

# ROCKETSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## Rocketship Futuro Academy

Petition for the Renewal of a Charter School

Submitted to the Mount Diablo Unified School District

July 27, 2020

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## CHARTER REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to California Education Code Section 47607(b), as part of the Charter Schools Act of 1992, renewals of charter petitions are governed by the standards and criteria set forth in E.C. Section 47605. One such standard, found under E.C. 47605(c)(5), requires the charter to provide a reasonably comprehensive description of fifteen different “elements” of its operations (labeled herein as Elements A through O). This petition is structured to provide these descriptions, along with other assurances and explanations as required by E.C. 47605.

Charter renewals must also satisfy the requirements of E.C. Sections 47607 and 47607.2, which codify the changes to the legal standards for renewal set forth in Assembly Bill 1505. In accordance with E.C. 47607(c)(1) and 47607.2(b), chartering authorities are required to consider a school’s performance on the state and local indicators, along with other measures of student achievement and growth.

While the Charter Schools Act is nearly thirty years old at the time of this submission, the intent of Legislature remains “to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following:

- (a) Improve pupil learning.
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils 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 pupils 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 pupil 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.” [E.C. 47601.]

The remainder of this petition describes how Rocketship Futuro Academy fulfills both the letter and the spirit of all relevant parts of the California Charter Schools Act.

## AFFIRMATIONS AND DECLARATION

As the authorized lead petitioner, I, Marie Issa Alvarado-Gil, hereby certify that the information submitted in this petition for the renewal of a California public charter school named Rocketship Futuro Academy (the “Charter School” or “RFA” ), submitted to the Mount Diablo Unified School District (“MDUSD” or “the District”) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that this petition does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, I understand that if awarded renewal of the charter, the Charter School will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School, including but not limited to:

1. The Charter School will meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code §60605, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code §47605(d)(1)]
2. Rocketship Education, Inc. declares that it shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act, Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code. [Ref. Education Code §47605(c)(6)]
3. The Charter School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code §47605(e)(1)]
4. The Charter School will not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code §47605(e)(1)]
5. The Charter School shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case it will hold a public random drawing to determine admission. Except as required by Education Code §47605(e)(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 §47605(e)(2)(B)(i)-(iv). [Ref. Education Code §47605(e)(2)(A)-(C)].
6. The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220. [Ref. Education Code §47605(e)(1)]
7. The Charter School will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
8. The Charter School will meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations §11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
9. The Charter School will ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment. The Charter School may request an emergency permit or a waiver

from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing for individuals in the same manner as a school district. [Ref. Education Code §47605(l)]

10. The Charter School will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
11. The Charter School will keