalized to the entire population of American students. They found five general areas of reading instruction which were crucial for developing excellent readers: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension. We expect that even our coaches will spend a significant amount of time building their skills in each of the five areas of Reading. These areas are described below.

Phonemic Awareness Phonemic awareness is the ability of a student to hear, identify and manipulate individual sounds in words. An example of a phoneme in the word "hat" is /h/ (the sound h makes, rather than the letter). Phonemic awareness is a pre-cursor to phonics. Phonemic awareness focuses on sounds, while phonics focuses on the relationship between sounds and their written symbols. RSMD will focus on phonemic awareness instruction in all TK, K, 1st classes and with older students who may need remediation in this area using Michael Heggerty's curriculum to guide our work.

Phonics Phonics is the process of building up pattern-recognition within students to associate sounds with written letters. In the past two decades, phonics developed a poor reputation as it was overused and over-scripted. However, methodologies like the word sorts from "Words Their Way" or Make-a-Word exercises are engaging, flexible, and have an immediate impact on the types of words that students can decode. For example, most of our EL students will not likely know that the letters "sh" make the sound /sh/ instead of /s/ /h/. If a student simply reads texts over and over again, they will eventually figure out that "sh" makes /sh/. For a group of students who have catching up to do, the direct instruction of this relationship can help them

[19] This study is available online at http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/Publications/summary.htm

identify this sooner and move on to other unknown sound/symbol relationships or eventually to being able to focus more of their mental energy on comprehension.

We leverage a variety of curricula to aid our teachers in planning for phonics instruction, including Open Court, Jolly Phonics, Words Their Way, and others in order to reinforce and teach the concepts of phonics. Jolly Phonics and Words Their Way include various strategies that explicitly focus on this type of "word work," which provides students a strong phonological awareness, and, thus, they are more prepared to read. Jolly Phonics, Open Court, and Words Their Way are effective resources to support students to decode, or read, words but also to encode, or spell, words as well.

We differentiate our word study programs into five stages of development:

1. Emergent Stage – primarily phonemic awareness focus.
2. Letter-Name Stage – primarily focused on correlating letters, blends and digraphs with the sounds they make.
3. Within Word Pattern Stage – usually focused within a single syllable on patterns which form long vowels, r-controlled vowels, three letter blends, and dipthongs.
4. Syllable-Affix Stage – Examines syllabification patterns. For example, rules for doubling of the consonant before adding ed or ing. Also begins to study prefixes and suffixes.
5. Derivational Relations Stage – focused primarily on word roots, prefixes and suffixes that can help students build meaning and comprehension.

We also adapt the pacing of these programs to account for the specific language needs of our ELs. For example, short vowels are often confusing to EL students and so we can expect to spend days helping our students differentiate the short vowel sounds of /a/, /e/, and /i/ which sound almost identical to many ELs.

Fluency Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, quickly and with appropriate phrasing and expression. It reflects the readers' ability to automatically recognize words instead of decoding them. Combined with vocabulary development, fluency is a crucial stepping stone to comprehension. If a student is spending most of their mental energy using their phonics skills to decode words, they have limited capacity to also comprehend what they are reading and their overall comprehension will suffer. RSMD plans to organize a portion of our literacy block around small teacher-led small groups. For example, we will level our phonics instruction and students in each group will receive phonics instruction in their group at their current level. Fluency instruction in our groups will be conducted by selecting a text which is on the independent level for the students in that group. Students will repeatedly read the text orally, working on both their speed and their phrasing. This is one way of individualizing literacy instruction.

In addition, Rocketship Mt. Diablo will utilize the Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress (STEP) assessment in order to assess a student's progress with their fluency skills. The STEP assessment is a reading comprehension assessment which also assesses fluency, scoring students on reading rate (number of words read accurately per minute) in addition to expression. Using this assessment will give RSMD staff insight to a student's individual needs and growth.

We also believe that learning the Fry word list of 600 sight words is an effective way to jump-start a new reader's fluency. Though we are not strong proponents of rote memorization in general, we have found that the time it takes to commit these words to memory pays off many times over by allowing students to focus less energy on decoding and more on comprehension in their early reading lessons. We want students to love reading, and being able to easily decode even basic texts is motivating to our beginning readers.

We believe that well managed independent reading contributes greatly to fluency. The most important part of independent reading is book selection. By using a library of precisely leveled texts and specifying a narrow range of levels from which a student can choose, we can help our students develop fluency through their independent reading. Independent reading occurs throughout the day and RSMD's Learning Lab will have a library of leveled texts to aid our students in their independent reading skills. We also believe that reading great children's books builds a student's love of reading, so our library will also include these books for students general enjoyment and they will have time each day to read not only leveled books but fine children's literature.

Vocabulary Vocabulary is the lexicon of words that a student understands. There are two kinds of vocabulary instruction that we plan on conducting at RSMD. The first is direct instruction of key vocabulary words. The most important aspect of this type of instruction is repeated exposure and manipulation of these words. The second method of building vocabulary is word study. Our word work will progress past phonics to focus on word parts like prefixes, suffixes, and roots which can give clues about the meaning of a word. One exciting thing about this for EL students is that if the language they speak is a Latin derivative, they are likely to know roots that English-only students will not, because these words are common in their language, but not in English. Another way that we believe we can build our EL students vocabulary is through the use of cognates. There are 15,000 words that share similar meanings between English and Spanish, though they usually have different pronunciations. Explicitly relating a new English word to its cognate can make the development of vocabulary much easier.

In addition, RSMD staff will all be trained in various Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) strategies that are especially focused in the area of vocabulary development. One of these strategies is called the CCD (cognitive content dictionary), which is a tool and graphic organizer that the staff will use to build their students' knowledge, use, and identification of vocabulary words.

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Comprehension Comprehension is a student's understanding of the text they have read. Ultimately, all of the other areas in reading are about improving a student's comprehension. Comprehension is also the most difficult area for all students, and in particular can be difficult for EL students who lack the background knowledge to understand some of the concepts. While developing the other areas of literacy will give students the ability to focus on comprehension, they are not as powerful in building comprehension as direct instruction in reading strategies and skills. Direct instruction in comprehension helps students name and practice the strategies that proficient adult readers use (for example, visualizing and creating mental images while reading, or using the headings of a nonfiction text to gather clues about the topic). Initially, one of the most important parts of comprehension is for the student to identify what they don't understand. Once this has happened, the teacher can work with the student on strategies to develop an understanding—reading back in the text for clues, skipping the section and coming back, rephrasing what they have read, formulating clarifying questions, etc. In general, comprehension progresses from factual (recalling specific information from the text) to inferential (reading between the lines) to critical thinking (making multiple inferences from across the text to demonstrate broad understanding within and across texts). Comprehension for fictional works relies on different skills than non-fiction texts and RSMD plans on explicitly teaching techniques for both.

RSMD teachers provide direct instruction in reading strategies during small-group guided reading lessons in which students are grouped according to reading level. Teachers model appropriate strategies for each group and give students an opportunity to practice independently with texts that are at their instructional level. This type of leveled practice is powerful because it requires that students constantly work within their zone of proximal development. With the teacher's assistance, students are led to comprehend increasingly advanced texts. When done by a skilled teacher, guided reading can be a powerful tool for accelerating student learning. Groups are formed flexibly at RSMD, and students are re-grouped every eight weeks (and often more frequently) based upon assessment results.

RSMD will also explicitly focus on the skill of comprehension through read alouds and reading mini-lessons that precede independent reading. These lessons give students access to rich, grade-level literature and non-fiction pieces. For more information on Rocketship's approach to literacy, please see Appendix A-3 for The Rocketeers Guide to Literacy Instruction.

Writing

Children will begin writing their first day at RSMD. Writing is often a difficult task for EL students, because it requires an application of language rather than the more simple recognition of words and sentence patterns, which are required in reading. Rocketship currently uses a model based on the Lucy Calkins Writing Units of Study.

A writing workshop model will give the RSMD staff a solid foundation of key traits to focus on in their application of writing and also provide the staff with a specific model of instruction.

We will adopt the Lucy Calkins' writing rubrics to focus student learning and give them specific feedback on their writing. The rubric will emphasize the development of ideas, organization and voice, and grammatical conventions.

The Lucy Calkins Units of Study focus on very specific strategies and elements of strong writing. They give students a chance to take ownership over idea generation, which ultimately leads to writing that is more interesting, unique, and reflective of a student's voice and higher student engagement in the process of writing. The Lucy Calkins Units of Study will allow the students at RSMD to further develop their writing skills while also giving our staff at RSMD the opportunity to grow and develop more as writing instructors.

Writing will be taught as part of the Humanities block and instructional strategies will vary by grade level. For beginning writers in Kindergarten, we will rely more heavily on shared writing linked to a mentor text, often a familiar read-aloud book. As our students develop more writing proficiency, we expect to conduct a structured writer's workshop with students working through the writing process of brainstorming, organizing, drafting, editing, revising, and creating an illustrated final draft all at their own pace. In all grade levels, students will develop the ability to distinguish between informational, persuasive and narrative writing and the different strategies and purposes behind each style of writing. Each grade level will introduce or extend students' understanding of various genres of writing including response to literature, personal narrative, informational writing, opinion writing, and/or letter writing.

See Appendix A-4 for CCSS aligned ELA scope and sequences across all grade levels.

Math

RSMD students will master the basic skills, computational fluency and conceptual understanding required in the California adoption of the Common Core State Standards. Within the context of these standards, students will constantly be challenged to reason and communicate mathematically, in addition to demonstrating proficiency in all required math standards. Additionally, as called for by the Common Core, our instruction emphasizes placing mathematical content in the context of real-world situations, and using mathematics to solve problems.

Specifically, teachers will focus on developing students' number sense and algebraic reasoning abilities. This approach is supported by the "Final Report of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel" (USDE, 2008, p. 17).[20] Even young students can begin to understand numbers conceptually, and can recognize relationships among mathematical concepts.[21] According to research conducted at the University of Texas, Austin, "Number sense not only leads to automatic use of math information, but also is a key ingredient in the ability to solve basic arithmetic computations." Important elements of number sense among young children include linking symbols to quantities, understanding part-to-whole relationships, and being able to make calculations with the same fluency that we stress in reading. As a result of our initial emphasis

[20] National Mathematics Advisory Panel. *Foundations for Success: The Final Report of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel*, U.S. Department of Education: Washington, DC, 2008.

[21] *Building a Foundation for Learning in the Elementary Grades*, NCISLA VOL. 1, NO. 2, Fall 2000

on these skills, our students are more prepared for the rigors of more complex mathematics, devoting more of their thinking to visualizing and tackling difficult word problems.

In order to focus on deeper comprehension of mathematical concepts, we will use discussion to help students explain how they reached an answer and to defend their process and answers. Students will focus not only on finding the correct answers, but will be expected to articulate how the answers were derived. Our methods will include hands-on activities, classroom discussion about mathematical reasoning, and sufficient calculation practice to make arithmetic operations automatic.

We believe that in order for our teachers and school leaders to deliver high quality math instruction, they must deeply understand the content of the Math CCSS. Math instructors are provided with professional development experiences centered on understanding the demands of the standards and their implication for instruction. RMSD also will provide math instructors with a math planning module for every common core standard, that includes information about what skills and understandings are necessary for mastery, as well as a myriad of instructional resources. (See Appendix A-6 for a sample Math Planning Module.) Additionally, our Assistant Principals will find relevant professional development experiences for our math/science teachers to improve their practices including observations of highly skilled teachers, conferences and workshops, and exploring professional literature as well.

Math instructors will develop mathematical units that are backwards planned according to a centrally-developed scope and sequence based on the CCSS for that grade. This will allow RSMD to focus on creating units that are focused on depth of instruction and conceptual instruction as well. See Appendix A-6 for sample Math planning modules.

As well as utilizing our internal math planning modules to assist with unit and lesson plan, RMSD uses the Common Core-aligned version of Singapore Math[22] to support teachers' planning process. Singapore Math is a curriculum based on the national mathematics curriculum used for Kindergarten through 6th grade in Singapore, modified for the US and aligned to Common Core. In fact, the creators of the Common Core consulted the Singapore Ministry of Education when creating the Common Core standards in mathematics due to the success of Singaporean students on international assessments such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The quality, rigor, and alignment of Singapore Math to the Common Core State Standards was verified by Achieve, an independent nonprofit organization that seeks to raise standards in America[23]. Two of Singapore Math's key approaches that Rocketship teachers are trained to incorporate into their instruction are a concrete to pictorial to abstract trajectory when teaching concepts, and bar modeling to help illustrate and solve word problems,

Science

[22] http://www.singaporemath.com/
[23] http://www.achieve.org/CCSSandSingapore

RSMD's science instruction will be grounded in the Next Generation Science Standards.[24] Science instruction will be embedded in both Humanities and Math instruction through the use of thematically integrated, standards-based Understanding by Design (UbD) units (described in more detail below). Integrating Math and Science gives students the context through which to understand how mathematics relates to the physical world. Moreover, science naturally integrates into various aspects of math. Science is also integrated into Humanities instruction throughout the block through the use of non-fiction texts, a major focus of the Common Core State Standards. Consequently, this integration of subject matter ensures that students will have greater exposure to expository texts, scientific notebooks, graphing, organizing data, and many other math and literacy skills that correlate with science.

The science curriculum at RSMD has been primarily organized through the implementation of UbD units which integrate science standards into mathematics and literacy instruction. At Rocketship, we have done extensive work to group science standards into robust UbD units that cover science topics in depth.

We believe that Science offers a broad array of concepts crucial to student understanding. Students will discover and learn about the natural world by using the methods of science as extensions of their own curiosity and wonder. Students will acquire knowledge of the life, earth and physical sciences from a balanced curriculum, which includes building on their understanding of science concepts to learn about the logic of the scientific method and applications of science to the world around them. Students will develop critical thinking skills of science: observing, comparing, organizing, inferring, relating, and applying.

All students will be exposed to life, earth, and physical sciences. Our desired outcomes from science are an understanding of the process of scientific inquiry, curiosity about the world around them, skills to comprehend informational text, and increased self-esteem from producing a tangible work-product as a result of their understanding.

Social Studies

Social Studies instruction will be embedded in Literacy instruction through the use of thematically integrated, standards-based UbD units. Our use of the UbD framework to design integrated Social Studies and Literacy units makes the concepts and academic vocabulary accessible to our students regardless of current reading level. For example, students will learn about the Civil War through an integrated unit. Students will read primary sources such as diary entries and secondary sources such as informational texts on the Civil War. They will also read fictional texts set in that time period. They will apply map skills to trace the route of the Underground Railroad and produce biographies of famous Americans of the Civil War. In this way, students learn Social Studies content and skills through rich integrated units that weave together Social Studies, Reading and Writing standards.

Key content outcomes for Social Studies include knowledge and cultural understanding, democratic principles and civic values, and academic and social skills necessary for effective participation in diverse societies. Key skills we hope students to learn include the integration of

[24] http://www.nextgenscience.org/

multiple skills to solve a project-based problem, the ability to use informational text, mastery of academic vocabulary, and increased reading and writing skills. This curriculum will be aligned with the state Social Studies Standards.

Teachers will build upon students' curiosity about themselves and their world by presenting history as an exciting and dramatic series of events and issues. Students will engage in problem solving as they acquire, evaluate, and use information in a variety of ways. Frequent opportunities will exist for all students including English Learners to share their language, cultural ideas, customs, and heritage, thereby providing multicultural dimensions to the curriculum. The teachers will provide equal access to the core curriculum for all students through a variety of appropriate strategies. The teachers will facilitate the exploration of values critical to understanding the democratic process.

Arts (Art and Music)

The curriculum will be aligned with the Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools and will include dance, drama/theater, music and visual arts. Arts will be integrated into the Humanities block, often as part of Social Studies content and also taught through our enrichment periods.

All students, including EL, Special Education, and high-achieving students will have equal access to the visual and performing arts core curriculum, with modifications to meet their individual needs. Integrated instruction will be delivered by the regular classroom teacher, as well as by the enrichment staff. The State has effectively identified key standards for the visual and performing arts. Those standards will guide the integration of arts into the curriculum. Through a process of unpacking and prioritizing content standards for the four core content areas, teachers will identify opportunities to integrate the arts into those curricular areas, and will build unit clusters that maximize student exposure to and engagement in the arts.

See Appendix A-7 for example Science, Social Studies and Art units.

Socio-Emotional Learning

We believe that RSMD students must master both academic skills and non-cognitive skills essential to the whole child: goal setting, perseverance, critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and communication. We provide an environment where students develop into confident, self-motivated, competent, and productive life-long learners. We know high expectations lead to higher student achievement.[25] Our students possess the habits, skills, and characteristics necessary to succeed in college and beyond, as contributing citizens of the twenty-first century. RSMD aligns with research that supports non-cognitive skills as essential to success. Carol Dweck argues that a growth mindset, in which abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work, affords the individual resiliency and a love of learning that carries

[25] Cotton, K. (1989). *Expectations and Student Outcomes.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

throughout life.[26] Rocketship parents who have older children attending other schools comment that their children enrolled at Rocketship demonstrate far more ownership and resiliency than their other children who have not attended a Rocketship school. We enable this growth mindset in a few ways:

- ***Home visits:*** RSMD culture begins with a home visit with the family and potential student from a RSMD staff member. Home visits create a learning partnership between families and our teachers. Teachers come to know the unique strengths and character of each student and their families while parents learn strategies for helping their student reach the individual student learning goals co-developed by students, parents and Rocketship educators. After enrollment, our students' parents participate in frequent parent meetings that reinforce RSMD practices and values; furthermore, they commit volunteer time to support their students' educations. That time is flexible and comes in a variety of forms such as accompanying students on class trips, attending RSMD community events, or providing assistance with class projects. Please see Element D below for more information on parental involvement at RSMD.

- ***Core values:*** Rocketship's core values of respect, responsibility, persistence, and empathy help cement this ownership of learning by students and their families (see Appendix A-8, for a full description of our core values). We reinforce the core values in every classroom and in all common spaces. There is a common language at Rocketship that reminds our students of the common vision for success both academically and behaviorally. Each day begins with a Rocketeer Launch, during which all classes gather to say the Rocketeer Creed (our daily promise to live by our core values) and sing a song that highlights one core value per month. Parents frequently participate in the Rocketship Launch (see Appendix A-9 for photos of a Rocketeer Launch). To further individualize core values, students reflect on their own exhibition of core values as they fill out their own behavior reports and give themselves a score for that day's efforts.

Ownership of Rocketship core values extends to personalized learning and out-of-school individualized practice time. We want our students to learn to be persistent, even when faced with difficult tasks. We believe that persistence, combined with taking responsibility for individual success, will develop motivated, self-driven, and "gritty" individuals. These individuals develop a growth mindset that drives them to succeed in higher education and life. Independent out-of-school practice reinforces these skills. We design assignments for students to complete during out of school time to include some common elements: differentiation, spiral review, and targeted practice of recently taught skills. Homework also covers both math concepts and fact-fluency in addition to reading skill and comprehension practice, writing, and grammar. Teachers regularly review homework with students.

Starting in school year 2012-2013, we implemented Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) network-wide. The fundamental purpose of PBIS is to create learning environments that are more consistent, predictable, positive, and safe, which helps our students develop their socio-emotional intelligence (See Appendix A-10 for a description of our PBIS

[26] Dweck, C. "What is Mindset." Available online at http://mindsetonline.com/whatisit/about/index.html. Accessed September 10, 2013.

approach.) One key component of PBIS is implementing a socio-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum. We implement the "Kimochi's" curriculum in the lower grades (pre-k through grade two), and the "RULER" approach in upper grades (third through fifth grades). The goal of these curricula is to help students identify, communicate, and regulate feelings, as well as develop appropriate social skills. RULER was developed at the Yale University Center for Emotional Intelligence. The Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence uses the power of emotions to create a more effective and compassionate society. The Center conducts research and teaches people of all ages how to develop their emotional intelligence. Emotions drive learning, decision-making, creativity, relationships, and health.[27] In turn, we believe that developing the emotional intelligence of our students enables improved goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem solving (See Appendix A-11 for research regarding the efficacy of the Kimochi's and RULER programs).

Transitional Kindergarten

For students in transitional kindergarten (TK), students attend school with roughly 25 fellow Rocketeers, and engage with certified-teachers and a paraprofessional. Core instructional components of the day are taught using research based curricula and strategies. As part of the daily schedule, students rotate among small-group instruction from a teacher and/or assistant-teacher; Online Learning Program (OLP) time; and center time (e.g., dramatic play, sensory or fine motor skills work, etc.). Within each classroom, we group students by skill level or into small group activities, allowing the teacher and paraprofessional to move throughout the room in support of students individually or to pull out small groups for targeted instruction. When students demonstrate mastery on a standard using an Online Learning Program or developmentally appropriate assessments, they move on to the next standard or program. When students demonstrate mastery in the classroom, they are re-grouped for targeted instruction. For example, students have access to core instruction through a whole group phonemic awareness and phonics block, and then are supported and challenged in small groups and differentiated independent work. See Appendix A-12 for a transitional K schedule and sample unit.

Approach to Academic Instruction

A sample student schedule (second grader) at RSMD is as follows:

Time	Activity
7:45 – 8:05	**LAUNCH – daily school-wide kick off**
8:05 – 8:25	**Breakfast and Community Meeting**
8:25 – 11:25	**Humanities** • **Includes Social Studies and Science thematic units** • **Targeted small group instruction**
11:25 – 12:10	**Lunch and Recess**
12:15 – 1:50	**Math** • **Includes Science thematic units**

[27] From the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, accessed on September 29, 2013 at http://ei.yale.edu/ruler/.

	• **Targeted small group instruction**
1:50 – 2:30	**Enrichment Center** • **Physical Education and/or Art, Music, etc. (depends on the day)**
2:30 – 4:00	**Learning Lab** • **Online adaptive curriculum (50 mins)** • **Leveled Reading (35 mins)** • **Targeted 1:1 and small group tutoring (30 mins, optional based on a student qualifying or not)**
4:00 – 6:00	**After School Program (Optional)** • **Additional tutoring based on RtI assessment** • **Homework Help**

Please see Appendix A-13 for a more detailed description of a typical day in school for this sample second grade student.

Personalized Learning

RSMD will provide instruction and tutoring in ratios that maximize student learning. Personalized learning at RSMD is geared to provide the right student with the right lesson at the right time through the right instructional method. Because RSMD utilizes a blended learning approach towards the goal of personalized learning, the configuration of a classroom is far different than that of a traditional elementary school. See Appendix A-14 for additional information regarding blended learning. See also Appendix A-15 for a case study written by the Dell Foundation in 2012 describing the then current use of blended learning at Rocketship.[28]

Our students are exchanged between a Humanities teacher (ELA and Social Studies and Science) and a Math teacher (Math and Science). Additionally, these students spend a portion of their day in the Learning Lab. The Learning Lab is a combination of a computer lab and tutoring center. There is a full-set of leveled books where students can read independently at their "just right" level (the top of their independent reading level) as well as at computers running adaptive online programs that allow students to access instruction at exactly their current level of understanding.

We have selected the programs used during Learning Lab based on their ability to adapt to each student's skill level. If a student is struggling with a particular concept, our adaptive programs adjust the pacing and content the student presented in order to target additional practice until the concept is mastered. Current Online Learning Programs (OLPs) for math include ST Math, DreamBox and iReady for Math. Current OLPs for reading include MyOn, iReady for Reading, and Lexia. Please see Appendix A-16 for descriptions of each of these software packages. While these are the OLPs currently in use, Rocketship is constantly searching for best in breed programs and reserves the right to change programs as it sees fit. Please also see Appendix A-17 for a research report regarding the efficacy of DreamBox, an OLP which Rocketship has used for several years.

[28] Not all of the information included in this case study is representative of exact practices for RSOG. However the study is illustrative of blended learning practices at Rocketship.

Use of Thematic Units

At RSMD, we believe that students benefit from having core subjects integrated throughout the day. This prevents subject areas from becoming isolated areas of learning, but rather, academic content is integrated throughout all subject areas through the use of thematic units and consequently, students are able to learn that all skill areas (reading, writing, math, science, social studies, etc.) rely upon one another in order for true learning and academic achievement to be accomplished. Moreover, through this approach, students are better able to more rapidly gain fluency in English and build vocabulary beyond a solely functional usage.[29] Consequently, we approach our instructional assignments for teachers and students in the same manner.

The science and social studies instruction at RSMD is based on the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's ("ASCD") Understanding by Design ("UbD") approach. This approach is a framework for creating a curriculum based on a deep understanding of standards. UbD has been shown to develop students' reasoning and interest in Science and Social Studies. To develop our curriculum based on the UbD framework, we started by backwards mapping of the Common Core standards (CCSS) into a set of 'focusstandards' in order to create a robust focus on core ELA and Math standards. The CCSS much more rigorously focuses on critical understandings and learnings, thus, this heightened level of focus and simplicity within our curricula, as well as the backwards mapping of CCSS from 5th grade to Kindergarten, ensures that our Rocketeers upon graduation will be thoroughly prepared for middle-school and on-track for college.

We then use the same backwards mapping process with the Next Generation Science Standards and CA state standards to identify the main objectives in Science and Social Studies, especially as the Social Studies content for our students is region- and often community-specific. For example, at some point in the grade level curricula of RSMD, it is likely that a unit will be focused on Cesar Chavez and his work for equity with Latinos in California. We then develop units and lesson plans within each unit to focus on these major objectives. As we develop these units, we focus on correlating these unit objectives with literacy and math objectives that are relevant to the core unit as well. We have been refining these units for multiple years, yet with the transition to CCSS and Next Generation Science Standards, we are now rebuilding many of these units and in the 2014-15 school year we will have the first UbD units correlated with the CCSS. In subsequent years, we will continue to refine and add to these units as more teachers contribute to the richness and learning techniques of each unit and lesson. See Appendix A-18 for sample UbD scope and sequences aligned with CCSS.

Each classroom teacher is also responsible for various objectives that, depending on their homeroom, may include literacy objectives combined with science and social studies objectives or math objectives combined with science objectives. This accountability to multiple subjects ensures that teachers are instructing various subjects throughout the day.

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[29] Collier and Thomas: Longitudinal Study of Successful Programs for Second Language Learners, 1995, Johnson, M. J., & Janisch, C. (1998). Connecting literacy with social studies content. Social Studies & the Young Learner.

RSMD teachers teach multiple UbD units a year. Instructional plans may include:

- Conducting investigations during the science block and reading non-fiction leveled texts related to the topic of investigation
- Using hands-on materials and working in cooperative laboratory groups to reinforce understanding of scientific concepts
- Writing expository pieces related to a unit
- Writing fictional text related to a unit (i.e. creating an extinct species)
- Researching and conducting inquiry-based projects related to a topic within a unit
- Utilizing GLAD strategies such as pictorial input charts, expert groups and cognitive content dictionaries
- Incorporating mathematical concepts into science units
- Presenting findings from units to parents and community members during Exhibition Nights

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In addition, at RSMD we believe that students need to be exposed to their natural world. There are a plethora of things that can be learned from students spending time in nature, which is often difficult for many of our students as they grow-up in an urban environment. Consequently, a unique and important component of RSMD science curriculum is exposing our students to overnight camps. These camps occur in 4th and 5th grades and some occur in 3rd grade as well. Through partnerships with several nature organizations, we are able to expose our students to several important scientific standards and help them gain a deeper understanding of these concepts.

The integration of science and social studies in the core literacy and math subject areas allow students to make connections across multiple subject areas. For example, one of the most important skills a student can learn from these classes in the primary grades is how to effectively read non-fiction text in the content areas (Pressley, 2002). The integration of literacy and science and social studies allows students to further develop these skills. Students will be faced with a multitude of classes throughout the rest of their lives where this skill will be central to their understanding of the content and ultimately their enjoyment and performance in the subject. The critical skills of determining the organization of a non-fiction text, identifying and understanding key vocabulary terms, and actively summarizing are skills that are not easily learned when reading fiction. Likewise, another important skill that students can learn from the integration of math and science is the application of mathematical concepts and equations. Students are able to translate a static equation into a meaningful real world experience, which allows them to better retain and apply this knowledge in future real-life situations. This ability to apply mathematical concepts outside of a controlled classroom environment is a crucial life-skill for the success of students as they mature and grow.

Extended Analysis Project:

All 5th grade students complete an independent or group learning project before graduating from 5th grade at RSMD. We call this the "extended analysis" project and make explicit connection for students between this project and the thesis projects that some college students complete in order to graduate from a four-year university. Recent student-developed project titles include: "Greek mythology is important to the development of a modern society:" "Pitbulls are not a danger to society and should not be restricted;" "We should all drive energy-efficient cars;" "Video games do not have to have a negative impact on society;" and "We must protect the rain forests". For this project, students have the opportunity to work one-on-one with an adult mentor to conduct research and analysis on a topic of their choice. Students must develop and articulate their own "thesis" or stance. The goal of this assignment is to provide students with a deeper opportunity to explore areas of learning not pursued in depth during time at RSMD. See Appendix A-19 for an exemplar "extended analysis" project.

Data Driven Instruction

Assessments

All students are assessed within the first four-six weeks of the school year in order to determine performance relative to grade level standards and national norms. This is a critical step in the school and teachers' ability to immediately begin to personalize instruction for Rocketeers. RSMD will use a suite of math and literacy assessments such as the NWEA MAP assessment, the STEP literacy assessment, math and ELA benchmark assessments, and frequent formative assessments aligned with the CCSS created via Illuminate. All of this data is used to identify our students who fall into the below basic level[30] s well as identify the overall achievement level of each student, and consequently, the appropriate levels of instruction and groupings.

RSMD uses both the NWEA MAP[31] and the STEP[32] assessment developed by the University of Chicago. The former allows us to measure our students' proficiency against national norms for CCSS performance, and the latter provides teachers with a granular breakdown of students' reading ability, both in what the CCSS terms "fundamental skills" and in general comprehension skills. These assessments drive decisions about whether students need additional classroom support or tutoring.

RSMD students, parents, and educators understand what students are learning and enable students to set and meet goals linked to CCSS-aligned standards and assessments. Near the beginning of the year, teachers use standardized test data and data from the NWEA assessments to understand the baseline achievement of their students along with specific areas of strength and weakness. To assess whether students are on track to meet their growth goals during the year, we administer the NWEA assessment at the beginning, middle and end of year. We also conduct additional bi-monthly standards-aligned assessments of each student in reading, writing, and math.

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[30] Previously we referred to this level as Far Below Basic/Below Basic to align with STAR performance levels, and now we use "below basic" or "far below grade level" to align to the lowest of the four achievement level on Smarter Balanced.
[31] http://www.nwea.org/
[32] https://uchicagoimpact.org/step

Quarterly Data Days

Following administration of these bi-monthly interim assessments, the teachers, Assistant Principal, and Principal at RSMD will have a full day of professional development that is focused on the analysis of the interim assessment data.

As a key component of these data days, a teacher identifies overall positive trends of the entire class and challenges as well. This exercise then leads the teacher to begin to identify specific 'focus' students that are within these 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 that they are intended to accomplish within the next four weeks and eight weeks (these goals are also entered into the Professional Growth Plan (PGP). The teacher then begins to develop an instructional plan for these specific students, which is intended to be applicable to all students that are facing similar challenges. However, this specific plan is intended to ensure that the student will realize the goals that have been set for them in the next four and eight weeks. 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. See Appendix A-20 for artifacts from a quarterly data day.

Goal Setting

After teachers analyze the data from diagnostic interim assessments during quarterly data days, students and teachers work together to set and/or revisit goals to help ensure that all students are on track to meet their growth goals in both ELA and math during the school year.

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. Students and teachers discuss goals so that students can understand the progress needed. In addition, students set weekly goals for their individual learning practice on Online Learning Programs (OLPs).

Below we describe the process for individual goal setting for both overall learning goals and goals for OLPs use:

- **Overall learning goals:** Each classroom or grade-level publicly tracks a number of class-based and individual goals, including progress toward ELA and math benchmarks, as well as sight word recognition, progression in STEP reading levels, letter/sound mastery, and more. All of these assessments are aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Each teacher defines his or 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 "rocketships" to align with school mascots (see Appendix A-21 for a photo of a classroom goal tracker).

- **Online Learning Programs goals:** Each student sets individualized goals for the week in their Online Learning Programs (OLPs) Log. These goals focus on progress planned for each student during computer-based learning experiences. The OLP Log is designed to help students set and track progress toward their individual goals and 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. Students write their goals in the OLP Logs, which are kept in the Lab for fall semester. In the spring, as a reflection of their ownership of their progress, students in grades two through five begin to keep track of their own OLP Logs second semester. See Appendix A-22 for example OLP goals.

At Rocketship, we celebrate progress toward individual student goals. Every week during the Rocketship Launch/Landing Time, 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.

Rocketship highlights the connection between individualized goal setting and success in college by focusing on college readiness from the first day our students enter our schools as pre-kindergarteners. Our hallways are lined with college banners, and each student belongs to a homeroom named for a college mascot (e.g., "Bears" for UC Berkeley). Community members speak to students about college and broader experiences related to college attendance. Students and parents participate jointly in college visits to experience the excitement and diversity of a college campus. As a result, all students believe and expect that they will go to college. See Appendix A-23 for a picture of college banners in a Rocketship hallway.

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 three times annually. See Appendix A-24 for a sample report card.

Data Tracking Tools

Illuminate

The Illuminate platform provides educators with easy access to assessment items, and supports the scoring and data capture of assessments (See Illuminate screenshot, Appendix A-25). 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 college- and career-ready aligned digital resources ensure that educators can effectively measure the progress of their students and modify their approach as needed.

Schoolzilla

Rocketship uses the cloud-based Schoolzilla data warehouse and reporting system to collect and organize student data. This system provides an integrated data warehouse that stores achievement, enrollment, and attendance data for all our students, and Rocketship partners with Schoolzilla to build toolkits and beautiful, easy to use reports and dashboards that are accessible

and informative for educators. The reports translate simple data into actionable information that educators can use to modify their instructional approach. 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. As the diagram below indicates, Schoolzilla enables teachers to further individualize instruction during a student's tier II Response to Intervention (RtI) sessions with ILSs. At the end of tier II sessions, tutors can leave notes regarding a student's progress, in order to provide teachers with more timely updates as well as update them during Common Planning Time, which occurs daily with ILS staff and teachers within a grade level. Both ILSs and teachers are then able to make better use of tier II sessions, to assist each child with his/her specific learning needs. More timely, targeted interventions help to accelerate each student's progress and increase the likelihood of successful remediation. Content from the RtI tab is automatically linked and integrated with the student's Individualized Learning Plan.

Approximately every 6-8 weeks our teachers reassess to show student progress. This is translated visually by the staff into data displays for each class, showing which students fall into each quartile from Below Basic to Advanced. This data is then used to adjust classroom instruction and to identify students in need of more focused support to make adequate progress.

Teachers will also collect data from Schoolzilla which enables educators to sort and identify students into different small groups, by using different criteria. Teachers will also collect data from the universal screens at a macro and micro level. They then use this data to select and group students for intervention.

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. Assessment data is then used by teachers and school leaders to assess students' learning proficiencies and remediate their deficits.

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.

Key benefits of the data analysis that Schoolzilla provides include:

- Real-time feedback on student progress. Real-time assessments from online curricula and external online assessments–are available for teachers to track and prioritize each student's progress.

- More effective lesson planning. Dashboard information gives teachers useful content and context for planning lessons based on students' current levels, enabling teachers to re-allocate instruction time for key topics, and regroup students based on mastery, as appropriate.

- More targeted, personalized instruction. Teachers have a larger, deeper "basket" of resources to deploy for personalized instruction and student achievement. Having more resources at hand (without adding complexity) gives teachers more options to help students succeed.

- Data-driven assessments of teacher effectiveness. Teachers and administrators have access to more assessment data. With more ways to assess students, teachers gain more insights into the effectiveness of their teaching methods and practices.

Through the purposeful integration of Schoolzilla with data analysis professional development days, teachers at RSMD are able to fully analyze their student achievement data and progress. Moreover, following this analysis, they are quickly able to find solutions and next steps involving the multiple resources (ILSs, online curricula, in-class objectives/interventions, focusing on a particular instructional objective with the Assistant Principal, etc.).

See Appendix A-26 for screenshots illustrating much of what's described above.

Intervention Learning Plans

Teachers and school leaders determine intervention plans for groups of students in intervention. They use assessment data to determine measurable goals that are realistic yet ambitious for a 6-8 week period, classroom modifications, computer curricula focus, and explicit goals and their corresponding practices for ILS's to accomplish with each student.

Assessment data, performance on classwork, RtI content and the integration of results from online learning programs are important inputs into this plan.

Response to Intervention

Revisions to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act specifically allow coordination of all general education, categorical and special education services. Although the state of California still uses a traditional, separated categorical and special education organizational structure, federal law and implementing regulations, along with precedent in other districts in the state of California, are currently interpreted as allowing coordination of services under Response to Intervention.

The Rocketship Response to Intervention model is intended to systematically coordinate regular and special education assessment and services to below grade level students. Response to Intervention (RtI) describes both a service delivery model and eligibility criteria for specific learning disability (IDEA 2004). In a report prepared by the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (2005), the Committee identified three core components of RtI: "(1) application of scientific, research-based interventions; (2) measurement of student's response to these interventions; and (3) use of RtI data to inform instruction" (Tom Green). The term RtI

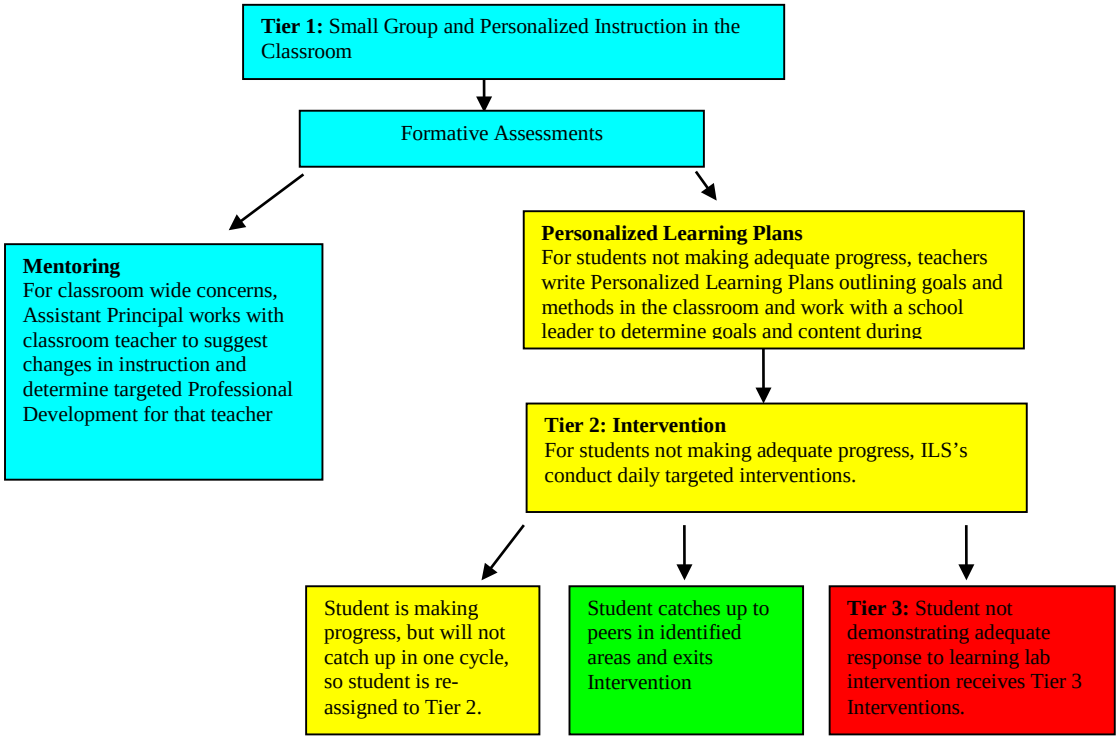
also describes an eligibility criterion for special education. This criterion is found in IDEA 2004 Sec 614(b)(6)(B). The law states; "In determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, a local education agency may use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures…"

The purpose of the model is to provide 3-tiered assessment, intervention, and support to all at risk students as early and effectively as possible. The expected outcome is that, over time, more students would progress from at risk status to functioning within a normal range for grade level standard, and far fewer students would ultimately need formal special education assessment and service. This model is also intended to address the achievement gap between below grade level English Learners, Learning Disabled students, economically disadvantaged students, and students of color; and white and Asian, English speaking, economically advantaged students. A growing body of research supports the contention that coordinated, intensive, early intervention promotes advanced and equitable student achievement.

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. Assessment, instructional strategies and materials, schedules and groupings, and RtI team makeup may vary from site to site depending on the instructional needs of the students and the expertise of the staff.

Please see Appendix A-27 for Rocketship's Response to Intervention guide.

RSMD's Three-Tier Response to Intervention Approach



RtI Rationale

Discontent with the IQ-Achievement model as a means of identifying students with learning disabilities stems from three major deficiencies with this model—the unreliability of discrepancy scores, the inability of IQ scores to predict student potential, and high misidentification rates (Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, and Hickman 2003). Along with these deficits, the IQ-Achievement model usually identifies students after they have experienced academic failure. This remedial approach to intervention stymies more preventative measures and frustrates service providers who are forced to wait for students to fail before intervening. *Catch Them Before They Fall: Identification and Assessment to Prevent Reading Failure in Young Children*, Torgeson (1998) summarizes the research base that echoes these frustrations, "One of the most compelling findings from recent reading research is that children who get off to a poor start in reading rarely catch up…And the consequences of a slow start in reading become monumental as they accumulate over time" (pg. 1). Instead of a remedial approach to intervention, RtI focuses on the prevention of learning difficulties by providing early intervention before students experience academic failure. With mounting evidence from both basic and applied research indicating the effects of a remedial approach to service provision and special education eligibility criteria, the preventative approach employed by RtI seems a more viable alternative.

Core Components of RtI

RtI describes a team-based, systematic process in which staff provide early intervention. The efficacy of this instruction is assessed using frequent progress monitoring, which in turn informs decision-making (Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, and Hickman 2003). The most frequently used service delivery model is the three-tiered model. In Tier I, general educators use a research-based core curriculum and monitor student progress regularly. This first level should ideally provide adequate instruction for at least 80% of students. If a student does not 'respond' to this primary intervention, the student receives Tier II services. Tier II services supplement the core curriculum and provide students with extra practice using a research-based intervention. Tier II interventions can either be provided in a general education or in a pullout setting, supporting 10-15% of students school-wide. If a student receives Tier II services and continues to need support, as measured by frequent progress monitoring, the learner moves to Tier III. When a student moves to this level of service and doesn't demonstrate adequate progress, a special education evaluation may be conducted to determine eligibility for formal special education services (National Joint Committee of Learning Disabilities 2005).

Other Potential Benefits of RtI

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. For example, students with diverse backgrounds are often overrepresented in special education (Department of Education 2007), and this model could help ameliorate this longstanding problem. 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).

Not only can RtI help increase equity in schools, it may also promote collaboration and shared responsibility between service providers. RtI, when preceded by an equalization of funding, training, and support, may help break down the historical barriers between general education and special education. This approach also offers general educators the ability to use "instructionally relevant" data beyond standardized test scores. Teachers and staff members could utilize a variety of assessments, including curriculum-based measurement, district-wide benchmarks, and teacher created measures to assess student growth (National Joint Committee of Learning Disabilities 2005).

Essential Elements of Response to Intervention

There are, however, several necessary elements of the educational program that are essential to successfully implementing this model, including:

1. **Consensus Building: A professional, institutional commitment to all students meeting or exceeding grade-level standards.** Staff must truly believe and be willing to put into practice the belief that all students are capable of meeting or exceeding grade level standards.
2. **Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring: The use of data-driven decision-making to inform instructional decisions, allocation of resources, and instruction.** Staff must initially assess all students upon entry into school, and assess student progress on an ongoing basis, at a minimum three times per year, collect the data, analyze the results, and design instruction to meet current student need.
3. **Early Intervention: A commitment to systematic early literacy instruction**. Intervention must begin at the earliest possible opportunity, in most cases upon beginning Kindergarten. An extended or full day Kindergarten program is essential for full implementation of the model. Kindergarten and primary grades staff must be trained in and provide highly effective pre-literacy and literacy instruction. Support staff, both remedial and special education, must be trained to provide effective and developmentally appropriate assessment and instruction at the Kindergarten and primary levels.
4. **Collaboration between all instructional staff.** Regular classroom teachers, remedial and support staff, and special education staff must meet regularly to examine assessment data, determine appropriate instructional strategies based upon that assessment data, develop plans and schedules for instructional groupings, and re-evaluate progress on a regular basis.
5. **Understanding that support and instruction for at risk students must supplement, not supplant, regular classroom instruction.** Response to Intervention suggests a 3-tiered model for support. Optimal support and intervention for below grade level students starts in and continues in the regular classroom. Regular classroom teaching staff must commit to differentiating instruction to most effectively address the needs of below grade level students in the regular classroom. If additional support and instruction by support and special education staff is needed, or if special education services are warranted, differentiated instruction must continue in the classroom in coordination with support and special education services. All at risk students should receive basic skills instruction in

the regular classroom, by support staff, and in an extended day setting. For greatest impact all of these services should be coordinated.

6. **Commitment to long-term professional development.** Current staff seldom has the professional knowledge to fully implement all aspects of an effective instructional program for below grade level students. The school as an institution must commit to identifying effective instructional strategies and providing the professional development to train staff to use those strategies.

The Response to Intervention Team

The work of the Response to Intervention program is guided by a Response to Intervention Team. This team works with school staff to assess all students upon entry into the school, determines need for all students assessed as below grade level, assigns services and develops schedules, and monitors progress. The RtI Team is led by the Principal or Assistant Principal and school psychologist, and also includes the Individualized Learning Specialists, general education classroom teachers, and any and all staff providing direct instruction or service to below grade level students.

Members of the RtI Team interact regularly to guide the work. They work together to train, assess, analyze data, determine instructional needs, obtain materials, and develop schedules and instructional groupings and assignments.

The Student Support Team focuses on individual at risk students within the greater context of the whole school RtI program. This focus fosters collaboration between the regular classroom and all support and special education staff and services. The significant revision of Student Support Team guidelines and procedures must be addressed in the Response to Intervention model. See Appendix A-28 for sample Student Support Team forms.

Assessment-Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring

All students are assessed upon initial enrollment in school. Using universal screens such as the STEP assessment, NWEA MAP, and/or AIMSweb, students are identified for RtI eligibility. Please also see Element C below.

This data collection and analysis process requires the implementation of a school-wide assessment, collection, and analysis system.

Eligibility Criteria

All students assessed as currently below grade level standards based upon the data from the multiple assessment tools are eligible for services under the RtI model. All law and policy guidelines for other eligibilities (special education and English Learner) must be adhered to, but are secondary to determination of relation to grade level standards. These legal and policy guidelines are no longer the highest priority for determination of need for service. The Response to Intervention Team uses current assessment data to determine need based upon relation to grade level standard, to develop instructional and support strategies, and as the next priority to determine eligibility for formal special education services.

Provision of Services-Instructional Strategies and Materials

RSMD's school model is a full Response to Intervention model, providing three tiers of intervention for students in need of additional assistance. For students determined upon initial assessment to be below grade level standards, the Response to Intervention Team employs the three-tiered approach and determines appropriate service and staffing. Delivery of service is in the least restrictive, most appropriate setting: general education classroom by the general education classroom teacher; general education classroom supported by additional pullout instruction, both augmented by extended day instruction; or a specialized inclusion program. Instructional strategies will include best practices as determined by the RtI staff. This approach requires a very high degree of collaboration and coordination between the general education classroom teacher and support staff. Regular grade level planning team meetings, staff meetings, and RtI team meetings may be used to support the collaboration necessary to plan coordinated instruction. Ongoing interim assessment results are analyzed to identify students who are failing to make adequate progress.

The first tier of intervention is in the classroom. Guided reading groups will often be used to deliver these more individualized objectives during normal classroom instruction to all students, while teachers will also run small skills-based groups for students in need of tier I interventions. The second tier of intervention in Learning Lab will be a daily small-group intervention with a group of students with similar needs. If classroom modifications and tier II interventions fail to help a student make adequate progress, students will receive tier III interventions which are targeted, individualized interventions. At this stage, students may enter the IEP process. Our IEPs reflect academic goals aligned with the school's goals for that grade level. Providing these three levels of intervention allows RSMD to serve the most struggling readers more effectively than traditional elementary schools.

Tier 1 General Education Classroom:

Teachers use research-based curricula with all students in such a way that at least 80% of students should be able to access and master the skills and concepts taught. Teachers formally assess student progress after 6-8 weeks of instruction and also monitor student progress through ongoing informal assessment. Students who do not respond adequately to the initial instruction receive additional modifications and support in the general education classroom. These modifications may include adjustments in intensity, duration, and frequency of instruction. Teachers may meet with smaller groups more often for longer periods of time. Teachers may adjust instructional strategies and materials as well.

Regular classroom reading programs use a balanced literacy approach with regular guided leveled reading. Regular classroom math programs use Singapore Math, supplemented by a variety of direct instruction support programs. Tier I interventions include increased frequency of small group instruction, including flexible, skill-based small groups in the regular classroom.

RSMD offers all students the opportunity to participate in our Learning Lab daily. The purpose of the Learning Lab is to provide students with additional practice in literacy and math at exactly their current level of instruction.

Tier II Continued General Education Classroom instruction supplemented by support services instruction:
Students that are not responding adequately to Tier I instruction, even with accommodations and modification in the general education classroom, or who are identified as significantly below grade level in the first round of assessments, are then assigned to a period each day that includes significant small group tutoring (intervention) time. During this time, they work directly with an ILS on the specific skills they are lacking. ILSs are provided with a very specific 6-8-week plan, designed by Rocketship Education, consisting of evidence based interventions, using strategies and approaches to get students to meet their target at the end of 6-8 weeks. For example, areas addressed through Tier II intervention may include letter-sound correspondence, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and/or comprehension. Rocketship sets customized goals for students in intervention and monitors student progress regularly throughout the intervention cycle, using curriculum-based measures. If the student achieves his/her goal and is performing on-grade-level, s/he may be exited from intervention; if the student achieves his/her intervention goal but is still below grade level, s/he remains in intervention and a new rigorous goal is set for the next intervention cycle. If the student still is not making adequate progress, we may conduct a Student Support Team meeting to discuss additional supports for the student.

Tier III The Response to Intervention Model and Special Education:
If the student fails to make progress in both Tier I and Tier II interventions after 2 cycles (16 weeks), they enter into Tier III interventions, which may result in a recommendation that the student begin the Special Education assessment process. Tier III interventions are individualized for each student and targeted to meet that student's unique needs. Because RSMD will be an LEA for Special Education purposes, a majority of our special education professionals work directly for RSMD, including paraprofessionals and education specialists, giving us more control to ensure that Special Education students' Individualized Education Plans are aligned with the academic goals of the school.

The Response to Intervention model is consistent with the program requirements of recent revisions to IDEA, Federal Special Education law and policy, and implementing regulations. The state of California has not yet adopted regulations consistent with Federal law, but expert advice in the field counsels us not to wait for these regulations. Districts all over the state are successfully, legally implementing RtI models. Referral for assessment for eligibility for formal special education services may be made by the Response to Intervention Team meeting as a Student Support Team at whatever point the team determines that failure to respond to intervention warrants such a referral. On the other end of the spectrum, students who make progress towards meeting grade level standards may be moved to less intense instruction. The RtI model provides a coordinated process for effectively moving students out of special education services to less restrictive settings. Upon meeting or exceeding grade level standards, students are moved to transition support service and monitored by the RtI Team as they receive instruction solely in the regular classroom. The RtI Team maintains assessment data on all students served to ensure student success and to analyze data to determine effectiveness of the instructional strategies and materials used. The RtI Team is also responsible for ensuring compliance with all special education and English Learner legal requirements.

Special Education Caseloads and Instructional Settings
Under the Response to Intervention model, special education staff serves all students who are assessed as needing most intensive services, regardless of legal eligibility for special education services. Legal caseload limits for Speech and Language Therapists and Education Specialists must be respected, but it is expected that special education staff will serve both legally identified special education students and students not legally identified for service. In all cases, the Response to Intervention Team will determine the most appropriate instructional setting.

Professional Development and Materials
All instructional staff requires training in highly effective instructional strategies. The Rocketship Response to Intervention model provides for necessary professional development. Please see "Professional Development" section below for additional detail.

English Learners and English Language Development
We recognize that historically English Learners often enter school below grade level. Thus, it must be a high priority to accurately identify the educational needs of these students as early as possible and provide appropriate instruction, both in the regular classroom and in pullout, depending upon the necessary intensity of instruction. It is also essential to recognize that below grade level students may very well have both English Learner and other instructional needs, and that early provision of service takes precedent over eligibility issues. If the student is below grade level, for whatever reason, the RtI Team should determine appropriate service.

Outcomes
All current research supports long term educational and cost effectiveness of early, coordinated intervention for below grade level students. The model holds great promise for such effect. The expectation is that over time a greater number of students will make adequate progress toward meeting grade level standards, and fewer students will require formal special education referral, assessment, determination of eligibility, and formal special education services.

Calendar Attendance and Instructional Minutes

The number of days in RSMD's academic calendar will match or exceed the academic calendar for the State. The school year will contain at least 175 instructional days.

RSMD parents/guardians will be responsible for sending their children to school and providing an explanation for absences. RSMD will have attendance policies to encourage regular attendance and to report truancies to appropriate local authorities. A sample attendance policy is included as Appendix A-29.

Bell Schedule and Instructional Minutes
RSMD school days will run from approximately from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (varies slightly depending on grade level). The number of instructional minutes offered for all grades will meet or exceed the State's requirements in Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1). This table delineates subject areas (including Learning Lab, but excluding lunch and recess) and approximate minutes by grade level; however, RSMD educators reserve the right to adjust students' instructional minutes in each subject, and instructional method, based on their personalized learning needs.

	Humanities	Math/ Science	Launch/ Community Classroom Meeting	Total Daily Instructional Minutes	Learning Lab and Enrichment	Total Daily Minutes
K	170	85	40	**295**	*125*	***420***
1	180	90	40	**310**	*130*	***440***
2	180	90	40	**310**	*130*	***440***
3	190	95	40	**325**	*135*	***460***
4	190	95	40	**325**	*135*	***460***
5	190	95	40	**325**	*135*	***460***

Please see the Bell Schedule in Appendix A-30, which lists classes in a typical day.

Rocketship's unique rotational model and approach to instruction, which includes students spending a portion of their day in the Learning Lab, allows for students to receive instruction in core academic subjects at student/teacher ratios of no more than 29:1.

In order to further understand the instructional and student: teacher ratios in the classroom (and overall), it is helpful to better understand the bell schedule and overall enrollment at RSMD. Initially, one may assume that with 116 students in a grade level (Appendix BO-1, Table A) and three credentialed teachers (Appendix BO-1, Table I) that the ratio is 39:1 or more during instructional time; however, that is incorrect. To understand the correct ratio of instruction, it is helpful to further focus on this one specific grade level.

In Kindergarten in year one, RSMD plans to enroll 116 students. This grade level will then be divided into four homerooms or cohorts of students (112/4=29). These cohorts of students will then rotate to their separate classes and remain with the same homeroom of 29 students throughout the entire day. The first cohort of students will begin their day in their humanities class with their homeroom and are provided instruction at a 29:1 ratio with a credentialed teacher. This cohort of Rocketeers spends approximately 170 minutes in this classroom every day. At the same time, the second cohort of Rocketeers is also receiving instruction from a second credentialed teacher in a separate humanities classroom, again at a 29:1 ratio, and similar to the first cohort of students, they will spend 170 minutes in this classroom. The third cohort of students is in the Math/Science class with the third credentialed teacher (Appendix BO-1, Table I) within this grade level, again at a 29:1 ratio. This cohort of students will spend 85 minutes in this class. The final cohort of students are in the Learning Lab at a 29:1 ratio as well with an Individualized Learning Specialist, a highly qualified tutor, that guides this class through online learning, tutoring, active reading .

After 85 minutes, the third and fourth cohort of kindergarten students will then switch classroom spaces (third homeroom of students goes to the Learning Lab with the ILS and fourth homeroom of students goes to Math/Science). Again, they will remain in their same homerooms and maintain the ratio of 29:1. This completes the first half of the school day for these students.

After completing these classes and 170 minutes of instruction, the entire grade level will then rotate. After this total of 170 minutes across the grade level, the first and second cohorts will then remain in their homerooms, but each will move to either Math/Science and the other cohort will go to Learning Lab for their separate 85 minute blocks. The third and fourth homeroom classes will at that same time then rotate to their humanities classes and spend 170 minutes in these spaces with the same credentialed teachers that instructed the first and second homerooms of students at the beginning of the day.

It is through this 'rotational model' that RSMD will be able to ensure that student: teacher ratios remain at a level of 29:1 throughout the school day as well as ensuring that students, teachers, and families are able to build deep relationships and learning communities by remaining with the same homeroom of students throughout the day and year.

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RSMD's teacher staffing levels are based upon enrollment projections. The table below shows planned staffing level across the school.

Teacher Type	**Number of Teachers (Year 1)**
Humanities Teachers (ELA, Social Studies/ Science)	9
Math/Science Teachers	5
Integrated Special Education Teacher	2

Staffing Model and Professional Development

Please see Appendix A-31 for a sample day in the life of a Rocketship teacher.

Recruiting, selecting, onboarding, developing, and evaluating educators and leaders is central to Rocketship's vision that all students graduate from grade five performing at or above grade level, prepared for success to and through college. We have a foundational support system to ensure teachers and leaders are well equipped to drive student achievement.

Key elements of the human capital development process at Rocketship today include:

- **Recruitment**: 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 (see Appendix A-32 for our recruitment calendar and materials). 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.

- **Selection:** 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 the central office. Principals are empowered to select and staff their own schools, ensuring that they hire candidates that are a good match for their school. Assistant Principals are hired as principals in training, and most are part of our leadership development program, which prepare these leaders to become school principals. We assess both student achievement and the candidate's track record of success in leading adults, often as a grade-level lead or serving as another type of coach or mentor to other adults. We most frequently hire principals from our experienced Assistant Principal pool as they have been trained to become Rocketship Principals. Hiring decisions are made though a committee process which includes steps such as school and classroom observation and debrief, leading a staff or parent community meeting, reflecting on student achievement data, and interviewing with current Rocketship Principals as well as Rocketship central office staff.

- **Onboarding**: Each summer, RSMD will host an intensive three week summer training for all teachers that emphasizes foundational knowledge in culture and classroom. A central component of our school model is a strong school culture. RSMD's 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 planning, including daily lesson plans, unit plans, and yearlong plans. We also introduce foundational components of the Rocketship program, including the process for the use of data, instructional techniques for use in the classroom, 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 RSMD 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.

- **Staff development**: The foundational piece of our ongoing staff development is customized, targeted one-on-one coaching provided by Assistant Principals or Principals to teachers. RSMD teachers receive ongoing coaching and support from the Assistant Principal or Principal responsible for their grade level. This typically includes about three hours per week of support for our newest teachers or others who need extra support. Our coaching cycle (see Figure A-1 below and more detail in Appendix A-33) provides a format and process for our teachers and their supervisors to work together in pursuit of increased teacher effectiveness. Assistant Principals or Principals meet once every 2 weeks one-on-one with each teacher and participate in grade-level meetings. Four times

per year they discuss their Professional Growth Plan (PGP) (described in more detail below).

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. Example topics from the 2013-2014 school year include: analyzing and planning using formative assessment data, creating rigorous independent work, exploring whole brain teaching, unit planning using the Understanding by Design framework, 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, so frequently our teachers learn from each other. We bring in outside specialists to provide support as needed. Some examples of our outside partners include Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design) leaders who work with our teachers on strategies for working with English Learners throughout a six day training and RAFT (Resource Area for Teachers) trainers to do tutorials on hands-on math and science instruction.

Figure A-1: Coaching and Development Cycle

	Analyze	Align	Act
Purpose	To identify the most pressing gaps in the classroom to inform the focus areas for the coaching cycle	To ensure teachers know their strengths and areas for growth, are invested in their development and capable of reflecting on their practice	To develop teachers in the most efficient and effective manner and in a way most aligned to the teacher's learning style

		independently	and readiness
Target Outcomes	*Determine coaching priorities *Provide teachers with observation notes and data on their practice	*Recognize progress *Facilitate problem-solving *Identify next steps	*Build knowledge, skills, and mindsets
Frequency**	*Approximately once a week	*Approximately once every two weeks	*Approximately once a week
Length**	*Roughly 30-45 minutes	*Roughly 30-45 minutes	*Roughly 60-90 minutes *(depends greatly on the strategies chosen)*

Rather than focusing on the time recommendations, it's best to allocate whatever amount of time is necessary to achieve the target outcomes. Coaches will likely extend or shorten these times based on the needs of the individual teacher.

Professional Development

At RSMD, we believe that professional development is a critical component to the success of our teachers and staff, but more importantly, it is a critical element to student achievement. Rocketship Education's professional development model involves multiple resources, which are detailed below.

Teachers at RSMD will be focused on developing a deep understanding behind the Charter School's approach to their subject areas. Typically, the learning objectives will include:

- a focus on the pedagogy which shapes the curriculum in their instructional focus areas (literacy/social studies/science and/or math/science)
- a focus on the organizational culture, values, and leadership skills necessary to lead students and families to extraordinary outcomes (Rocketeer Core Characteristics)
- an understanding of the instructional techniques used and how to use them, especially through the Professional Growth Plan ("PGP")
- building an understanding of how to use student data to identify learning challenges, especially during Data Analysis Days
- developing techniques for personalizing their planning and instruction
- observing excellent schools or instructors and learning their techniques/strategies
- investing students and families in the attainment of ambitious academic growth goals

To develop the necessary subject expertise for our teachers as well as provide ongoing support for Assistant Principals, Rocketship Education partners with several outside professional development organizations and higher education institutions to conduct in-depth professional development in Literacy and Math. Currently, these organizations include Project GLAD, Santa Clara County Office of Education, Doug Lemov with Uncommon Schools, Lucy Calkins, and various other organizations as well. 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.

Summer Professional Development

As described in the above section "Onboarding," professional development at Rocketship Education begins approximately three weeks prior to the start of school, with a focus on school culture, classroom management, planning (daily lesson plans, unit planning, and year-long planning), building culture within the school team, home visits and parent investment/empowerment, instructional techniques, and data. These first few weeks in the summer create a critical foundation for the school staff to build a collaborative culture of trust, align on school and grade level goals for the year, and commence with a cohesive team of educators that has already begun to invest families in their work.

Yearly Professional Development

In addition, RSMD's commitment to teacher professional development is further evidenced in the amount of time that is set aside throughout the year for teacher development. There are several days set aside during the calendar year that are solely focused on professional development, which also include an annual staff retreat, and moreover, each week, two and a half hours are reserved for professional development as well. This means that more than 250 hours of time is set aside throughout the calendar year for staff professional development as an entire team or school. The professional development that occurs is facilitated and organized primarily by an Assistant Principal at each school site. The Assistant Principal has access to a professional development scope and sequence that provides each school with a suggested timeline for introducing, learning, and practicing key components of our instructional model and the RSMD professional development program. This scope and sequence is also differentiated by teacher experience level. However, the Assistant Principal and school site retain the ability to deviate from the scope and sequence map in order to address more immediate or local needs of the school site. These may include addressing a school culture need, reviewing local school data and addressing any local instructional needs, and various other items that may arise.

The RSMD summer training and various professional development days throughout the annual calendar set the stage for new areas of focus for teachers. For example, before the beginning of the school year and for the first few weeks of school, the literacy focus is on setting up the classroom, classroom management, creating literacy centers, and managing guided reading groups effectively to get a fast start on building students' literacy. Within these focus areas, a more junior teacher may initially be focused on classroom management and will be ready to begin the transition of focus to guided reading in October. However, a more experienced teacher may already be prepared to manage guided reading as they have mastered classroom management and setting up their classroom. In subsequent professional development days, new topics are introduced focusing on issues like guided reading time effectively to achieve goals like reading a new book each day with students. These focus areas differ throughout each year based upon the experience level of teachers and their immediate needs.

See Appendix A-34 for sample professional development schedules.

Professional Growth Plan

The core of Rocketship Education's professional development is the Professional Growth Plan (for a sample, please see Appendix A-35). The PGP is a tool that includes various components of instruction that are critical to student achievement. The first component of the PGP is the school goals, grade level goals, and data from interim assessments. Data is the driver of the PGP in that it ensures that the teacher, Principal, and Assistant Principal are able to remain focused on the annual goal and current progress towards these academic goals, thus, making professional development decisions that will have the greatest positive impact on ensuring that students realize these annual academic goals. The next component of the PGP is the Rocketeer Core Characteristics. These are the five core characteristics (Community, Innovation, Pursuit of Excellence, Authenticity, and Tenacity) that are at the foundation of the culture of RSMD. These core characteristics are an important part of the PGP as RSMD is focused on developing great teachers, which requires not only instructional knowledge and development, but also further development and alignment with the core characteristics of what makes a teacher successful at RSMD. The core characteristics are then followed by specific instructional components that are critical to student achievement. These major components are outlined in the Vision of Excellence and each has been strategically decided upon and created based upon other teacher development rubrics, including the California Teaching Professional Standards, Teaching as Leadership rubric developed by Teach for America, Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching, and others. In addition, the sub-components of each section have been decided upon and based upon successful professional development resources like Lemov Taxonomy, Project GLAD, Lee Canter, and various other resources. The PGP includes all of these items and attempts to introduce them in a manner that is scaffolded. For example, a new teacher may first focus on setting goals and creating a daily lesson plan while a more experienced teacher who has mastered planning, classroom management, and differentiation is more able to focus on the leadership skills that will be required of them to emerge as a lead teacher or other position like an Assistant Principal or Principal.

Every teacher at RSMD has a Professional Growth Plan that is focused on their professional growth and development as a teacher and is personalized to their needs. The creation of the PGP begins with a teacher's coach observing a teacher multiple times in the beginning of the year and gathering their student data, which then begins to indicate the focus areas for this teacher. The coach then meets with the teacher in a one to one (1:1) meeting, which typically occurs every other week, but may occur more frequently for newer teachers. During this meeting, the coach collaboratively selects up to three sub-components of the PGP with the teacher to focus on for the next coaching cycle. Thus, the teacher, Principal, and Assistant Principal have a much more discrete skill to focus on in developing, observing for, and coaching. Following the subsequent interim assessments (occur approximately every 8 weeks) the sub-components focus may change based upon student data and Principal/Assistant Principal observations of the teacher's instruction.

The Role of the Assistant Principal

In order to fully implement the Professional Growth Plan and professional development of teachers, RSMD has two Assistant Principals. The Assistant Principal is a former teacher who serves as a mentor for all RSMD teachers and who focuses on professional development of staff members and the Response to Intervention program. The Assistant Principal also oversees

Individualized Learning Specialists and the Learning Lab. Thus, a majority of the Assistant Principal's time is spent on professional development and focuses on the coaching of teachers and teacher development methods. While Assistant Principals are by definition masters of their academic area, successfully coaching other teachers is a completely different skill than successfully teaching children. While we believe that our Assistant Principals will have already shown a predisposition to coaching based on the positive evaluations they had to receive from peers in order to be promoted, we will provide extensive professional development for new Assistant Principals to help them learn our academic systems and the best techniques for mentoring their associated teachers. It is also crucial that Assistant Principals stay current in their field both through internal professional development, external professional development opportunities, and by being involved in professional organizations like the International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of Math.

The Assistant Principal invests in the professional development of teachers to meet their PGP goals using multiple methods. These methods include pre-conferences prior to a lesson, observing lessons, videotaping lessons, post-conferences after a lesson, regular one to ones with teachers to reflect on their practice, modeling lessons, co-teaching, and various other techniques as well. Another method of professional development that Assistant Principals have access to is called Real Time Coaching. This method of coaching involves a teacher placing an 'ear-bud' or microphone in their ear. An Assistant Principal (or Principal) then coaches the teacher during instruction by giving directions to the teacher through a walkie-talkie while sitting in the back of the classroom and observing the class. This form of professional development has been a great resource to both Assistant Principals and teachers in that it provides real time information and instructions to teachers that allows them to instantly modify their instruction and learn beneficial instructional techniques, rather than having to wait for a post conference or follow-up meeting.

The Assistant Principal is also responsible for planning ongoing professional development on a weekly basis. One day a week shall be a minimum day, allowing the staff to come together for two and a half hours of professional development and/or collaboration time each week. Assistant Principals plan for and facilitate these meetings, including such topics as data reflection, investing families and students in growth targets, improving management strategies, or simply sharing resources and planning for the next Social Studies or Science unit.

Other Professional Development Activities

RSMD offers additional professional development activities for staff as well. These activities include providing teachers with a substitute and thus, the opportunity to observe other teachers within the Rocketship Education network or even at another school. In addition, outside professional development providers are brought to schools depending on the needs and resources of a school. Teachers are also given the opportunity to apply to be grade level lead teachers, which provides additional professional development in the area of leadership, but also allows teachers to grow in other areas as well such as leading grade level meetings, providing mentorship to new teachers, helping to facilitate professional development days, organizing parent involvement, and many, many more activities.

Career Progression

To retain as many effective educators as possible, develop teachers and leaders to take on new positions as we grow to serve more students, and extend the reach of our most effective educators, we provide opportunities for educators to progress in their career by taking on new and different responsibilities. From Individualized Learning Specialist, to classroom teacher, to grade level lead, to Assistant Principal and Principal, we are focused on making teaching a sustainable, enjoyable, and well-compensated career. We have specific programs and supports for grade level leads as a step for an experienced teacher and have a robust training program to train and develop school leaders.

We also believe that in order for teaching to be a viable and more robustly pursued career by the most talented individuals in our communities, there has to be a career path that recognizes a teacher's ability to consistently make significant gains with significantly increased pay and responsibilities. Thus, at Rocketship, we have implemented a merit based compensation structure that ensures that all teachers are able to more aggressively realize increased compensation based upon the student achievement outcomes, rather than being constrained by a 'tenure' system or something similar. See Appendix A-36 for sample materials related to Rocketship's compensation structure.

In addition to merit based compensation, Rocketship has created 'lead teacher' positions, which allow the most successful teachers within Rocketship the opportunity to further support, mentor, and guide teachers on-campus as well as lead in the work of curricula development and refinement. In addition to this career pathway each school has two full-time Assistant Principals. The Assistant Principals are primarily focused on developing a teacher's instructional abilities and helping them to manage the execution of our academic program through multiple classroom observations, innovative professional development approaches like real-time coaching, co-planning with teachers through the purposeful integration of student data and subsequent groupings, and more. These leadership positions, as well as the Principal role, provide added support for students and families, drive robust professional support for teachers, and provide an attractive career path for teachers. With these pathways available, we believe we will be able to attract top college graduates to RSMD who might otherwise pursue careers in law, medicine, engineering, business and other prestigious professions. Because of the critical importance of rewarding talented and dedicated teachers, each school will spend approximately 50% of its operating budget on administrative and instructional staff compensation.

Leadership Development

Rocketship is not only invested in academic gains and skills for its students, but is also highly invested in the professional growth of its staff. In fact, at Rocketship we believe that it is the mission of the organization not only to realize these academic goals, but also to help develop additional leaders within the organization who can eventually become Principals and Assistant Principals, both to provide compelling career opportunities for our employees and also to meet the demand for more Rocketship schools within the community and in other communities. With this in mind, we have created a multi-year leadership development program, which supports teachers in developing their craft in the classroom and in preparing for possible school leadership roles in the future.

School Leadership Positions

RSMD school leadership team is made up of, first and foremost, the Principal. Principals at Rocketship are responsible for the success of the school and their role is defined by the following primary responsibilities:

- Attaining student achievement results (closing the achievement gap)
- Instilling Rocketship culture in students, teachers, and parents
- Coaching teachers to reach student achievement goals
- Developing other leaders to support Rocketship's growth and scale

Every school also has two Assistant Principals, who serve as instructional leaders at the school with primary responsibilities in the following areas:

- Overseeing grade level teams
- Overseeing ILSs and Learning Lab
- Coaching teachers to reach student achievement goals
- Managing staff professional development

Together, these roles make up the educational leadership team of Rocketship schools. Principals and Assistant Principals are responsible for the success of the school (and thus, Rocketship's ability to close the achievement gap.) We also believe that many Assistant Principals will eventually take over established schools, and so we have designed the Rocketship Network Leadership program to build these critical skills and experiences.

The Rocketship Network Leadership Program

The Rocketship Network Leadership program is based on the belief that leadership potential, coupled with intense ground-level experience in our schools, is the best preparation to become a Rocketship leader. Just as the best preparation for teaching is being a teacher, the best preparation for school leadership is being a school leader. With this in mind, program participants will fill real leadership roles in our network including Assistant Principal positions. Program participants first work as lead teachers or Assistant Principals under the direction of current Rocketship Principals. Additionally, Rocketship leadership candidates participate in a comprehensive, rigorous training curriculum that includes 1:1 coaching and workshops from third-party experts in management as well as instructional and personal leadership. For example, program participants will attend specialized leadership workshops on topics such as effective communication, performance management, and data-driven instruction and make visits to observe high-performing schools throughout the country. Throughout the entire program participants learn through sustained collaboration with other program participants as part of a selective cohort.

Principal Preparation Program Structure

Rocketship leaders train intensively in preparation to run or take over an existing Rocketship school upon program completion. In this year, leaders are based at a single school site, serving as Assistant Principals and becoming immersed in the Rocketship school model. These leaders are responsible for managing and intensively coaching all new and experienced educators in specific grade levels as well as planning and executing professional development. Additionally, they prepare to open and run a new Rocketship school, or take over an existing Rocketship

school, in the next year by building community relationships, hiring staff, and creating a plan for their school.

Because we believe that experience is so critical in developing leadership skill and capacity, the Network Leadership program aligns explicit trainings with authentic leadership and management work. The different types of development activities include:

Leadership Experience	**Training & Coaching**	**Start-Up School Activities (Incoming Principals only)**
• Coaching and support of at least three teachers on staff, representing different levels of experience and in subject areas where Fellow may not be experienced • Additional work streams that address school needs and development areas (e.g. running PD events, overseeing school's PBIS program, leading parent/community meetings)	• Trainings address the following functional areas: personal leadership, performance management, organizational development, instructional leadership, and operations • 360 feedback protocols to assess personal development areas • Small group trainings with LD staff, regional director, or external facilitators • 1:1 coaching from principal at school site, regional director, and leadership development staff as needed	• Community and family engagement activities (community meetings, home visits) • Staff hiring and engagement (Assistant Principal, OM, teachers, ILS) • Drafting school plan that incorporates additional core value and principal's own touch on RSED mission as well as day-to-day systems and procedures

Other possible leadership development activities include:

- Shadowing current Principals
- Mentoring at least one staff member at each site
- Teaching model lessons for coached staff members
- Helping to facilitate and plan staff meetings
- Observing online learning and tutoring
- Observing Response to Intervention
- Monthly and at times bi-weekly trainings
- 1:1/Coaching with Regional School Leadership and coaching one rising Assistant Principal (who will be assigned to their school)
- Building the Parent Leadership team for their start-up school

Core Characteristics and Leadership Competencies

In all tracks of the Rocketship Network Leadership Program, cohort members are working to develop a core set of competencies essential for success in a school leadership role at Rocketship. These competencies may be divided into our core characteristics, which we believe

should define all Rocketship employees (for our leaders, we place even higher expectations on demonstration of these characteristics) and then additional leadership competencies:

1. Uses Data to Make Decisions and Solve Problems
   - Conducts analysis based on data to define the opportunity and/or identify the problem
   - Addresses problems at the root and provides systemic solutions based on data and evidence
   - Reflects constantly and improves practice quickly
   - Exhibits good judgment and appropriate pace in data-driven decision-making

2. Builds Relationships and Influences Others
   - Understands and integrates diverse perspectives
   - Communicates effectively
   - Engages, invests, and empowers others
   - Collaborates across teams and the organization

3. Operates Productively and Effectively
   - Organizes and plans ahead
   - Uses resources efficiently and runs operations smoothly
   - Manages time and priorities

4. Drives Results through Management of Teams
   - Makes effective staffing decisions
   - Sets vision
   - Manages team towards clearly defined outcomes
   - Fosters accountable and productive culture
   - Develops staff leadership

5. Instructional Leadership
   - Establishes clear academic vision and goals consistent with Rocketship mission
   - Effectively implements individualized instructional model across entire school
   - Builds staff capacity through coaching and professional development for all instructional staff
   - Drives student achievement through the use of data
   - Bases all instructional decision in sound knowledge of content and pedagogy

Cultivating Leadership from Day One

In addition to the Network Leadership Program, Rocketship also recognizes the importance of developing leadership inside and outside of the classroom for all teachers. Our interview and selection process includes authentic tasks that screen for our core characteristics and leadership competencies (listed above). Rocketship maintains a strong partnership with Teach for America, attracting both high-performing corps members and alumni to our network.

While formal school leadership training begins in the Network Leadership Program, we believe that all of our teachers can be and must be classroom leaders. Additionally, we seek to build their

leadership skillset from their first days with our organization, both because we know this will make them better teachers and because we want to provide them with exciting opportunities to move into school leadership in the future. With this in mind, all Rocketship teachers receive leadership development support through 1:1 coaching, feedback, and evaluation from their coach.

Teachers may also apply for the grade level lead teacher position, where they play an active role in overseeing grade level work on using data to drive instruction and creating targeted instructional plans to reach all students.

Ongoing Leadership Development
Finally, it is important to note that leadership development does not stop once an Assistant Principal becomes a Principal. The Leadership Development programming involves the ongoing professional development and support of Principals and Assistant Principals once they move into their roles. To date, most professional development opportunities for Principals and Assistant Principals occur in 1:1 meetings with their immediate supervisors and a trained leadership coach. In addition, the Principals receive professional development during weekly Principal Team Meetings (PTMs) and through opportunities with external providers such as GLAD and Real Time Coaching.

Summary
Rocketship Education's plans for growth and scale depend on having a talented and prepared pipeline of leaders ready to serve as Principals and Assistant Principals. Therefore, it is critical that the organization establish a high-quality and comprehensive system for identifying, cultivating, developing, training, evaluating, and supporting talent from within its schools. Rocketship strongly believes that this investment in building leadership capacity in staff will not only foster a ready pipeline of future leaders, but most importantly, the highest quality leaders for all existing schools.

Special Populations

Academically Low-Achieving Students

As stated above, RSMD is designed to serve students who are at risk of achieving below basic proficiency on state exams. Thus, the entire school is focused on serving at-risk students. We will identify at-risk students based on standardized tests and those who are operating at least one year below grade level in Reading, Writing and Math as measured through our interim assessments. In addition, we administer a range of 1:1 assessments, including our kindergarten math benchmark and the STEP assessment, which enable us to gauge functional oral language deficiencies. Please see Section C for Measurable Student Outcomes, "Measuring Student Progress" for details on the bi-monthly assessments currently planned. We believe that our students will progress from low-achieving to high-achieving during their time at RSMD. Through constant data analysis, we intend to isolate specific challenges for each at-risk student and personalize instruction for each of these students to become not just proficient, but advanced proficient achievers on state tests.

RSMD will screen the following data to identify at-risk students in accordance with the California and CDE guidelines:

- Students scoring Basic, Below Basic, or Far Below Basic (or their equivalents on CAASPP assessment) on the previous year's adopted standardized test in any one subtest score in Reading and Language Arts.
- Students who are at least one year below grade level in the areas of Reading, Writing, and Math as identified by interim assessments. Please see the section in Student Outcomes titled "Measuring Student Performance" for more information on the assessment methodology to be used.
- Students recommended for academic intervention through RtI.

At-Risk Student Outcomes

RSMD anticipates that 70% or more of our students will be eligible for free and reduced meals and over 50% will be EL students. Because of these hardships, most of our students are at-risk of failing. Our core program is geared toward students like this.

Strategies to Improve At-Risk Performance

1. Early Detection. RSMD will use the STEP Assessment and initial benchmark assessments to help us identify struggling students within the first four-six weeks of school, and every two months 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. For more details on the assessment structure at RSMD, please see Element C.

2. Family Communication. We will inform the families as soon as we become concerned. We ask that our parents sign a significant Commitment Letter (See Appendix A-37 for the Rocketship commitment letter), committing to help their student get through these times. We will share formal strategies parents can use at home to help their child.

3. Teacher Collaboration Teachers will gather regularly 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.

4. Focused Instruction. Rocketship Education expects that the majority of students will come to RSMD performing at least one year below grade-level. As such, our entire academic program is geared towards differentiated instruction to provide the appropriate interventions to improve our students' performance. The standard RSMD instructional approach will be for teachers to plan their lessons for at least three groups of students, who are striving for different sub-goals in their development towards meeting the same overall grade-level standards. For example, in Writer's Workshop, there may be a group of second graders still working on the basics of capitalization and punctuation. Others will be focused on more advanced grammatical issues in their writing like subject/verb agreement or plurals. Still others will be working on creating better story maps to make it easier for them to write a new story. By focusing on at least three student groups in each lesson, teachers will have to prompt themselves to customize parts of the lesson to each group.

Additionally, as further described in the "Response to Intervention" section above, RSMD employs a full Response to Intervention (RtI) model to ensure students receive the

support needed to access the curriculum. Through RtI, instructional modifications occur at three different tiers:

- Tier I: Students receive modifications and support within the general education classroom, which may include adjustments in intensity, duration, and frequency of instruction (i.e. teachers meet with small groups for longer periods of time to reinforce a particular concept)
- Tier II: Students spend a portion of the school day receiving more intensive, targeted small-group instruction focused on a particular skill
- Tier III: Students received individualized interventions designed to meet his or her unique needs and may end up being referred for the Special Education assessment process

5.Direct Intervention. Despite the significant amount of personalized learning built into the RSMD curriculum, some students may need more. ILSs will provide direct intervention to the bottom quintile of our students during Learning Lab interventions or during an after-school program. For more information, please see the "Response to Intervention" section above.

6.Ongoing Assessment Data is gathered both through frequent interim assessments performed in the subject areas and daily feedback given teachers from the computers in the Learning Lab. Teachers will have the tools they need to track all of their students and make sure they are not falling behind again in the areas where they received intervention.

7. A Commitment to Each Student With the most struggling students, an effort is sometimes required beyond any normal day to day instruction in order to help a student achieve. Because of the RSMD mission of bringing all students to grade level by second grade and above grade level by fifth grade, our staff will find ways to help each student succeed in Math, Reading, and Writing. As further described above, we use a variety of instructional support structures to differentiate and personalize instruction, including small group skills instruction during RtI's Tier I and Tier II interventions; guided reading; differentiated classwork, centers, and homework in both the Humanities and Math/Science instructional blocks; and differentiated Online Learning Programs.

<u>Academically High-Achieving Students</u>

High-achieving students are those who score at least one grade level above on standardized tests or internal metrics for Reading, Writing, and Math.Please see the section in Student Outcomes on "Measuring Student Progress" for details on the means of bi-monthly assessment currently planned.

Our high-performing students will benefit from the same practices that are helpful to our struggling students. Because our internal systems measure student gains every 6-8 weeks, we will be able to monitor our high-achievers to make sure that their gains continue and do not regress to class averages.

1. *Early Detection.* Rocketship will use internal assessment in Reading, Writing ,and Math to help us identify high performing students within the first four-six weeks of school and

monthly thereafter. Please see the section in Student Outcomes titled "Measuring Student Performance" for more information on the assessment methodology to be used. 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.

2. *Differentiation.* Rocketship will use our interim assessments to track a student's work over time for students achieving significantly above grade level. Differentiation will be used with high-performing students to allow teachers to collaborate on best processes and successful past enrichment activities with the student. This will occur both in whole-class and small-group lessons.
3. *Family Communication.* We will inform the families as soon as we have assessed a child's performance. With high-performing students, it will be common for teachers to give students additional books and work to perform at home to increase their understanding of the subject area.
4. *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.
5. *Focused Instruction* The standard RSMD instructional approach will be 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. These subgroups include 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 humanities and math/science. Advanced 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 during centers and independent reading. This material spans many genres and Lexile levels well above and below the Lexile levels typically associated with a given grade level. Our math/science teachers also differentiate math centers, homework and daily review exercises by difficulty level. Each student receives personalized attention during 1:1 conferences during Writer's Workshop.
6. *Daily Enrichment* For high-performing students, the Learning Lab will be a place where they can read a lot of children's literature and use software that challenge them, even if they are far ahead of the class. We anticipate providing other activities to our high-achieving students during Learning Lab which let them examine the current grade-level themes in more depth. In addition, during daily Enrichment, this may include activities like physical education, art, music, and/or other extension activities for students.
7. *Ongoing Assessment* Data is gathered both through frequent real-time assessments performed in the subject areas and daily feedback given teachers from the computers 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 falling off. If they do fall off, this data will be used during teacher collaboration time to think of strategies for this student.

English Learners

OVERVIEW

RSMD will follow all applicable laws and regulations in serving its EL students as they pertain to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, re-classification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirements. RSMD will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELs and the rights of students and parents. EL students at RSMD will be served by full inclusion in the classroom with small group and individual customization in the classroom. RSMD will work closely with the school's English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) to ensure that the instructional strategies outlined herein are complying with all federal and state mandates and meeting the needs of EL students within the school.

Rocketship Mt. Diablo will follow the California Department of Education "EL OPSET" as a program development tool to ensure that the program operates in absolute compliance with guidelines. Structurally, RSMD runs a full-inclusion program for our EL students. EL students will not be in sheltered or bilingual instruction classes at RSMD. From the first day of school, EL students will be immersed in English by full inclusion in the classroom with small group and individual customized language support they need to learn and develop the grammatical framework and vocabulary needed to begin developing as readers and writers. In our experience, the most crucial aspect of teaching EL students is the professional development that teachers have had in order to understand the steps that their students are going through in order to acquire English. All RSMD teachers will be Crosscultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) certified or in the process of obtaining CLAD certification.

Our goal is to help our EL students make rapid progress out of levels 1 and 2 and into levels 3 and higher on the CELDT Assessment. Our experience shows that once a child reaches the intermediate stages of fluency, he or she begins to accelerate his or her progress on all of his or her academic work. In order to help our EL students to master listening, speaking, reading and writing in English by second grade, RSMD students will be immersed in English. We believe that the most effective instructional approach for a school with a high EL population is to embed ELD principles in all aspects of the curriculum and to teach explicit ELD during a portion of the day Rocketship has begun implementation of the ELD standards developed by the CDE and will continue to further embed this approach into our pedagogy over the next several years. To embed ELD principles across all subjects, we work with Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design) to teach our teachers methods to provide additional instructional support to EL students. Studies of Project GLAD have shown statistically significant gains in students relative to control groups of EL students taught by non-GLAD teachers. Our explicit ELD will focus on developing oral language, grammatical constructs and academic vocabulary in English. This period will take place during the Humanities block when EL students may be leveled by English fluency and provided with explicit ELD instruction. In the RtI tutoring program, ELs who are not reaching their growth goals may receive Literacy instruction as well as ELD as appropriate.

The acquisition and eventual mastery of the English language is demonstrated for each of the three modes of communication—collaborative, interpretive and productive—which encompass

the four domains of English language (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and the two knowledge of language domains—metalinguistic awareness and accuracy of production, Additionally, we assess how students apply these skills to access
accessing grade level content. Language proficiency levels are identified as *emerging, expanding,* and *bridging* The curricular expectations of English Learners depend more on language proficiency rather than on age or grade.

IDENTIFICATION & ASSESSMENT

Home Language Survey (HLS)
RSMD will administer the home language survey upon a student's initial enrollment into RSMD (on enrollment forms). Parents or legal guardians of students shall complete the Home Language Survey when they enroll their child at RSMD. If a student's HLS shows a response other than English to questions 1, 2, or 3, he/she must be tested within 30 days for English comprehension, speaking, reading and writing and within 90 days for primary language assessment as required by law. School personnel shall arrange for these assessments and will place the HLS in the student's cumulative file.

California English Language Development Test (CELDT)
All students who indicate that their home language is a language other than English will be CELDT tested within thirty days of initial enrollment[33] and at least annually thereafter between July 1 and October 31st until re-designated as fluent English proficient.

RSMD will notify all parents of its responsibility for CELDT testing and of CELDT results within thirty days of receiving results from the publisher. The CELDT shall be used to fulfill the requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act for annual English proficiency testing. All students whose primary language is not English must take the California English Language Development Test within 30 calendar days after they are enrolled in a California public school for the first time. The CELDT also must be given 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 administration. CELDT scores will be placed in the student's cumulative file.

The purpose of the CELDT is: (1) to identify new students who are ELs, in transitional kindergarten through grade twelve; (2) to determine their level of English proficiency; (3) to monitor their progress in learning English on an annual basis; and (4) to determine when students have met one of the criteria to be reclassified to FEP status.

Initial Identification of Students

[33] The thirty-day requirement applies to students who are entering a public school in California for the first time or 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.

Legal guidelines clarify that, an EL is a TK-12 student who, based on objective assessment (the "CELDT"), has not developed listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiencies in English sufficient for participation in the regular school program.

RSMD will follow standard procedures for identifying English Learners, including issuing a home language survey to identify if a student's primary language is something other than English; reviewing cumulative files for evidence of English Learner status for any students who transfer from another public school in the state of California; and administering CELDT to all new students in transition kinder and kindergarten, students who transfer from out-of-state or a private school, and students identified as English Learners.

A student is identified as English Learner (EL) if the student's primary language is something other than English.

A student is identified as Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) if the student's primary language is something other than English but s/he scores "Early Advanced" or "Advanced" on the initial CELDT administration, making the student eligible to be classified as IFEP, and demonstrates s/he has the English language proficiency needed to fully participate equally with average native speakers in the school's regular instructional program instruction. The below additional criteria are used to confirm the student is making adequate progress and can fully participate in the school's regular instructional program and thus should be classified as IFEP:

In Grades TK-1st:

- On the initial CELDT assessment, the student earns an overall score of Early Advanced (Level 4) or Advanced (Level 5) and Listening is Intermediate (Level 3) or higher and Speaking is Intermediate (Level 3) or higher.
- Academic performance is monitored for one year to verify that the student is able to successfully participate in curriculum designed for students of the same age. At the end of the academic year:
    - Teacher evaluates the student's performance in the classroom, taking into account the student's level of curriculum mastery.[34]
    - Parents are consulted and provide consent for IFEP reclassification.
    - Student demonstrates on-grade-level performance on objective assessments of basic skills (e.g. RSMD will likely choose to use nationally normed NWEA MPG scores to compare ensure on-grade-level performance.)

In 2nd-5th or 6th grades,[35]the same multiple criteria will be reviewed to classify a student as IFEP as are reviewed to classify a student as RFEP. See below section on "*Criteria, Standards and Procedures for Reclassification*" for detail.

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[34] Note that incurred deficits in motivation and academic success unrelated to English language proficiency do not preclude a student from being considered for reclassification.

A student is identified as Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) if the student's primary language is something other than English but s/he meets the requirements for reclassification. See below section on "*Criteria, Standards and Procedures for Reclassification*" for detail.

Ongoing Assessment

Each English Learner will be evaluated regularly via a parent conference process. At the conference, the student's English and/or academic needs will be discussed, and individual student achievement and longitudinal growth will be evaluated based on the school's internal assessments. The following multiple measures may be examined:

• CELDT
• Student portfolios
• Performance on an objective assessment of basic skills in English (i.e. NWEA MAP or benchmark assessments)• State assessment performance
• Teacher observations

We track progress toward ELD goals and reclassification for all of our identified English Learners.

Formative Testing

In addition, RSMD may choose to implement an interim, formative assessment, such as ADEPT, which will be used to further assess a student's growth in regards to his or her language proficiency. Through the use of this assessment, teachers will gain input on the language development of their students and the assessment will also provide the staff with information regarding specific language skills that they need to address and practice.

Criteria, Standards and Procedures for Reclassification

When an EL student demonstrates adequate oral and academic English skills, a recommendation for reclassification can be made. Each former LEP student who has been reclassified to RFEP has demonstrated English-language proficiency comparable to that of the average native speakers and can participate equally with average native speakers in the school's regular instructional program. (Education Code Section 52164.6.) The participation of the classroom teacher, parent(s) and site administrator/designee is required in the reclassification process.

Reclassification procedures utilize multiple criteria in determining whether to reclassify a pupil as proficient in English including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- Assessment of language proficiency using an objective assessment instrument including, but not limited to, the California English Language Development Test or CELDT.

[35] As stated in the above section "Target Student Population," RSMD plans to open through 5th grade but reserves the right to add a 6th grade in Year 2 and beyond if there is sufficient community demand.

- Participation of the pupil's classroom teachers and any other certificated staff with direct responsibility for teaching or placement decisions of the pupil to evaluate the pupil's curriculum mastery.

- Comparison of the pupil's performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance and basic skills based upon the performance of English proficient pupils of the same age that demonstrate to others that the pupil is sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for pupils of the same age whose native language is English.

- Parental opinion and consultation. This is achieved through notice to parents or guardians of the language reclassification and placement process. This includes a description of the reclassification process and the parents' opportunity to participate. We encourage parent or guardian participation in the reclassification process

The following criteria and standards for reclassification shall be used to determine when Limited English Proficient (LEP) students have developed the English language skills necessary (oral and academic) to succeed in English-only instruction and may be Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP). The Principal will ensure that all English Learners in second to fifth grade are considered for reclassification at any time during the school year after receiving students' annual CELDT scores. A classroom teacher, parent, or Principal may also initiate the reclassification process by reviewing applicable assessment data.

Based on the reclassification requirements developed by the California Department of Education (CDE) and set forth in Education Code (EC) Section 313, RSED will use multiple criteria to determine whether a student should be reclassified as English proficient. EL students at Rocketship that meet the following criteria should be recommended for reclassification:

1) Assessment of English language proficiency using an objective assessment instrument, including, but not limited to, the English language development test pursuant to Section 60810 of the Education Code (i.e. CELDT):

   a) Annual Assessment *(for reclassification as RFEP, Reclassified Fluent English Proficient)*
      i) The 2nd-5th or 6th grade student demonstrates English proficiency by achieving an overall performance score of Early Advanced (Level 4) or higher and domain scores for Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing of Intermediate (Level 3) or higher.

   b) Initial Assessment *(for classification as IFEP, Initial Fluent English Proficient)*
      i) The TK-1st grade student demonstrates English proficiency by achieving an overall performance score of Early Advanced (Level 4) or higher and domain scores for Listening and Speaking of Intermediate (Level 3) or higher.
      ii) The 2nd-5th ot 6th grade student demonstrates English proficiency by achieving an overall performance score of Early Advanced (Level 4) or higher and domain scores for Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing of Intermediate (Level 3) or higher.

In November 2012, California adopted new English Language Development (ELD) Standards aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). As a result, the CELDT will continue to be administered through 2015-2016 until its replacement, the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC), becomes available in 2016-2017. The ELPAC will be aligned with the new ELD Standards and will officially replace CELDT as California's assessment of English language proficiency (EC Section 313 and 60810).

2) Comparison of the student's performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of the performance of English proficient students of the same age in basic skills, that demonstrates whether the student is sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for students of the same age whose native language is English (EC Section 313 [f][a]).
   - "Performance in basic skills" means the score and/or performance level resulting from a recent administration of an objective assessment of basic skills in English (e.g., benchmark assessments).
   - "Range of performance in basic skills" means a range of scores on the assessment of basic skills in English that corresponds to a performance level or a range within a performance level.
   - "Students of the same age" refers to students who are enrolled in the same grade as the student who is being considered for reclassification.
   - Students in grades 3-5 must score at a minimum "adequate" on the Smarter Balanced (CCSS) assessment in reading, writing and mathematics.
   - Students in grades TK-2 demonstrate English proficiency by achieving scores at or above grade-level as compared to the national norm on NWEA's Reading and Math assessments. This score suggests that the student is sufficiently prepared to participate effectively in the curriculum.

3) Teacher evaluation, including, but not limited to, a review of the student's curriculum mastery:

   a) RSED teachers will use student academic performance to inform the reclassification process. Student work samples will be used as supporting evidence.
      i) RSED teachers understand that student deficits in motivation or academic difficulties unrelated to language proficiency do not preclude the student from reclassification. This ensures that students who may not be meeting standards in an area unrelated to English language acquisition, such as math, are able to move to R-FEP status

4) Parental opinion and consultation:

   a) RSED will provide notice to parents or guardians of their rights and encourage them to participate in the reclassification process.
   b) RSED will provide an opportunity for a face-to-face meeting with parents and guardians to discuss the reclassification process. A signature will be obtained as official documentation of parental consent to reclassify.

Date of Reclassification is recorded in the student's cumulative record.

Follow-up Procedures

The progress of students who have been reclassified will be monitored for two years following the reclassification. Site EL coordinators will complete an evaluation of students' academic progress during the subsequent grading periods following reclassification. The student's progress will be reviewed again one year after reclassification and again two years after reclassification. All reclassified (RFEP) students' Smarter Balanced scores will be evaluated to assess to overall reclassification progress, and interventions will be implemented if the student does not maintain appropriate progress.

STRATEGIES

The most important aspect of these standards from the CELDT in our opinion is to help the teacher level his or her instruction appropriately for a child at different stages of language acquisition. Although it is difficult to categorize a student into a single English Language Development stage, they are helpful for thinking about the different scaffolding necessary to provide for students who are at Beginning, Early Intermediate, Intermediate, Early Advanced and Advanced stages during lesson planning. These categories require distinct skills and strategies as well. In Language Arts, we believe that oral language comprehension and production is the critical link allowing EL students to make large gains in Reading and Writing. Thus, much of our Humanities blocks in the early grades will be focused on oral language development and comprehension activities. This is made possible through the personalized or small group instruction. Through this small group, a student is able to receive specific language instruction and they are able to further develop their language proficiency through re-tells, explicit vocabulary lessons, and a small group focus on letters, word patterns, spelling, blends, sounds, etc.

Similarly, in tier II and III interventions, students that are struggling due to language proficiency will be participating in intervention activities that are specifically focused on decoding and comprehension. These activities may include comprehensive activities that explicitly and systematically build English language skills during reading instruction. There are interventions that focus explicitly on English letter/sound correspondences, word patterns, spelling rules, and other skills. By introducing these skills in isolation and practicing them in context, students are better able to move through the language proficiency categories. In addition, there is vocabulary instruction for these students through the usage of graphic organizers, drawings, motions, pictures, and other means. Finally, in class and during tier II and III interventions, educators emphasize the relationships between and among words to build oral language skills that includes story retells that target both comprehension and language development.

In Science and Social Studies, we intend to focus on hands-on and project-based curriculum in order to build our students curiosity about these subjects. We then provide leveled readers so that they can build academic vocabulary at their current reading level. Academic vocabulary is much more difficult for EL students to acquire than spoken vocabulary. We believe that curious students who are able to access texts at their instructional level will allow our students to make significant gains in their Science and Social Studies knowledge. Thus, the purposeful focus on the use of guided reading as an instructional strategy and ensuring that all students have access

and use leveled texts in classrooms and Learning Lab is critical to their success and further acquisition of language.

In our experience, the most crucial aspect of teaching EL students is the professional development that teachers have had in order to understand the steps that their students are going through in order to acquire English. Thus, this is a critical focus at RSMD through the provision of explicit professional development focused on EL students. In addition, all RSMD staff will be fully trained in GLAD strategies.

EL students will be monitored by homeroom teachers using the same process as other students. Much of the data we will be gathering among our younger students will be focused on speech production and listening comprehension. Because RSMD focuses on the individual student, we are able to accommodate a much wider range of levels in literacy. For example, our Reading classes are broken into multiple groups, allowing teachers to focus instruction on the language acquisition issues at the current level of the student. In addition, because online curricula in the Learning Lab can be tailored for each student, ELs will have more time to practice their English in a one on one setting.

English Immersion with Appropriate Native Language Support

English Learners will be immersed in English, with the language support they need to learn the language and develop the grammatical framework and vocabulary needed to begin developing as readers and writers. The National Literacy Panel (August & Shanahan, 2006) found that EL students can acquire English literacy skills in English-only classrooms. The panel found that strategic primary language support can scaffold EL students' literacy development in English. To the extent possible, RSMD will recruit teachers capable of providing strategic primary language use in order to help students acquire advanced levels of English literacy.

English Language Arts with Appropriate EL Accommodations

Rocketship's literacy approach incorporates current research on teaching children to read in a second language by providing scientifically-based reading instruction, small group interventions based on on-going assessment, and accommodations for EL students such as those recommended by the National Literacy Panel. This type of leveled grouping and instruction will create an environment that allows EL students to be much more successful and receive instruction at the appropriate instructional level. In addition, the smaller groups will allow the teacher to meet the individual needs of each student and differentiate instruction according to their academic abilities and needs.

The National Literacy Panel report (August & Shanahan, 2006) contains the most comprehensive and rigorous synthesis to date of the research on developing literacy in second language learning children and youth. One of the major findings in the report is that instruction that provides substantial coverage in the key components of reading, identified by the National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension) has clear benefits for language-minority students. Rocketship's Literacy approach is a scientifically-based reading program that incorporates these five key components.

The panel also found that instruction in the key components of reading is necessary, but not sufficient, for teaching language-minority students to read and write proficiently in English. Additional research (for example, Vaughn, Mathes, Linan-Thompson & Francis, 2005) has demonstrated that to make significant gains, appropriate accommodations must be made to:

- increase the oral comprehension of EL students
- provide effective reading interventions that are systematic, explicit and intense (i.e. are provided in small groups or individually)
- provide instruction in the critical elements of beginning reading including phonemic awareness, phonics and word study, fluency, writing and comprehension strategies

This approach is supported by the work of Vaughn et. al (Vaughn et. al, 2005), who designed a rigorous English Language Literacy intervention program adding a set of language support activities appropriate for EL students. Their language support activities were similar to Rocketship's explicit vocabulary and grammar instruction, and extensive oral language instruction. This blended approach yielded significant gains for the study group of EL students in all five of the core areas of reading instruction.

English Language Development Instruction in Groups Leveled by English Fluency

Small literacy groups will be leveled based on literacy assessment results, taking into account EL students' English linguistic proficiency. English Language Development (ELD) instruction grouping will be based on ELD assessments. It is important to provide EL students with both literacy instruction that is based on literacy criteria and second language development instruction that is based on language development criteria. These two areas often overlap, however it is critical to distinguish between them in order to provide EL students with both a rigorous literacy instructional program and one that builds their developing abilities in both oral and written academic English across the content areas. It is also important to make sure that EL students are not segregated into linguistically homogenous groups. ELD small group time will typically be the only time where EL students are grouped by language proficiency, with no more than two levels of English linguistic proficiency in each group in order to ensure targeted instruction in ELD. At other times, language proficiency is a factor taken into account for instruction, but not for grouping.

August and Shanahan (2006) found a significant correlation between oral language and reading comprehension and writing ability in EL students and suggested that classrooms with significant EL populations should focus extensively on using oral language to summarize and analyze stories. Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders and Christian (2006) concluded that one explanation for the 5-7 years which EL students often take to master academic language is that insufficient attention is paid to the oral language development of students, especially in the late elementary school years. We will focus extensively on expressive and receptive oral language development at the same time as focused reading instruction is conducted. We believe that working on oral and literacy skills concurrently will help our EL students to master listening, speaking, reading and writing in English.

Because oral language development is so critical to reading comprehension and content area learning, RSMD will incorporate an intensive focus on oral language development. Additionally, we will focus on explicit academic vocabulary instruction and providing students

with increased and scaffolded opportunities to talk in the classroom using academic language and provide students with explicit instruction in the linguistic features of academic English. These objectives will also be assessed through formative assessments and during RSMD's Exhibition Nights when students will be responsible for orally presenting their work and learning. These assessments and public demonstrations will provide RSMD and the students with data to measure their progress.

Content Area Interactive Instruction to Increase Academic Language Proficiency

Genesee et. al found that a combination of direct instruction with interactive instruction is more effective than one or the other. RSMD focuses on direct language instruction in small groups. Our integrated Science and Social Studies content focuses on interactive activities using small cooperative groups, providing a context for extensive discussion of academic language. Stoddard et. al. found high value in integrating content and academic vocabulary. These skills will also be further enhanced through the integration of strategies from Project GLAD, which focus on vocabulary development, graphic organizers, oral language, interactive displays, and several other strategies that have been proven to be highly effective with EL students. They also developed a rubric for teacher self-evaluation to monitor their balance of hands-on and vocabulary time and the degree of integration. (Stoddard, T. et al., 2002) This rubric will be used by RSMD teachers in order to assess the efficacy of their instruction.

English Language Development through Literacy

EL Level	**K-2**	**6**
Beginning (CELDT 1)	Teachers use chants and songs to introduce basic phonemes. Students receive instruction on survival communication. Teachers use controlled speech rate and variation. Cognates (words with common roots and look or sound similar in related languages) that exist between primary and English language are used to explain simple concepts. The teacher uses those drawings to help students develop new vocabulary. The teacher utilizes various GLAD strategies like input charts, graphic organizers, Teacher "big books," picture file cards, observation charts, inquiry charts, T graphs, and various other strategies.	Teachers present the English alphabet using visuals and songs. Rhythm and repetition are key strategies for getting students accustomed to the sounds of spoken English. Daily rituals (morning meeting, bathroom pass requests, etc.) require students to use simple greetings and other phrases. Students have opportunities to tell and re-tell stories using drawing, mime, and basic words. In writer's workshop, students develop complex stories through pictures, and work with the teacher to put those stories into words. The teacher utilizes various GLAD strategies like input charts, graphic organizers, Teacher "big books," picture file cards, observation charts, inquiry charts, T graphs, and various other strategies.
Intermediate (CELDT 2-3)	Students are engaged in real-world activities that require them to communicate basic needs, and describe common objects orally and with basic written language. In writer's workshop, the teacher introduces story boards with pictures and words to help students comprehend stories and to help them develop their own writing. Students practice reading aloud with rhyming	Teachers present students with oral and written comprehension activities. In centers, students use audio books and then respond to texts in writing, using simple sentences. Significant time is spent on pre-reading vocabulary development activities. During writer's workshop, students focus on getting their first draft in writing, using invented spelling as needed. The revision process is an opportunity for the teacher to reinforce

EL Level	K-2	6
	poetry and stories, and have opportunities to dramatize fiction to enhance understanding. The teacher utilizes various GLAD strategies like input charts, graphic organizers, Teacher "big books," picture file cards, observation charts, inquiry charts, T graphs, sentence patterns, "Farmer in the Dell," and various other strategies. Students at this level have acquired basic conversational skills, so the focus is on helping them acquire the academic language and syntax which they need in order to become more proficient speakers, readers, and writers of English.	conventions, and teach new spelling concepts. The teacher utilizes various GLAD strategies like input charts, graphic organizers, Teacher "big books," picture file cards, observation charts, inquiry charts, T graphs, sentence patterns, "Farmer in the Dell," ELD retell, and various other strategies. Students at this level have acquired basic conversational skills, so the focus is on helping them acquire the academic language and syntax which they need in order to become more proficient speakers, readers, and writers of English.
Advanced (CELDT 4-5)	Teachers challenge students to find spelling patterns when reading. Students are given literature that is accessible but requires them to decode around 5-10% of the words they encounter. Centers allow students to explore vocabulary through antonyms and synonyms, and to explore how word meanings change in different contexts. Students read and respond to grade-level literature orally and in grade-appropriate writing. Students analyze and compare literary devices used in different forms of prose. Students have multiple opportunities to read aloud for authentic purposes. Teachers use recording and feedback to help students reflect on their read-aloud skills. The teacher utilizes various GLAD strategies like input charts, graphic organizers, Teacher "big books," picture file cards, observation charts, inquiry charts, T graphs, sentence patterns, "Farmer in the Dell," ELD retell, and various other strategies.	Students respond to texts using specific and appropriate language. The teacher uses many graphic organizers for both reading comprehension and pre-writing activities. Students have opportunities (dramatizations, speeches, circle time) to read aloud with accuracy and expression, from a variety of kinds of texts. Students read and write independently (and are able to self-correct) in literature circles and writer's workshop. The teacher helps students identify topics that are high-interest, and assigns leveled literature that allows students to work in their zone of proximal development (not too easy, not too hard). The teacher utilizes various GLAD strategies like input charts, graphic organizers, Teacher "big books," picture file cards, observation charts, inquiry charts, T graphs, sentence patterns, "Farmer in the Dell," ELD retell, and various other strategies.

STAFF TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Good instruction is the foundation of good EL instruction. (Goldenberg, 2003) RSMD's intensive professional development model with ongoing mentorship is crucial to high performance. Professional development that is directly related to the curriculum teachers use and that provides sustained and hands-on support is the most effective. For ongoing professional development in integrating ELD strategies into literacy and language development for EL students, Rocketship has chosen Project Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD), based on their rigorous hands-on approach and extensive validation studies showing significant gains relative to comparison groups. Each teacher at RSMD will be thoroughly trained in the usage of SDAIE and GLAD. These strategies have already been demonstrated to be highly effective in

regards to EL students' academic achievement. The implementation and usage of these strategies will be expected throughout the campus and each classroom.

Additionally, August and Shanahan found that intensive mentoring and interim assessments were extremely important to creating behavior changes in teacher's instructional practice (August & Shanahan, 2006). RSMD's Assistant Principals' full-time commitment to mentoring helps teachers to better determine ways to scaffold and augment their instruction for EL students. This capacity building model will ensure that the strategies presented in professional development activities provided by both inside and outside experts will be implemented effectively in classrooms and sustained over time.

PARENT / GUARDIAN, STAFF AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The School's plans to involve parents, staff, students, and/or community members in developing, implementing, and/or evaluating programs for English learners.

Parent Communication

Communication with the parents of EL students in their primary language is essential to encourage parent support and involvement. To support this communication, the School will provide translations of major documents, notices, public meetings, and workshops for parents in Spanish and other languages as needed.

Parent Notification of Assessment Results and Initial Identification

The parents/guardians of students with a primary language other than English shall be notified of the English comprehension and primary language assessment results completed for the initial identification. The notification shall be in English and in any language which is spoken by 15 percent or more of the students in the School, as determined by the R-30 Language Census. This information shall be communicated orally when a written notice (Parent Notification) letter is not understood or orally translated into another language if needed. If the Parent Notification letter is not returned, site personnel will complete a follow-up phone call.

This written notification will be done on an annual basis and will invite parents to a meeting to do the following:

1) Inform parents that they have chosen to enroll their children in a charter school with an English immersion program.

2) Parents will be provided with a full written description of the structured English immersion program which includes the educational materials to be used.

3) Inform parents that they have a right to visit the program and to withdraw their student from the program through a waiver.

4) Inform parents of their rights to participate in the School Meeting.

Once completed, the initial identification process will not be repeated unless the parent/guardian claims there is an error.

Parent Participation

Parents are encouraged to participate in any and all school activities, including but not limited to:

- English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), a committee for parents or other community members who want to advocate for English Learners that completes required tasks related to monitoring and evaluating the EL program
- School Site Council (SSC), a team composed of the principal, teachers, classified staff, and parents that works to develop schoolwide achievement plans, maintain communication with the school community, and engage in professional development activities[36]
- Volunteering in classrooms and Learning Lab
- Community Meetings
- Parent/Family Meetings

Parental Rights

Parents concerned with their student's progress or group placement can call for a meeting with teachers and administrators to review the child's EL status and progress.

Community Meetings

Rocketship Mt. Diablo will have monthly community meetings, which are intended to keep the parents and families of RSMD informed and empowered. This meeting will be coordinated by the Principal and along with other school information presented to the community, will advise on programs and services for English Learners. During the meetings, the parents will be informed of programmatic and assessment issues that affect EL students and will also be informed about the programs, funds, and strategies that are being applied to these students. The community will have the opportunity to vote on these issues and ensure that the RSMD community creates a collective for EL instruction and interventions. Please see Element D below for more information on how parents will participate in RSMD.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The RSMD mission of every student on or above grade level by graduation will be the primary means of determining the effectiveness of our approach with EL students. This goal will be measured by academic proficiency on Smarter Balanced and additional assessments. Our interim assessments are correlated to grade-level benchmarks and Smarter Balanced, and will provide monthly feedback on how our students are progressing towards this goal. Additionally, our oral language assessment will test language proficiency predictive of CELDT year-end outcomes. As described above, these assessments will be used to drive changes in classroom instruction and in individual student interventions. As a school with a large professional development budget and several Assistant Principals who are able to mentor other teachers, we have made significant improvement every year in both our general classroom teaching for EL

[36] For a more detailed description of the ELAC and SSC, please see Element D below.

students and our ability to diagnose and intervene with our most challenged EL students. In specific areas of weakness for the school, we will seek outside resources such as the Literacy department at Education schools of nearby universities.

The most important expectation to set is the way that language proficiency level will affect outcomes on the Smarter Balanced assessment. Recently, Genesee et. al concluded that one explanation for the 5-7 years which EL students often take to attain English proficiency could be because of poor instructional practices with EL students.[37] We believe that the key to becoming fluent English proficient is the rigorous data-driven cycle used by RSMD to measure students monthly, modify classroom practices, and provide students with additional instruction.

REPORTING
EL students will take the CELDT test annually. CELDT scores for all EL students will be reported to the authorizer.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS
The Charter School evaluates the effectiveness of its education program for ELs by:

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

Students with Disabilities

SPECIAL EDUCATION (INTEGRATED SPECIAL EDUCATION)

OVERVIEW:

RSMD intends to operate 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). See Appendix A-38 for a letter of support from the El Dorado County Charter SELPA. RSMD will operate in complete compliance with IDEA and SELPA policies and procedures including: 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), AB 602, and all California laws pertaining to special education students. As an LEA, RSMD will be solely responsible and liable, the same as a school district, for providing special education and related services.

[37] Genesee et. al (2006). Educating English Language Learners New York: Cambridge University Press.

As an LEA, RSMD shall receive its AB 602 and Federal revenue allocation through the Charter SELPA and shall utilize those special education funds to provide instruction and related services to eligible pupils in accordance with IDEA, State law, and RSMD's mission. Funding to the school will be based on all students in attendance, including those students with disabilities. Special education funding is considered 'excess cost,' meaning that the same funding is applied to all students, including students with disabilities, and special education funding is used to supplement the base program for students with disabilities. In this way, the perception that students with disabilities deny the school additional dollars becomes moot and all students receive the services and the support they need. RSMD shall be solely responsible for all special education costs which exceed State and Federal special education revenue.

RSMD will be accountable for compliance monitoring and reporting through the Charter SELPA, and will comply with any internal requirements of its authorizer related to IDEA.

INTEGRATED SPECIAL EDUCATION:

RSMD will organize special education program and services to provide an "integrated special education" model in each school. An integrated special education 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. Instead, 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.

RSMD 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 RSMD, a variety of curricular and pedagogical options are employed to maximize student learning in in 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.

With integrated services, student learning takes place in heterogeneous environments with in-class differentiation, accommodations and modifications and small group instruction as the primary means of personalizing instruction for all students. This means that students are, for the most part, not grouped by similar characteristics in the same way all the time. There are 'seats' in every classroom for every potential learner ensuring FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for all eligible students.

At RSMD, Response to Intervention (RtI) supports an Integrated Special Education Model, aligns with NCLB and IDEA 2004, and meets the spirit and the regulations of IDEA. All students have a system of supports readily available at the beginning of a student's difficulties to

provide preventive academic and behavioral instruction within the general education environment. In this way, students (many of who are typically misrepresented and over-identified) receive appropriate integrated services, and it becomes unnecessary for RSMD to refer and excessively determine eligible students who are often those students of color and poverty.

ENROLLMENT OF ALL STUDENTS REGARDLESS OF DISABILITY:

RSMD strives to achieve a student population from the community in which we are serving. Whether a child is eligible under IDEA, or is provided a plan under Section 504, he or she is considered with all others for enrollment at RSMD. 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. Following the public random drawing, students who were not awarded one of the open enrollment spaces are placed on a wait list, in the order in which they are picked at the drawing, for midterm acceptance during the school year.

RSMD recognizes the need to provide all students, with or without a disability, with a free, appropriate public education and recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that "no qualified person with a disability shall, solely by reason of her and his disability, be excluded from the participation in, by denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." We provide access to education for all RSMD students and provide appropriate supports and services to eligible students to ensure access to learning within general education.

ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS WITH IEPS

When a special education student transfers from one SELPA to another, and there is evidence of an existing disability, an Interim Program Placement determination is made. The student's existing IEP, to the extent possible, will be immediately implemented. An Interim Placement form will be completed immediately upon enrollment and parent signature will be obtained. Assessment information as well as records and reports from the prior district may be utilized to make program recommendations. Upon receipt of the signed Individual Assessment Plan (IAP), the team will conduct any additional assessment needed to determine educational needs and make program recommendations. Within 30 days, of the student's enrollment, the IEP team will meet to review the placement, review any new completed assessments, and develop new goals and objectives as needed. Rocketship's practice is to provide the state and our SELPA a list of our special education student roster annually.

CHILD FIND ACTIVITIES:

RSMD shall administer no assessment or evaluation for purposes of admission to the charter school. Rocketship conducts a continuous and proactive effort to identify students with special needs, and those in need of a pre-referral intervention plan, and meet all requirements under IDEA. Each school receives training on special education referral process during the summer professional development sessions. Referrals may be received from teachers, parents, service agencies and other qualified professionals are responded to in writing to ensure timely access to

our Special Education services. An information sheet describing ways to access services is available for parents in the parent handbook. Parents shall be notified that special education and related services shall be provided at no cost to them.

A referral for special education and related services initiates the assessment process and shall be documented. When a verbal referral is made, a charter representative will assist the individual in making a written request for assessment for special education. We will respond in writing and with follow-up meetings to referrals or requests for assessments from teachers, parents, service agencies and other qualified professionals to ensure timely access to our Special Education programs.

All referrals will be responded to in writing by RSMD within 15 days and, if the request is deemed appropriate, the parent will receive a written Assessment Plan within 15 days Parents will be provided a copy of the Parent Procedural Rights with the signed assessment plan. The assessment will be completed and an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting held within 60 days of receipt of the parent's written request.

If the referral was determined to be inappropriate, a meeting will be scheduled with the parents and the referring party to address their educational concerns and review the purpose and scope of Special Education. Even if the parents do not wish to meet, we will respond with a Prior Written Notice explaining why the request for assessment is not being accepted and processed.

OTHER PRE-REFERRAL INFORMATION

Current law requires that all options in the general program be tried before referral to special education. These options may include, but are not limited to the following:

*Accommodations within the general education program, including instruction, environment or curricular supports.
*Research-based instructional strategies and intervention, including universal screening.
*"Tiered" interventions and progress monitoring,
*Problem solving teams within the general education program (RtI model), and consultation with appropriate staff.

All pre-referral options are considered the responsibility of general education staff.

REFERRAL OF PRE-SCHOOL STUDENTS

Because RSMD is a TK-5 charter program, when a student who is referred is not of school age, the child will be referred to his/ her district of residence.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI): SEARCH AND SERVE

Rocketship's RtI approachidentifies those students who are struggling, regardless of the causation, and provides identified students dedicated, targeted, supplemental instruction in their areas of need during their school day. While goal of these specific early interventions is to

reduce eventual referrals for special education services by providing the academic support services students need before they fail, RMSD will work to identify students who do not currently have an IEP but are in need of a pre-referral intervention plan

Additionally, the Rocketship RtI approach provides supplemental instructional support to students eligible under IDEA when that would complement their specialized services. Rocketship's model for intervention starts with in-class daily intervention, consisting of small group, guided reading, centers, and writer's workshop. Monthly formative assessments and progress monitoring may lead to:

*Teacher analysis with specialist consultation and support
*Changes in classroom practice
*Small group and individual intervention
*Strategic evidence based interventions

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

When classroom and RtI interventions have been implemented and documented and a student is still not successful, the next step is a referral to the Assistant Principal for a Student Support Team (SST) meeting. The SST is chaired by a knowledgeable educator and comprised of an administrator(s), general education teacher(s), parent,clinical providers, special education teacher(s), and agency representatives, as needed. The family and school team then meet to develop a more comprehensive intervention plan, or consider other factors that may interfere with learning. If the Student Support Team finds that the pre-intervention plan is not sufficient to meet the student's needs, they will recommend that student for a formal special education assessment and the school may also choose to refer a student for services through the provisions of a Section 504 Plan, if appropriate. To ensure school site understanding of the SST process, training is provided to teachers and school staff as part of the summer training.

GENERAL EDUCATION ACCOMMODATION OR MODIFICATION:

All students with disabilities will be integrated into the programs of RSMD, with the necessary materials, services, and equipment to support their learning. The school will ensure that any student with a disability attending RSMD is properly identified, assessed and provided with necessary services and supports. RSMD will meet all the requirements mandated within a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Rocketship's mission is to ensure students reach grade-level proficiency in Literacy and Math. We employ a variety of general education modification strategies to make this goal reachable for all of our students, including: extended day (8am-4pm), small teacher-led instructional groups, instruction driven by formative assessment results, and daily online learning.

All Rocketship students receive a variety of services in a number of settings, with the goal being access and success in the general education curriculum with designated support from special education (Integrated Special Education) staff. We believe in organizing our professional staff

by the needs of each learner instead of clustering learners by label. RSMD staff is not assigned to a "program" and students are not "placed" in separate classrooms. Our school and community environment is one in which general education and special education work collaboratively to meet the diverse learning needs of our students, encompassing a continuum of services.

Integrated services ensure the integration of resources as well. Our ISE (special education) team works with parents, general educators, and school administrators. We believe that our approach ensures the quality and effectiveness of services for students with disabilities under IDEA, ADA, as well as Section 504. Rocketship's successful Response to Intervention approach, which is tightly coordinated between General and Special Education, ensures thinking about addressing each student's unique learning needs across a system of supports and services. Rocketship continues to iterate to ensure the RtI framework works in concert with the ISE team to promote the best outcomes for all students. Additionally, we continue to integrate the benefits of online learning opportunities for our students with disabilities through full access to the blended instructional model of RSMD, which we believe will improve the educational outcomes for all of our students.

General education modifications may involve:

*homework reductions
*in classroom physical environment adaptations
*instructional or testing accommodation
*other integrated resources or technology tools available for all students.

The special education staff is available for monthly consultation with school site administrative teams and we are therefore able to identify students who may be struggling to make expected progress or be at risk for referral to special education.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

Receipt of the signed assessment plan begins the special education timeline and the assessment plan determines eligibility.

A copy of the Notice of Parent Rights is provided to parent with the assessment plan. An Individual Assessment Plan will also be developed for students currently eligible for IEP services whenever a reassessment is required, such as for the Annual Review or Triennial Re-Evaluation and Notice of Parents Rights will be provided.

Written parent consent is required before the assessment may be conducted. Assessment may begin immediately upon receipt of consent. Within 60 calendar days of receipt of the signed IAP, the assessment must be completed and a team meeting is to be held to determine a student's eligibility, as well as to develop the individualized education plan. Parents are to be provided no less than ten days prior written notice of meetings regarding the educational program for their child.

Program placement is an IEP team decision and written parent consent must be obtained prior to placement. The recommended program placement and services should begin as soon as possible from the date of the parent's written approval of the IEP. A review of each student's IEP must be reviewed conducted at least once annually, including a summary of progress. Re-evaluation must occur every three years to determine a student's continued eligibility or need. Prior to the three year review, the IEP team shall review existing progress towards goals and determine what additional data is needed.

ASSESSMENT:

The special education evaluation has three major purposes:

*To assess needs and gather information about the student.
*To determine eligibility for special education programs and services.
*To recommend the appropriate special education programs and/or related services for the student.

Prior to the assessment, a member of the ISE team will contact the parent to review the reason for assessment and to describe the materials and procedures that will be used to obtain information about the child. The rights of the parent/guardian and the Charter School related to assessment are explained to ensure parent is fully informed.

A parent's written consent for release of confidential information may also be part of the assessment meeting, as well as making arrangements to have the child's needs evaluated through testing and conferences held among others who have worked with the child's, such as counselors, therapists, psychologists, or social services. Written consent for participation in assessment will be needed, and evaluation results will be shared with parents.

Assessments are conducted in primary language and materials when determined necessary to ensure that they measure the extent of disability rather than English language skills. Ecological assessments are conducted for students with moderate-severe disabilities. Assessments are student centered and will meet all federal timelines. All children who transfer into RSMD are placed on a 30-day interim IEP and are assessed as needed within the 30-day period.

Assessment must address all areas related to the suspected disability and be conducted by a multidisciplinary team, including the parent. The assessment plan considers each of the following when appropriate: vision, motor abilities, general ability, self-help, career and vocational abilities and interests, developmental history, hearing, language function, academic performance, orientation and mobility, social and emotional status, and health and development. For pupils with suspected disabilities or a behavior disorder, at least one member of the assessment team, other than the child's general education teacher, shall observe the child's performance in the general classroom setting and document the observation.

For initial evaluations and re-evaluations, students will be assessed in hearing and vision, unless parent consent is not provided. All pupils not meeting threshold hearing test requirements will be appropriately referred for trained personal for hearing tests. A student's health provider may also

provide information if a student has been medically diagnosed with a chronic illness or relevant medical issue that may interfere with learning. In short, no single procedure will used as the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for an individual with exceptional needs. Under certain conditions, parents have the right to obtain an independent assessment at public expense.

The Individual Assessment Plan will be personalized and will reflect the unique concerns and strengths of each student. It will be provided in the primary language of the parent or another mode of communication used by the parent, unless it is clearly not feasible. It will provide an explanation of each type of assessment. It will state that no educational placement will result from the assessment without the consent of the parent. We will have a copy of the Parental Rights and Procedures attached to the IAP. The assessment will be completed and an IEP meeting will be held within 60 calendar days from the date of receipt of the parent's written consent for assessment.

All assessment reports will then possibly include, but not limited to, 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; whether there is a discrepancy between achievement and ability that cannot be corrected with special education services; a determination concerning the effect of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage; 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.

The IEP team—comprised of, at a minimum, the ISE teacher, general education teacher, clinical providers, parent, and student—will then meet with the parents, who are also designated specifically as members of the team, to reach an eligibility determination in consideration of all of the data, observations, and assessment results.

504 PLANS:

As not all children will qualify for special education and related services, RSMD follows Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), where discrimination is prohibited based on a disability. Under Section 504 and Title II of the ADA, it is illegal for schools to deny a student to participate in services, provide a service that is not as effective as provided by others, and provide lower quality services. Also, students with disabilities, like other children in the general education setting, must be provided with courses and instruction that teach the curriculum. Any student who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity including, but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodation by the school.

A 504 team will be assembled by the Assistant Principal and shall include the parent/guardian, the student (where appropriate) 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 is appropriate. If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEIA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under IDEIA, 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 will or will not be identified as a person with a disability is 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 shall consider 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 Charter School's professional staff.

The 504 Plan shall describe 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, must have 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 shall be maintained in the student's file. Each student's 504 Plan will be reviewed at least

once per year to determine the appropriateness of the plan, needed modifications to the plan, and continued eligibility.

See Appendix A-39 for Board approved Section 504 Board Policy, Administrative Regulations, and Parent-Student Rights.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS (ELs):

Because the majority of current Rocketship students are considered EL (70%), 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 may be conducted in a student's native 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 CLAD certification. Training is provided to specialists to ensure that IEP goals are written to support the unique learning needs of EL students with disabilities. Progress monitoring and program evaluation will ensure appropriate practices for re-classification to fluent English proficient status. EL students at RSMD will be served fully in the general education classroom with appropriate small group instruction and personalization in the classroom or the Learning Lab to support learning and developing English proficiency.

The results of the Home Language Survey and CELDT results are considered when developing a student's IEP. Testing accommodations described on the child's IEP, are considered for CELDT testing.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN APPROPRIATE IEP:

Our IEPs are created for the benefit of the student receiving special education services. All Rocketship schools are currently in compliance with all of the guidelines around the development of an appropriate IEP. RSED 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 consortium, 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 organizes special education programs and services to provide a holistic and integrated service delivery system in each school. The integrated service delivery approach requires schools to align and carefully match educational services to students with special

education within existing structures (grade levels, groupings, looping, Learning Lab, etc.) rather than exclusively through special and segregated programs. Special and general education teachers prioritize working collaboratively to bring appropriate instructional supports to each child in the general school setting and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

IEP REVIEW PROCESS:

IEP meetings will be held, at a minimum, once yearly to review the student's progress and make changes to the IEP as needed. Every three years, a triennial IEP meeting will be held to review the review progress and re-examine eligibility for special education services. An IEP will also be held within 30 days of a parent's request or if a manifestation meeting is required. Unless otherwise specified on the student's IEP, parents will be informed three-four times a year of the student's progress toward meeting annual goals.

FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS ASSESSMENTS AND BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLANS:

Rocketship conducts a functional behavior assessment (FBA) if an IEP team determines that a student with a disability exhibits serious behavioral problems. Assessment includes parent interviews, file review, direct observation and review of health and medical records.

THE CONTINUUM OF SERVICES:

SPECIALIZED ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION, MILD TO MODERATE:

We provide mild/moderate services to qualified ISE students. These pull out and push in services range in amount of time and intensity based on the needs of the students. All services are described in the IEP and fully executed by the ISE staff with the assistance of the general education staff and administration. Students receiving mild/moderate services typically require less than 40% of the day in direct services.

Based on our model, qualified Integrated Special Education teachers work with a qualified paraprofessional to provide ISE services. The Paraprofessional works under the direction of the ISE teacher to provide additional instructional support and services to identified students. The ISE teacher will provide monitoring of students' progress; information, materials and assistance to individuals with exceptional needs and their parents; consultation with general education staff on methods for accommodating students with special needs, coordination of special education services, and direct instruction to students with IEPs.

Rocketship's general education approach is built on a system for differentiating instruction according to student need and implementing and monitoring interventions for all students who are not meeting standards. This design supports the goals of a collaborative model with the ISE teacher, who will be responsible for extending these services to students with special needs to meet IEP goals. We believe this close collaboration between general and special education professionals to serve any student who is experiencing learning challenges will help Rocketship meet its goal of helping every student to reach 1.5 years of achievement in each grade. The ISE teacher will be responsible for implementing an IEP such that the student is able to make adequate progress towards grade level standards. Rocketship monitors progress on a regular

basis and the ISE teacher will collect IEP specific data for to determine if adequate progress is being made.

SPECIALIZED ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION, MODERATE TO SEVERE:

We provide more intensive and specialized services for students inclusively that would normally require this type of setting. Our flexible and supportive Integrated Special Education model is able to provide all children both the assistance and independence that they need. We do not anticipate the need for a non-severe SDC "placement setting". To the maximum extent possible, students with disabilities will be educated with non-disabled students. Because of Rocketship's structure, particularly small reading groups, personalized instruction, and time for daily teacher interventions, we believe that Rocketship can serve students with disabilities within the general education program, in the Least Restrictive Environment by providing the supports each student needs. To ensure access to appropriate learning in very specialized cases, if needed, Rocketship will establish a relationship with another area LEA to ensure an appropriate placement for a student.

SEVERE SPECIAL DAY CLASS:
To ensure access to appropriate learning, RSED employs individuals with the Specialist Moderate/Severe Credential. Removal of students from the general education environment would only be considered if the student is not meeting goals and objectives with the provision of supplemental aids and services in that setting. This determination would be reached only through the IEP process with appropriate designated personnel, parent in attendance and written agreement of all members of the IEP team.

DESIGNED INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES—SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, COUNSELING, VISION AND HEARING THERAPY, ETC:

We provide related services, including 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.

INCLUSIVE SERVICES:

To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities will be educated with general education students including non-academic and extracurricular services. Currently all students at all Rocketship schools are served in general education with pull out or push in services to meet intensive need.

PLACEMENT IN A NONPUBLIC SCHOOL/AGENCY:

In some exceptional cases, when a student may require a placement in a more restrictive setting, Rocketship will consider a referral to a non-public school or agency (NPS or NPA). Rocketship will not make referrals for placement at non-public schools, private schools, or agencies without consultation with the SELPA. If a parent places students at a non-public school, private school or residential facility, Rocketship will immediately inform the SELPA. We currently do not have any students enrolled in NPS or residential facility at any of the Rocketship schools.

Mental Health as a Related Service

Whenever necessary, as evidenced by student need, assessment, or recommendation of emergency mental health provider, a referral for assessment of eligibility for mental health as a related service will be made to address a student's mental health needs and potentially access other supports or services for a student and his/her family.

TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN ORDER TO ACCESS SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES:

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. Rocketship will locate a local LEA or a contract service provider to fulfill these portions of the IEP. A transportation assessment will guide the determination.

STAFFING:

Our ISE team is typically comprised of a Program Director, Program Specialist, School Psychologist, ISE Teachers (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 Individualized Education Plan.

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 NCLB requirements. In order for us to build teacher capacity, Rocketship will utilize 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 will be 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, Response to Intervention, and in the classroom setting. This role will be responsible for implementation and recording of data for personalized instructional programs and positive behavior support plans. The Paraprofessional will work under the supervision of ISE teachers and the School Psychologist who will provide weekly oversight, training and direction.

The ISE teacher will be 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.

STAFF TRAINING:

RSMD staff will participate in ongoing staff training prior to school commencement and throughout the school year. Our department provides constant professional development opportunities internally as well as through our SELPA, and we also cross-train school staff in many areas. Areas of cross training typically include areas such as: Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training, sensory integration and service delivery training, speech services and screening process, SAT-SST-SPED referral process, etc.

ISE professional development is provided to all members of the IEP Team. Training for Paraprofessionals typically includes, but is not limited to, behavior and Positive Behavior Support systems, foundations of SPED, special health care issues, cultural awareness, intro to low incidence disabilities, etc. Training for ISE teachers includes, but is not limited to, technology in SPED, advanced behavior analysis, language development for all students, data collection and decision making, compliance with SPED law, autism spectrum disorders, independence building, writing IEP goals to address literacy, interpretation of assessments, handwriting without tears, ALERT program implementation in general education classrooms, writing IEP goals aligned with standards, SEIS data entry and special education compliance, etc.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

Parent Participation and Training:

RSMD parents are encouraged to participate in the school community through volunteer hours and monthly community meetings. Parents of students with IEP's are full members of the parent/school community. Parents are invited to participate in Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings through El Dorado County Office of Education (EDCOE) 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. Parents are also encouraged to join Parents Helping Parents who meet on campus. 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:

ISE Teachers in collaboration with General Education Teachers begin their school year with a home visit to all students on their caseload. ISE Teachers 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 ISE teacher 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.

Translation:

RSMD 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.

Alternative 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 RSMD or the California Department of Education.

DUE PROCESS:

RSED understands and complies with all due process cases. We ensure that all parents are informed of their procedural rights and provide all information required. Our staff is experienced and able to participate in any legal actions necessary. A charter attorney with special education expertise is available as needed.

FACILITY COMPLIANCE WITH ADA:

All existing RSED facilities were built completely ADA compliant—all buildings, rooms, and auxiliary areas were constructed 100% up to ADA codes. All areas are fully accessible by individuals with any disability. The facility proposed for this school will also meet all ADA compliance requirements.

COMPLIANCE MONITORING:

The California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS) information will be reviewed by Rocketship's Director of Integrated Special Education on a regular basis to ensure compliance with state and federal statutes, reporting requirements, and timelines. In addition, Rocketship will be accountable for all compliance monitoring and reporting required through the SELPA.

RSMD will collaborate with the California Department of Education to collect/maintain information required by IDEA and lists: age, grade, type of disability, EL status, and number of

students receiving services, number of students receiving and types of test modifications and exemptions; settings of service; suspension data, and reasons for charter exiting.

TESTS AND OTHER EVALUATION MATERIALS:

Tests and other evaluation materials are validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel. Tests and other evaluation materials include 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 will or will not be identified as a person with a disability is made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of this student in their primary language along with 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 disability under the Section 504, the 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the student receives the free and appropriate education (FAPE). In developing the 504 plan, the 504 team shall consider 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 shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program accommodations, modifications, or services that may be necessary.

ELEMENT B: MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

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).

Assessment Beliefs

Our assessment methods are based on the following beliefs:

- In order to have a complete picture of a student's growth, differentiated assessment methods must be used. Assessments for individual students should focus on individual mastery of specific content standards and learning objectives.
- There should be an appropriate relationship between a desired student outcome and the means used to assess it. Assessments should be aligned to the prioritized standards and student objectives.
- Knowledge Targets (Stiggins, 2004)[38] should be studied and aligned to student assessment. All assessment methods should be based on what we expect students to know and to be able to do with specific information.
- Assessment should promote and support reflection and self-evaluation on the part of students, staff, and parents.

All RSMD goals are focused and aligned to the state priorities. In particular, RSMD is focused on ensuring that all students graduate elementary school at and above grade level based on the Common Core State Standards. By reaching these goals, we will ensure that our students will be educated persons in the 21st century and well on their path to college graduation and career readiness.

School Outcome Goals

RSMD is dedicated to documenting student achievement of the state content standards each year through state-mandated student assessments. As is required by the California Department of Education Code Section 60605, students will participate in the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress ("CAASPP") and all other mandated accountability programs (CELDT, etc.). Through these assessments, RSMD shall demonstrate student mastery of state standards. Standardized assessments allow us to compare our students' performance with the rest of the state. In the absence of a State mandated test in any year, RSMD may administer another nationally standardized test. In addition, the Charter School may provide internal learning performance accountability documentation. This internal documentation may include, but is not limited to: STEP, Individual Education Plan ("IEP") goals, and other methods by which student progress may be assessed.

[38] Stiggins, R.J., Arter, J., Chappuis, J., & Chappuis, S. (2004). *Classroom Assessment* for *Student Learning: Doing It Right-Using It Well.*

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(B), the following is a table describing RSMD's outcomes that align with the state priorities, and goals and actions to achieve the state priorities, as identified in Element A of this charter.

The LCAP and any revisions necessary to implement the LCAP, including outcomes and methods of measurement listed below, shall not be considered a material revision to the charter, and shall be maintained by RSMD at the school site.

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))

Goals:

1. 100% of core teachers will be appropriately assigned and hold a valid CA Teaching Credential with appropriate English learner authorization as defined by the CA Commission on Teaching Credentialing.
2. 100% of pupils will have access to standards-aligned materials and additional instructional materials as outlined in our charter petition.
3. Facilities will be maintained and in good condition with repairs made on a timely basis.

School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible
All core teacher candidates will be screened for employment will hold valid CA Teaching Credential with appropriate English learner authorization; RSED Human Resources will annually review assignment and credential status.	Initial and annual verification of core teacher credential as reported by the CA Commission on Teacher Credentialing; CALPADS Report 3.5 NCLB Core Course Section Compliance; Annual publication of School Accountability Report Card.	RSED Human Resources Principal
All instructional materials purchased will be aligned to CA Common Core State Standards and aligned with our charter petition. We will purchase additional classroom libraries rich in non-fiction texts. We will purchase additional classroom technology.	Principal reviews all instructional materials before purchase pursuant to E.C. § 60119.	Principal
Regular general cleaning by custodial staff will maintain campus cleanliness; Regular facility inspections will screen for safety hazards.	Regular site inspection documents prepared by Business Operations Manager; Annual Facility Inspection Reports.	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.

Goals:

1. All teachers are trained to implement CA CCSS in their classrooms.
2. Annually, 100% of EL students will access academic content knowledge through the implementation of the CA CCSS.
3. 30% of EL students will be reclassified after three years of enrollment at RSMD.

School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible
RSMD teachers will receive at least 5 hours of professional development based on CCSS and the associated RSMD "focus standards" as outlined in this charter.	Professional Development calendar.	Principal Bay Area Director of Schools
EL students participate in English Language Arts/Literacy instruction with appropriate instructional support. Teachers receive training in Guided Language Acquisition Design.	EL student performance on the CAASPP assessments; CELDT Assessments.	Principal
EL students participate in English Language Arts/Literacy instruction with appropriate instructional support. All teachers will participate in professional development regarding ELD standards and appropriate strategies for support and intervention, as outlined in detail in this charter.	Reclassification and enrollment records.	Principal

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

Goals:

1. Parents are engaged in their students' learning and actively participate in school decision making.

School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible
Parents are engaged in their students' learning and actively participate in school decision making.	RSMD will hold a minimum of 3 parent conferences a year and a minimum of 4 community meetings for parents to weigh in	Principal

	on critical school decisions.	

STATE PRIORITY #4— STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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

- ***A.*** *CA Assessment of Student Performance and Progress 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 –* ***N/A***
- ***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 –* ***N/A***
- ***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 –* ***N/A***

Goals:

1. Rocketship students will exceed the average performance levels of students in schools with similar demographics in the local school district on the Common Core Assessments
2. RSMD will meet or exceed State-wide academic performance index ("API") growth target school wide and for all subgroups.
3. 50% of students in CELDT levels 1-3 will move at least 1 CELDT level annually.
4. 30% of students will be reclassified after three years of enrollment at RSMD.

School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible
Implementation of the CCSS aligned curriculum and instructional strategies and teachers will assess students throughout the year. Teachers will receive training on the CA Common Core Standards. Additionally, we will implement assessment software that mimics the online testing format and rigor of the CAASPP.	CAASPP results and API reports or equivalent as determined by the CA Department of Education.	Principal
EL students will receive in class instructional support which includes 1-on-1 teacher support, small group work, usage of SDAIE and ELD instructional strategies, GLAD instructional strategies, and additional English Learner instructional best practices as outlined in the charter.	CELDT/ELPAC Score Reports; EL Reclassification documentation; enrollment records; results of bimonthly benchmark assessments and other formative assessments	Principal

STATE PRIORITY #5: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

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

Goals:

1. At least 95% attendance as measured by ADA
2. RSMD will have truancy rates less than those of surrounding district schools with similar demographics.

School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible
RSMD will provide a safe and engaging learning environment for all its students and families, including those of the various subgroups enrolled. RSMD will provide unique enrichment center opportunities and field trips to engage students and encourage high attendance.	Monthly and Annual ADA reports.	Principal
Parents will be made aware of the school's attendance policy (see Appendix A-29). RSMD will notify parents of student absences. RSMD will provide a safe and engaging learning environment for all its students and families, including those of the various subgroups enrolled.	Annual Truancy reports.	Principal

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.*

Goals:

1. RSMD suspension rates will be lower than surrounding district schools with similar demographics.
2. RSMD will maintain an annual expulsion rate of less than 1%.
3. 70% of parents are satisfied with the relationship they have with their child's teachers.

School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible

Teachers will be trained in Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports as outlined in this charter. RSMD will track student behavior or infractions and conduct conferences when serious infractions occur.	Suspension and expulsion records.	Principal
RSMD will regularly conduct a parent survey. Families will be encouraged to complete the survey. Teachers will conduct home visits and other parent teacher conferences. RSMD will provide additional support staff during high-traffic periods of arrival and dismissal to ensure school safety.	Parent survey.	Principal

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))—**N/A***

Goals:

1. Annually, 100% of students, including all student subgroups, unduplicated students, and students with exceptional needs, will have access to and enroll in all core and non-core content areas available.

School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible
All academic content areas, curriculum, and technology will be available to all students, including student subgroups, at all grade levels.	Course Schedules, including Reading, Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies, Arts, Socio-Emotional Learning, and Learning Lab	Principal

STATE PRIORITY #8—OTHER STUDENT OUTCOMES

Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.

Goals:

1. RSMD will outperform nearby district schools with similar demographics on the subjects

that have state-mandated assessments (ELA, Math, Science). Students will participate in all non-tested subjects (Social Studies, Visual Arts, Physical Education, and Life Skills). **2.** Students, including all subgroups, will receive feedback on their demonstration of Rocketship Core Values.		
School Action	**Method of Assessment**	**Person(s) Responsible**
The RSMD literacy model will have a heavy focus on phonics, fluency and vocabulary. As part of a Balanced Literacy approach, all students will participate in Guided Reading to ensure they receive instruction targeted at their skill level. Writing will be taught through a workshop model. Additional information can be found previously in Element A, as well as Appendices A-2, A-3 and A-4 of this charter.	CAASPP assessment results NWEA MAP.	Principal
In addition to emphasizing basic skills and computational fluency, teachers will focus on developing students' number sense and algebraic reasoning abilities. Students will be challenged to reason and communicate mathematically. Additional information can be found previously in Element A, as well as Appendices A-5 and A-6 of this charter.	CAASPP assessment results NWEA MAP.	Principal
Social Studies and Science instruction will be embedded in Literacy and/or math instruction through the use of thematically integrated, standards-based Understanding by Design (UbD) units. Additional information can be found previously in Element A, as well as Appendix A-7 of this charter.	CAASPP assessment results Teacher created assessments.	Principal
Arts will be integrated into the Humanities block, and or Enrichment courses. Additional information can be found previously in Element A, as well as Appendix A-7 of this charter.	Course schedules.	Principal

All students will have an opportunity to learn about different methods of exercise including team and individual sports.	Course schedules. 5th Grade Physical Fitness Results.	Principal
Rocketship teachers will be trained on the Rocketship Core Values and evaluate students against those values.	Report cards.	Principal

ELEMENT C: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT AND SCHOOL OUTCOMES

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).

Because of the importance of data to our RtI model, RSMD will be a data-driven school. .

Use and Reporting of Data

Because of the importance of data to our RtI model, RSMD will be a data-driven school. As discussed further in the Data Driven Instruction and Professional Development sections of Element A, teachers will spend much of their time developing the expertise to use data to understand student challenges and then to develop the skills they need to individualize instruction and overcome these challenges. The data analysis will be tied to professional development on instruction, so that teachers can enhance their understanding of student performance in light of normative data, and modify their instructional designs accordingly. In this way, staff will continuously be challenged to rethink current pedagogical practices to meet the changing needs of students.

Additional ways in which RSMD teachers and school leaders will utilize data include the following:

- Teachers and school leaders will participate in quarterly Data Days following the administration of the bi-monthly benchmark assessments to identify class-wide trends, create instructional plans for individual students who are not making progress, and revisit previous goals to ensure that all students are on track.
- Each classroom will publicly track class-based and individual student goals.
- Students will set and track individual goals. Students will also meet with teachers following their bi-monthly assessments to review data summaries and discuss their progress.
- The entire school will participate weekly in Launch/Landing, during which student progress toward individual goals will be celebrated.

As detailed above in Element A, RSMD will use Schoolzilla, a data nwarehouse and reporting system, to track student data. Schoolzilla integrates data from state assessments, teacher-created standards-based assessments, school-wide enrollment and attendance records, and a wide range of other sources. Schoolzilla will also be integrated with RSMD's Student Information System.

Student progress towards skill mastery will be documented at least three times annually in standards-based report cards**.** In addition to the standards-based report card items, we add summary metrics in Literacy and Math based on our bi-monthly assessments to aid parents in understanding where their children are on the path to reaching or exceeding grade level proficiency. Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled three times a school year and more often on an as-needed basis. Teachers will share students' academic and socio-emotional progress with parents. Upper grade students will be given the opportunity to participate in conferences to reinforce their participation in the learning process. Additionally, the school will

publish student results annually through the SARC, in compliance with the California Constitution, California Education Code and NCLB. Student achievement data will be disaggregated annually to identify the academic performance of students by sub-groups (e.g., by ethnicity, gender, English Learners, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities).

Additionally, Rocketship Education's Board of Directors and leadership team regularly reviews progress towards these goals using our network health dashboards. These dashboards are regularly reviewed by our executive team, board, and school leadership. This regular review helps keep our schools on track to meet these goals.

Student assessments are designed to align to the mission, exit outcomes, and the curriculum described in the charter. RSMD collects annual data from the assessments listed above and will utilize the data to identify areas of necessary improvements in the educational program. RSMD shall comply with Education Code Section 47604.3 and the Public Records Act.

Assessment Plan

CAASPP data and data from the NWEA MAP assessment will be used at the beginning of the year to help teachers understand the baseline achievement of their students along with specific areas of strength and weakness. To correctly assess whether students are on track to meet their growth goals during the year, we will administer the NWEA assessment at the beginning, middle and end of each academic year, as well as conducting bi-monthly assessments of each student in Reading, Writing, and Math. Following are the current methods we plan to use to assess students. Our Reading assessment is based on STEP. Our Writing assessment is a rubric at each grade-level based on Lucy Calkins. Our benchmarks are aligned to the CA Common Core State Standards. We have correlated the NWEA assessment and these internal assessments with performance on end of year CAASPP data, and CELDT testing to correctly measure progress and give teachers detailed data about areas in which each student needs improvement.

The table below outlines existing Rocketship Assessments and methods of assessment, and how they will align to the LCAP State Priorities and Rocketship goals listed above in Element B. RSMD affirms that, to the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.

Measurable Goals (as defined in Element B)	Assessment Tools	Assessment Description	Assessment Schedule
State Priority #1, Goal 3: Facilities will be maintained and in good condition with repairs made on a timely basis.	*Site inspection reports	Site inspection checklists and facility inspection checklists, prepared by Business Operations Manager	Quarterly
State Priority #2, Goal 1: All teachers are trained to implement CA CCSS in	*Professional development calendar	*Summer and school year professional development calendar	Annually

their classrooms.	*Teacher rosters	*Rosters for current teachers	
State Priority #2, Goal 3: 30% of EL students will be reclassified after three years of enrollment at RSMD.	*Reclassification records *Enrollment records	*English language development assessment *State ELA assessment *Internal writing assessment *Enrollment date	Annually
State Priority #3, Goal 1: Parents are engaged in their students' learning and actively participate in school decision making.	*Materials from Community Meetings *Materials from Parent Conferences	* All structures will create and maintain agendas and reports on parent participation.	Continuous basis as scheduled by the school
State Priority #4, Goal 1: Rocketship students will exceed the average performance levels of students in schools with similar demographics in the local school district on the Common Core Assessments.	*CAASPP	State required assessments - STAR, Smarter Balanced	Annually
State Priority #4, Goal 2: RSMD will meet or exceed State-wide academic performance index ("API") growth target school wide and for all subgroups.	*API	State required assessments - Smarter Balanced	Annually
State Priority #4, Goal 3: 50% of students in CELDT levels 1-3 will move at least 1 CELDT level annually.	*CELDT/ELPAC	English language development assessment	Annually
State Priority #4, Goal 4: 30% of EL students will be reclassified after three years of enrollment at RSMD.	*Reclassification records *Enrollment records	*English language development assessment *State ELA assessment *Internal writing assessment *Enrollment date	Annually

State Priority #5, Goal 1: At least 95% attendance as measured by ADA.	*Monthly and Annual ADA reports	*Monthly and Annual ADA reports	Monthly, Annually
State Priority #5, Goal 2: RSMD will have truancy rates less than those of surrounding district schools with similar demographics.	*Annual truancy reports	*Annual truancy reports for RSMD and nearby schools	Annually
State Priority #6, Goal 1: RSMD suspension rates will be lower than surrounding district schools with similar demographics.	*Annual School Accountability Report Card & Annual Report and CALPADS Report 7.1	*Annual School Accountability Report Card & Annual Report and CALPADS Report 7.1	Annually
State Priority #6, Goal 2: RSMD will maintain an annual expulsion rate of less than 1%.	*Annual School Accountability Report Card & Annual Report and CALPADS Report 7.1	*Annual School Accountability Report Card & Annual Report and CALPADS Report 7.1	Annually
State Priority #6, Goal 3: 70% of parents are satisfied with the relationship they have with their child's teachers.	*Parent Survey	*Internally created survey capturing parent satisfaction with Rocketship	Bi-annually
State Priority #7, Goal 1: Annually, 100% of students, including all student subgroups, unduplicated students, and students with exceptional needs, will have access to and enroll in all core and non-core content areas available.	*Course schedules	*Course schedules for students (e.g. bell schedules)	Annually
State Priority #8, Goal 1: RSMD will outperform nearby district schools with similar demographics on the subjects that have state-	*CAASPP *5th grade physical fitness assessment *Course schedules *NWEA MAP *Teacher created	*State Required Assessments *Course schedules for students (e.g. bell schedules) *Nationally normed	Varies by assessment (Annually, Quarterly and more frequent as necessary)

mandated assessments (ELA, Math, Science). Students will participate in all non-tested subjects (Social Studies, Visual Arts, Physical Education, and Life Skills).	assessments	English Language Arts and Math assessments *Internally created teacher assessment to measure student performance	
<u>State Priority #8, Goal 2:</u> Students, including all subgroups, will receive feedback on their demonstration of Rocketship Core Values.	*Report cards	*Student ratings against each of the Core Values (Respect, Responsibility, Empathy, and Persistence)	3 times a year

ELEMENT D: GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL ISSUES

"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)

Legal Status

In accordance with Education Code section 47604, RSMD shall be operated by Rocketship Education (RSED), a California non-profit public benefit corporation with 501(c)(3) status pursuant to California law. RSED will be governed by a Board of Directors pursuant to its corporate bylaws as adopted, and as subsequently amended from time to time, which shall be consistent with this charter.

Please see RSED's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and Conflict of Interest Code in Appendix D-1.

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

The proposed governance structure will help ensure that RSMD becomes and remains viable.

Organizational Structure

RSMD will be governed by the RSED Board of Directors. The Board is ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of RSMD. Board Members have a responsibility to solicit input from, and opinions of, the parents of students, and the faculty and staff, regarding issues of significance and to weigh the input and opinions carefully before taking action. The primary method for executing their responsibilities is the adoption of policies that offer guidance and interpretation of the charter and procedures to assist the staff in facilitating the implementation of such policies.

The Rocketship Education bylaws state that the Board must consist of at least three and up to twenty five members who will govern RSMD. 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 Rocketship Education Board does not experience full turnover at once.

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
- Chief Executive Officer, responsible for general management of Rocketship Education
- 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.

In addition, each region with Rocketship schools will have at least one advisory board made up of parents as well as community and business leaders. The advisory board will be crucial in conveying the needs of the communities that Rocketship schools serve to the Rocketship Education Board of Directors and will give parents and community members a voice in the governance of RSMD. Please see Appendix D-2 for an example of the Rocketship Education Advisory Board policy.

The Board will meet on a regular basis. Currently, the board meets quarterly and more often as needed. RSED's Board of Directors 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:

- Operation of charter schools
- Real estate expertise
- Legal expertise
- Financial expertise
- Fundraising ability
- Significant involvement in the communities served by RSMD
- Subject and professional development knowledge in Literacy and Math

RSED Board Duties

The RSED Board of Directors will be responsible for the operation and fiscal affairs of the Charter School including but not limited to:

- Setting the enrollment and grade-level configuration for the Charter School;
- Approval of annual school budget, calendar, salary schedules, major fundraising events, and grant writing;
- Monitor negotiation and approval of a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") or other contracts with the CDE;
- 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 all changes to the school charter;
- Participation as necessary in dispute resolution;

- Monitoring overall student performance;
- Evaluation of RSMD Principal;
- Monitoring the performance of the Charter School and taking necessary action to ensure that the school remains true to its mission and charter;
- Monitoring the fiscal solvency of the Charter School;
- Participation in RSMD annual independent fiscal audit;
- Participation as necessary in student expulsion matters pursuant to RSMD policy;
- Increasing public awareness of the Charter School

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

Board Meetings

The Board of Directors 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 shall 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 is available within the jurisdictional boundaries of Contra Costa County for every meeting. The notice and agenda of each meeting will provide for public comment from each teleconference location.

RSED has adopted a conflict of interest code which complies with the Political Reform Act, Government Code Section 87100, and applicable conflict restrictions required by the Corporations Code. (Please see the Conflicts of Interest Code for RSED in Appendix D-1.) [39]

The Board of Directors meetings will be headed by a Board Chairman.

As long as a quorum exists as defined by the corporate bylaws, measures voted on by the Board of Directors may be passed with a simple majority of present members as allowable under state law.

Board Training

The RSED Board of Directors shall participate annually in professional training regarding topics such as board governance, Brown Act, strategic planning and conflicts of interest rules.

Board Delegation of Duties

The RSED Board may execute any powers delegated by law to it and shall discharge any duty imposed by law upon it and may delegate to an employee of RSED any of those duties with the exception of those listed in the Bylaws (please see Appendix-D). Furthermore, the Board may not delegate approval of the budget, approval of independent fiscal audit, approval of Board policies, hiring or termination of the CEO, and expulsion of students, and any other duties

[39] To be updated as necessary to meet updates to applicable conflicts of interest laws.

prohibited by law. The Board, however, retains ultimate responsibility over 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 entity designated;
- Describe in specific terms the authority of the Board being delegated, any conditions on the delegated authority or its exercise and the beginning and ending dates of the delegation; and
- Require an affirmative vote of a majority of present Board members.

The Board may utilize an Executive Committee as needed to perform various governance functions. If utilized, the Executive Committee will be composed of no fewer than 2 members. The Executive Committee shall comply with the Brown Act and the Conflicts Code of the Charter School.

Rocketship Education

The Staff of Rocketship Education shall provide the following services to RSMD:

(a) creating the School, including, but not limited to, any and all required legal and financial filings;
(b) creating, preparing and submitting the School's charter;
(c) researching, locating and preparing a suitable facility (the "Facility") for the operation of the School;
(d) researching, providing or preparing for any future expansion of the Facility to accommodate growth of the School;
(e) providing professional development training for certain employees of the Company prior to the commencement of the school year and continuing throughout the school year as necessary;
(f) providing office services, such as accounting, payroll, human resources and billing;
(g) supervising the annual budget;
(h) developing and executing fundraising opportunities;
(i) working with the Charter Authorizer, CDE and other agencies as necessary, including complying with reporting requirements and any other general inquiries received from these agencies;
(j) supervising the parent coordinators and parent involvement generally;
(k) marketing for student enrollment;
(l) assisting with public relations;
(m) writing grants for state and other funding;
(n) providing guidance relating to the curriculum;
(o) providing support for information technology;
(p) securing working capital financing for the school
(q) providing financial support as needed; provided, however, that such support be agreed to by the parties in a separate writing;

(r) providing any other operational or educational needs relating to the School that the Company may reasonably request of Manager.
(s) collecting Special Education funds and managing the Special Education program budget on behalf of all Rocketship Education schools that are part of the El Dorado County SELPA and therefore having the authority to determine the allocation of Special Education dollars based on Special Education needs at each site; and
(t) collecting in-lieu property taxes and reconciling payments made by the Mt. Diablo Unified School District against actual amounts owed pursuant to the Charter Schools Act.

Parent Participation

Rocketship views deep parental engagement and ongoing advocacy for their children as essential to our mission of eliminating the achievement gap.

A new charter school can evoke a mix of hope and anxiety from targeted school communities. While parents are eager for high quality school options, many are skeptical of a new provider and its intentions. To mitigate these concerns, RSMD is committed to communicating transparently and respectfully with the community from the onset. Staff will hold a series of open meetings for parents and community members—after school and on weekends. In addition, the organization will sponsor community outreach nights so parents and community members can be informed of the new vision for this school.

As RSMD is being established to serve the needs of the students and their families, there are a number of ways that parents may participate in the leadership of the school. Because RSMD will be its own LEA and projects to have over 21 English Learners enrolled, RSMD will form an ELAC committee that complies with all of the California Department of Education English Learner Categorical Program requirements as well as a School Site Council as required by state law. RSMD parents will be encouraged to join the ELAC, School Site Council, and the Regional Advisory Board.

The School Site Council (SSC) is a requirement for all schools that receive federal or state categorical funding. The SSC is composed of the principal, teachers, classified staff, and parents from each school. The SSC is required to produce a Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), which is replaced by the LEA plan for charters, which incorporates academic instructional programs and all categorical resource expenditures for their school, and monitor the implementation of and revise the plan annually. All schools with more than 21 English Learners must have a ELAC (English Language Advisory Committee) that completes required tasks related to monitoring and evaluating the EL program and directly contributes to the school's SPSA or LEA plan.

Beyond compliance with Ed Code, Rocketship's School Site Councils will seek to empower and inform parents in the education of their children, the allocation of school resources, and the building of community and culture at their specific school. Additionally, Rocketship's SSCs will not only be an open forum for parents, but will also have opportunities for parents' professional development (through guided exposure to data and analyses, and training around budget review).

Finally, each SSC will elect a parent representative to serve on Rocketship's Regional Advisory or Governing Board, giving them system-wide exposure and input.

The ELAC is a committee for parents or other community members who want to advocate for English Learners. The ELAC membership must include parents of English learners, but may also include other duly elected family & community members. The percentage of parents who are elected must be at least equal to the percentage of English learners at the school site. For example, if 50% of the students at a given site are English learners, at least 50% of the membership of the ELAC must be parents. The remaining 50% of the committee members can be the principal, community members, teachers of participating students, instructional aides, parent liaisons and other staff. **However, only parents of English Learners are empowered to elect additional members to the ELAC.**

The ELAC will be involved in the following tasks:

- ⇨ The school's program for English learners.
- ⇨ The development of the Single School Plan for Student Achievement.(BSC/SPSA)
- ⇨ The school's needs assessment.
- ⇨ The school's annual language census (R-30 LC Report). This is submitted through CALPADS, but this report is a site copy that should be distributed to the ELAC.
- ⇨ Efforts to make parents aware of the importance of regular school attendance.
- ⇨ Develops the Title 1 Parent Involvement Policy and Home - School Compact

Additional Opportunities for Parent Involvement

Parents, students and teachers will meet regularly to plan and assess the student's learning progress and determine goals. In addition, other parental involvement opportunities include:

- **School and staff evaluations**: parents fill out a survey each year evaluating the strengths and weaknesses they identify with the program to be reviewed by staff and faculty for consideration of ongoing improvement of Rocketship Education.
- **Volunteer opportunities**: the Principal will maintain a list of various opportunities for parents to volunteer at RSMD. As part of the Commitment to Excellence, families are asked to commit to 30 hours of volunteer time per year. While this commitment is not a requirement, it is strongly recommended as a method to foster family-school partnerships. In order to fulfill their commitment, parents have the opportunity to help in classrooms, lead extracurricular activities, assist in event planning, attend field trips and serve on parent committees.
- **Advocacy**: parents and community members communicate the school design and outcomes to the public, educators, and policy makers and advocate for necessary policies and resources.

Determining Success for Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is critical to the academic success of RSMD students and the overall success of RSMD, and so the Rocketship Governing Board of Directors and RSMD school leaders will use dashboard metrics to measure the success of parent involvement. The key goals for successful parent involvement are:

- Enlisting at least 20 "Parent Leaders" at RSMD: 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 Concord and the Mt. Diablo community.
- Achieving at least 70% 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 RSMD Schools.
- Engaging each RSMD family to complete at least 30 volunteer hours at the school per year: RSMD parents will be encouraged to volunteer at the schools to help tighten the link between the families and the school as well as assist RSMD teachers and staff with various school operations. These activities will vary widely but will include classroom assistance, translating documents, administrative assistance, and assisting in special school events. Though these volunteer hours are encouraged, no family is required to complete the 30 volunteer hours.

Families will be made aware of RSMD's performance in a variety of ways: First and foremost, school performance (not solely on state accountability assessments, but also on Rocketship internal assessments, and other summative assessments such as the NWEA) will often be a topic of discussion at Rocketship Community meetings which will be held on a monthly basis. Further, it will also be a topic discussed by teachers with Rocketship parents during parent-teacher conferences and by the Principal at various other school events, including back-to-school barbeques assuming assessment results have been released.

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)

RSMD shall recruit 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), RSMD shall be nonsectarian in its employment practices and all other operations. RSMD 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 RSMD.

RSMD is a School of Choice and will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding background checks, clearance of personnel, maintenance and disclosure of employee records, and NCLB guidelines.

Key Positions

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

The Principal is the instructional, cultural, managerial, and community leader of the 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 required
- BA from accredited university
- Valid Teaching Credential

Assistant Principal

RSMD will have at least two Assistant Principals, focused full-time on the implementation of RSMD's academic systems and mentoring teachers to improve their effectiveness. Job qualifications for the Assistant Principal include:

- Assistant Principals have made significant gains with their students for at least the past year or years;
- Assistant Principals care deeply about children. Assistant Principals must espouse RSMD's culture of caring, showing concern not just for the academic, but for the emotional welfare of their students;
- Assistant Principals must show 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;
- Assistant Principals must be strong team players, 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.

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 through coordination of SST and SAT processes
- Collaborate with the ISE teacher 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
- Manage the BTSA process for eligible staff and support other teachers through the credentialing process, which includes the successful completion of Teacher Performance Assessments
- Have a lasting impact on the design of network professional development resources

Qualifications:

- 2+ years' experience teaching in an urban city classroom and realizing significant gains
- 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 required
- 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 by RSMD will be considered noncore 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 noncore, non-college preparatory courses.

RSMD core teachers at all levels shall meet or exceed all "highly qualified requirements" under the No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB").

Accordingly, a teacher of core academic subjects must meet the following qualifications:

(1) a bachelor's degree;
(2) California teaching credential: CLAD or BCLAD, clear or in progress
(3) demonstrated core academic subject matter competence. Demonstrated core academic subject competence for elementary grades is done through CCTC's approved subject matter examination or by completing the California High Objective Uniform State Standard of Education ("HOUSSE").

RSMD 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 be CLAD certified or a CCTC recognized equivalent.

Teachers assigned to a Transitional Kindergarten classroom will, by August 1, 2020, have completed 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 that teacher, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool age children that is comparable to the 24 units of education described above; or a child development permit issued by the CCTC.

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, merit-based salaries typically averaging 120% of salaries in surrounding districts. A component of Teacher pay and the criteria for considering their advancement to Assistant Principal will include the following:

- Personal achievement of significant gains for students which they have directly instructed;
- Parent and Assistant Principal satisfaction with their teaching;
- Peer and Assistant Principal satisfaction with their mentoring and instructional leadership.

We believe it will be possible for Teachers to be promoted to Assistant Principal positions within two to three years of becoming Teachers.

RSMD personnel progress up a career ladder. Advancement up the ladder is based on the quality of that teacher's instruction: student academic outcomes, his or her ability to work in a team of educators, and satisfaction of the families served by this teacher. We believe that teachers need a career path which rewards their success both with more responsibility and significantly greater compensation. RSMD has a career ladder for teachers, which recognizes student performance as a primary factor in advancement. Creating a career ladder like RSMD's has several advantages, including employee retention, succession planning, and better career development (CA State Dept. of Employee Development, 2003).

Integrated Special Education (ISE) Teacher

The ISE Teacher is a full-time position that reports to the RSMD Principal. The ISE Teacher 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 ISE Teacher 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 RSMD 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 assisting other personnel in the diagnosis of learning disorders, development of remediation plans and/or student progress

- Provide one-to-one or small group instruction, direct services and push in or pull out intervention as required by IEP
- Administer standardized achievement tests, interpreting results to determine learners' strengths and areas of need for initial, annual and triennial assessments
- 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 assuring 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 Education
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Knowledge of curriculum, education code and special education law/policies
- Skills in appropriate special subject matter
- 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

Individualized Learning Specialists (ILS)

Individual Learning Specialists 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
- Bachelor's Degree is a plus, but not required
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

Paraprofessional

The Rocketship Special Education Paraprofessional position is a full time position that reports to the RSMD 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

Transitional Kindergarten Assistant Teacher

The Rocketship Transitional Kindergarten Assistant Teacher position is a full time, non---exempt, 11--- month position that reports to a site---based school leader. Assistant Teachers will work closely with a transitional kindergarten multiple subjects credentialed teacher, embedded in their self---contained classrooms.

Responsibilities

- Tutor small groups of students on literacy and/or math skills; use Rocketship---adopted curricula to deliver lessons to target students' intervention needs
- Lead select whole---class learning activities, such as read alouds (if Child Development Permit is held)
- 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
- 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
- Work directly with students in group, and individual settings to execute highly structured programs or instructional review
- Participate in grade level meetings to review student data and problem---solve around grade level priorities and challenges
- Interpret and manage online student data generated by multiple educational software programs; monitor student progress using Rocketship's data platforms; and promote individual and group progress within the curricula

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 young children 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
- Experience working with students with disabilities (desired)
- AA Degree and HS Diploma or GED (required)
- Possession of a Child Development Associate Teacher Permit or Child Development Assistant Permit is a plus, but not required
- Bachelor's Degree is a plus, but not required
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

Other Positions

Office Manager

The Office Manager will be responsible for daily operations at RSMD. The Office Manager will report to the Principal. Qualifications include the following.

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 RSMD.

Qualifications:

- Strong organizational skills
- Strong time management skill
- 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 (BOM)

The primary purpose of the 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

Enrichment Center Coordinator

The Enrichment Center Coordinator provides students with the opportunity to engage in physical education, art, and various other enrichment activities. The Enrichment Center Coordinator plays a critical role in strengthening school culture. He or she oversees the effectiveness of the Enrichment Center and interacts with all students on a daily basis. Students rotate through Enrichment Center every day in blocks of 30-45 minutes.

Responsibilities

- Motivate students to participate in learning activities; create a positive student culture around sports and teamwork; maintain high behavioral expectations for all students
- Develop a year-long scope and sequence map as well as thematic unit plans to teach discrete sports skills (soccer, basketball, kickball etc.), art skills, gardening skills, teamwork, and various other enrichment skills throughout the school year.
- Collaborate with school staff to develop a positive culture focused on Rocketship's core values (respect, responsibility, persistence, empathy) both outdoors and indoors
- Serve as the leader and facilitate large group lessons and games on the topics indicated above
- Communicate and collaborate with teachers and school leaders; participate actively in staff development opportunities as a member of the Rocketship team

- Ensure that students have access to a positive and productive learning environment by enforcing all campus safety rules and behavior expectations; respond to occasional exposure to blood, bodily fluids and tissue and/or occasional interactions with children who require additional support with behavior
- Inventory and maintain Enrichment Center materials and accessories
- Other duties as assigned by the supervisor

Qualifications

- Commitment to Rocketship's mission, vision, and goals
- Passion for working with children; ability to motivate and support children in reaching high levels of academic success
- Belief in the value of enrichment, art, gardening, and physical education for all children
- Previous experience or training building teams with youth
- Previous experience managing and/or teaching groups of elementary-age students is strongly preferred
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Ability to learn laws, rules, practices and procedures related to public education and specific to Rocketship Education
- Fluency in English
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn
- At least 2 years of college or passing score on Rocketship's Paraprofessional Assessment required
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

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

Duties may include, but not be limited to:

- 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 Education
- 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 F-1 for a detailed description of sample RSMD 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. See Appendix F-2 for policies on Sexual Harassment and Complaint Procedures and Appendix F-3 for policies on Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters. RSMD may 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 RSMD policies:

Fingerprinting/Background Check

Employees and contractors of RSMD will be required to submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code 44237 and 45125.1. New employees not possessing a valid California Teaching Credential must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Principal of the Charter School shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to the RSED Director of HR on a semi-annual basis. The Director of HR shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Principal. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

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.

TB Testing

RSMD 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

RSMD will adhere to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school.

Vision/Hearing/Scoliosis
RSMD shall adhere to Education Code Section 49450 *et seq*. as applicable to the grade levels served by RSMD.

Emergency Preparedness
RSMD 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
RSMD 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 "Blood-borne 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
RSMD shall maintain a drug, alcohol, and smoke-free environment.

Facility
The facility to be utilized by RSMD must be in compliance with either the Field Act or the California Building Standards Code in accordance with Education Code 47610. RSMD shall receive a Certificate of Occupancy before the start of school.

RSMD presently intends to comply with the requirement contained in Education Code Section 47610 by utilizing private facilities that are compliant with the California Building Standards Code. However, RSMD reserves the right to build a facility in compliance with the Field Act or to request Field Act compliant facilities in the future under Proposition 39 and its implementing regulations. The School 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. The School shall conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001. Please see Appendix F for additional health, safety, and personnel policies.

Comprehensive Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures
RSMD is committed to providing a harassment-free environment. Furthermore, RSMD 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)

RSMD shall strive, through recruitment and admissions practices, to achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its students that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the local school district.

RSMD will implement a strategy that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, printing and distributing materials in English, Spanish and other languages reflecting the needs of the community, and:

- An enrollment process that is scheduled and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based application process.
- The development and distribution of promotional and informational material that reaches out to all of the various racial and ethnic groups represented in the territorial jurisdiction of the local school district.
- Outreach activities as described in Element A.

As part of outreach to ELL speakers, RSMD provides:

a. Flyers in English, Spanish and other languages about upcoming RSMD meetings

b. General information sheets, and other key documents, including the school vision and mission statement in English and Spanish.

c. Information in Spanish on the Rocketship Education website

d. Spanish language translators at all general meetings

RSMD shall, as part of its programmatic audit, analyze the success and/or weakness of its outreach initiatives. RSMD shall utilize the data from the programmatic audit to make any necessary revisions to the outreach initiatives in order to correct imbalances.

Please see Appendix-G for a copy of Rocketship Mt. Diablo's Outreach Plan.

ELEMENT H: ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

"Admission requirements, if applicable."
- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(H)

STUDENT ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

RSMD shall strive to achieve a student population from Concord which understands and values RSMD's mission and vision statements and is committed to RSMD instructional and operational philosophy.

Rocketship Mt. Diablo 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 the Charter School. The Charter School 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.

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, 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).

The application process is comprised of the following:

- Completion of a student interest form, which includes basic student and family identification information for the purposes of entry into public random drawing

Upon selection for admission pursuant to public random drawing, the registration process will include 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, e.g. birth certificate

RSMD feels strongly that success for students requires a commitment from both students and parents to the mission and vision of RSMD as set forth in the Charter. During the registration process, all parents or guardians shall be asked to sign a Commitment Letter indicating they understand RSMD philosophy, program, and volunteer policy. Students will not be denied admission or dis-enrolled for failing to sign the Commitment Letter.

RSMD shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School subject only to capacity. 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 to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability. In the event that this occurs, RSMD will hold a public random drawing to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students (2nd year forward) who are guaranteed enrollment in the following school year.

Enrollment preferences in the case of a public random drawing shall be allowed in the following order of preference:

1) Siblings of currently enrolled RSMD students
2) Children of employees of RSMD (not to exceed 10% of total enrollment)
3) Residents of the Mt. Diablo Unified School District
4) Other California residents

The Charter School and CDE mutually agree that the preferences in the public random drawing as listed above are consistent with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2) and applicable federal law and non-regulatory guidance; however, should the preferences require modification in order to meet requirements of the Public Charter Schools Grant Program (PCSGP), such modifications may be made at the Charter School's discretion without any need to materially revise the charter as long as such modifications are consistent with the law and written notice is provided by the Charter School to the CDE.

Students qualifying for more than one preference group will be considered part of the highest preference for which they qualify. Public random drawing rules, deadlines, dates and times will be communicated in the application form and on the Charter School's website. Public notice for the date and time of the public random drawing will also be posted once the application deadline has passed. The Charter School 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.

RSMD will likely conduct the lottery in the 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 RSMD after the open application period and will be placed on the wait list 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. RSMD will notify all wait list families when the next year's application becomes available. Students who remain on the wait list at the end of a given school year will have to submit a new application for the next school year.

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 RSED Board will appoint an Audit Committee, which will select an independent financial auditor and oversee audit requirements.

An annual audit of the books and records of the Charter School will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(b)(5)(I) and 47605(m). The books and records of RSMD will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law. The audit will employ generally accepted accounting procedures. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller's K-12 Audit Guide.

The Audit Committee will select an independent auditor through a request for proposal format. The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and will be approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars.

The annual audit will be completed and forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The audit committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Business Committee of the Board of the Charter School with recommendations on how to resolve them. The RSED Business Committee will then approve the audit. By March 15th, The Board will submit a report to the CDE 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 the Charter School will work with the CDE to ensure all audit exceptions and deficiencies are resolved to the satisfaction of the CDE. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel ("EAAP") in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit of the Charter School is 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. -- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J)

RSMD acknowledges the responsibility of each student, parent, volunteer, faculty, staff and administrator to contribute to the wellbeing of the community by demonstrating responsibility and accountability for individual and group actions. It is the RSMD's goal to enhance the quality of relationships, the quality of learning, and the quality of the community through shared responsibility.

Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at RSMD or at a school sponsored event. A student may also be suspended or expelled for activities considered to be "social media bullying". Section B of RSMD's Suspension and Expulsion policy, attached here as Appendix J, enumerates 23 offenses for which students may be suspended or expelled.

Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

The procedures by which a student can be suspended from RSMD are as follows:

1. Conference: Within three days of the suspension, a conference will be conducted by the Principal or the Principal's designee with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Principal. At the conference, the student will be informed of the reason and evidence for the suspension and be given an opportunity to present a defense.

2. Notice to parent or guardian: At the time of the suspension, the Principal or designee will make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian will be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice will state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice will also state the date and time when the student may return to school.

3. Suspension time limits/recommendation for expulsion: Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, will not exceed 5 consecutive school days per suspension. The total number of days for which a pupil may be suspended from school shall not exceed 20 schooldays in any school year. Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Principal or Principal's designee, the student and the student's guardian will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension should be extended pending an expulsion hearing.

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing within 30 days to determine whether the student should be expelled. 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, a committee of the Rocketship Education Board of Directors, 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 3 days prior to the hearing. Written notice of the hearing will be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing.

For further details on suspension and expulsion procedures, please see Sections C-E of Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy, attached as Appendix J.

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

Rocketship shall immediately notify the CDE and coordinate the procedures for the discipline of any student with a disability who is suspended for more than 10 school days during a school year.

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 alterative 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.

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 RSMD's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if Rocketship had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

For more details, please see Section O of Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy, attached as Appendix J. Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy shall serve as the RSMD's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport

with legal requirements. RSMD staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students.

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 the Charter School will participate in a qualified retirement plan. Full-time certificated employees will participate in the State Teachers' Retirement System ("STRS"), and full-time non-certificated employees will be offered a 403(b) program with a 3% match from RSED. All part-time employees and full-time non-certificated employees will participate in the federal social security system. Employees at the Charter School may have access to additional RSMD-sponsored retirement plans according to policies developed by the board of directors and adopted as the Charter School's employee policies. Rocketship Education's HR team, in conjunction with the principal, ensures that appropriate arrangements for coverage have been made.

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 the Charter School. Students who reside within the Mt. Diablo Unified School District may attend other district schools or pursue an intra- or inter-district transfer in accordance with existing MDUSD enrollment and transfer policies.

Parents and guardians of each student enrolled in the Charter School 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 the Charter School. Employees of the school district who choose to leave the employment of school district to work at the Charter School will have no automatic rights of return to the school district after employment by the Charter School unless specifically granted by the school district through a leave of absence or other agreement. Charter School employees shall have any right upon leaving the school district to work in the Charter School that the school district may specify, any rights of return to employment in a school district after employment in the Charter School that the school district may specify, and any other rights upon leaving employment to work in the Charter School that the school district determines to be reasonable and not in conflict with any law.

All employees of the Charter School will be considered the exclusive employees of Rocketship Education 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 Education. Employment by Rocketship Education provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of the Charter School.

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)

Intent

The intent of this 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 RSMD to meet the requirements of Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(N) with the understanding that RSMD may present revisions for CDE consideration and approval either as part of the MOU or as a revision to this charter.

Public Comments

The staff and governing board members of the Charter School and the CDE 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.

Internal Disputes

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

Disputes Between the Charter School and the Chartering Authority

In the event of a dispute between the Charter School and the authorizer, the staff and Board members of RSED 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 RSMD 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, RSMD 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 CDE and the Principal(s) of RSMD 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(s) 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: LABOR RELATIONS

Governing Law: A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code. -- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)

RSED shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of Educational Employment Relations Act ("EERA"). RSED will comply with the EERA.

ELEMENT P: 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)(P)

The following procedures shall apply in the event the Charter School closes. The following procedures apply regardless of the reason for closure.

Closure of the Charter School shall be documented by official action of the RSED 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 RSED Board will promptly notify parents and students of the Charter School, the Charter School's SELPA, the retirement systems in which the Charter School'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 the Charter School 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 the Charter School.

The RSED 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 CDE, the Charter School shall transfer all appropriate student records to the CDE and shall otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. If the CDE will not store student records, the Charter School will discuss an alternative arrangement with the CDE 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, RSED shall prepare final financial records. RSED shall also have a State Controller-approved firm complete an independent audit within six months after closure. RSED shall pay for the final audit. The audit shall be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by the Charter School and shall be provided to the CDE 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 the Charter School.

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

On closure of the Charter School, all net assets of the Charter School, 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 the Charter School and upon dissolution of the corporation, shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and applicable law upon dissolution. Any CDE property will be promptly returned upon Charter School closure to the CDE. 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, the Charter School shall remain responsible for satisfaction of all liabilities arising from the operation of the Charter School. The Charter School will utilize reserve funds to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

BUDGETS AND CASH FLOW

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)

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

- A projected multi-year budget including start up costs
- Cash flow and financial projections
- A narrative describing the above

These documents are based upon the best data available to the Petitioners at this time. The Mt. Diablo Unified School District will owe in-lieu property tax payments to the Charter School pursuant to Education Code 47635, which provides, in relevant part:

> (b) The sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer funding in lieu of property taxes to the charter school in monthly installments, by no later than the 15th of each month.
> (1) For the months of August to February, inclusive, a charter school's funding in lieu of property taxes shall be computed based on the amount of property taxes received by the sponsoring local educational agency during the preceding fiscal year, as reported to the Superintendent for purposes of the second principal apportionment. A sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer to the charter school the charter school's estimated annual entitlement to funding in lieu of property taxes as follows:
> (A) Six percent in August.
> (B) Twelve percent in September.
> (C) Eight percent each month in October, November, December, January, and February.
> (2) For the months of March to June, inclusive, a charter school's funding in lieu of property taxes shall be computed based on the amount of property taxes estimated to be received by the sponsoring local educational agency during the fiscal year, as reported to the Superintendent for purposes of the first principal apportionment. A sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer to each of its charter schools an amount equal to one-sixth of the difference between the school's estimated annual entitlement to funding in lieu of property taxes and the amounts provided pursuant to paragraph (1). An additional one-sixth of this difference shall be included in the amount transferred in the month of March.
> (3) For the month of July, a charter school's funding in lieu of property taxes shall be computed based on the amount of property

taxes estimated to be received by the sponsoring local educational agency during the prior fiscal year, as reported to the Superintendent for purposes of the second principal apportionment. A sponsoring local educational agency shall transfer to each of its charter schools an amount equal to the remaining difference between the school's estimated annual entitlement to funding in lieu of property taxes and the amounts provided pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (2).

(4) 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.

(5) Subdivision (a) and paragraphs (1) to (4), inclusive, do not apply for pupils who reside in, and are otherwise eligible to attend a school in, a basic aid school district, but who attend a charter school in a non-basic aid school district. With regard to these pupils, the sponsoring basic aid school district shall transfer to the charter school an amount of funds equivalent to the local control funding formula grant pursuant to Section 42238.02, as implemented by Section 42238.03, earned through average daily attendance by the charter school for each pupil's attendance, not to exceed the average property tax share per unit of average daily attendance for pupils residing and attending in the basic aid school district. The transfer of funds shall be made in not fewer than two installments at the request of the charter school, the first occurring not later than February 1 and the second not later than June 1 of each school year. Payments shall reflect the average daily attendance certified for the time periods of the first and second principal apportionments, respectively. The Superintendent may not apportion any funds for the attendance of pupils described in this subdivision unless the amount transferred by the basic aid 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 as required by Education Code 47635 and 42238.02. The program outlined in the petition is predicated, among other things, on the Mt. Diablo Unified School 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

RSMD shall provide reports as required by Education Code Section 47604.33 as follows, and shall provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the CDE:

1. By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year.

2. By July 1, an annual update required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5.

3. 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 State Controller and the California Department of Education.

4. By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.

5. By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the CDE shall include an annual statement of all the Charter School's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

6. All attendance reports: 20 day, P-1, P-2 and annual.

7. All additional reporting as agreed to, in writing, as part of an MOU between CDE and RSMD.

INSURANCE

RSMD 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 State 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 under Governance for the role of Rocketship Education as the predominate provider of administrative services. We do not anticipate purchasing any services from the CDE, but we will fairly evaluate any offer of services from the CDE against any other offers for similar services from third party providers. Administrative services which we have experienced to be required for RSMD 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 Education 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

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:

RSMD has not yet selected the location of the school. We are still seeking out suitable facilities within the Mt. Diablo Unified School District and they will substantially comply with Education Code section 47605 (a) (1) and the guidelines listed below. Rocketship is currently targeting the facility to be located within the Monument Boulevard Corridor.

Rocketship engages in contingency planning in the event that we do not secure the primary site identified, including actively maintaining a pipeline of potential sites that will serve as back-up options in the case that a preferred location is not secured. RSMD reserves the right to locate a single site outside the Mt. Diablo Unified School District in the unlikely event that the proposed site cannot be utilized and no other site within the Mt. Diablo Unified School District can be found so long as appropriate notice is provided pursuant to Education Code 47605.1 (d).

Projected Cost, Type, and Financing Plan

Rocketship conducts a rigorous facilities acquisition process. Historically, this process has resulted in working with Launchpad Development Company (Launchpad) to acquire the land and build Rocketship's schools.

Each of these facilities housing Rocketship's first nine schools was completed on-time and on budget, resulted in an average facility cost of ~18% of revenues for the school network for 2013/14 (Bay Area Region), prior to any lease-aid reimbursements available under California Proposition 39.

Rocketship will budget Facility Expenses based on estimated lease payments determined by its real estate development partner based on the cost of each new 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.

For schools that are developed by Launchpad, Rocketship's permanent school facility will typically include the following:

- Classrooms to support up to 650 students
- At least 2,300 sq. ft. multi-purpose room
- A servery, including a warming oven, refrigerator, and milk cooler for food service
- A foyer
- At least 3 to 4 staff offices and administrative spaces
- A flexi-space that will likely serve as a parent volunteer room, with the possibility of converting into an ISE (integrated special education) room, another staff office, or other such use
- A staff room
- Parking to accommodate all staff and a few visitors, usually 24 to 27 spaces
- A play area with recycled rubber surfacing and a play structure
- An outdoor area for community Launch, structured physical education, and recess
- An outdoor lunch shelter

Launchpad has successfully used this building model for Rocketship's first nine schools and revises the model each year to ensure that the school building is accommodating the school programming needs in an efficient and optimal manner, and is supporting the high performance of the schools.

Launchpad's financing plan for the development of the new schools and sites, absent the desired Prop 39 partnership, 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.

1) New Market Tax Credits

2) Tax Exempt Bond financing

3) 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 nine Bay Area Rocketship projects with New Market Tax Credits, four projects by issuing long term tax exempt bonds, and one project through short term private financing. These transactions have resulted in the increased interest of location 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.

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).

Civil Liability

RSMD is operated by RSED, a California non-profit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 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 Education Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are attached as Appendix D-1. Rocketship Education shall work diligently to assist the CDE in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other requested protocol to ensure the CDE shall not be liable for the operation of RSMD.

Further, RSED and the County shall enter into a memorandum of understanding or contract which shall provide for indemnification of the CDE by RSED. Insurance amounts will be determined by recommendation of the insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and type of program. The CDE shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of RSMD.

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

Rocketship Education and the Rocketship Education Board of Directors will institute appropriate risk management practices, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, staff, and participating families, and procedures governing financial transactions and dispute resolution.

CONCLUSION

By approving this charter, California Department 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, yet cooperatively with the CDE to set the gold standard for charter schools. To this end, the Petitioners pledge to work cooperatively with the CDE to answer any concerns over this document and to present the CDE with the strongest possible proposal for approval of a charter for a five-year term to begin July 1, 2016. In order to comply with rigorous CDE charter approval requirements, the Petitioners have attached a comprehensive series of detailed appendices. These appendices, with the exception of the Budget included as Appendix BO-1, are not intended to be incorporated by reference into the petition, but are provided to ensure that the CDE has a full and accurate understanding of the scope of the charter proposal and the means by which the Petitioners intend to achieve the academic results outlined in the charter.

Pursuant to Education Code section 47605(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 charter school authorizer 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 the authorizer shall not deny a petition for the establishment 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.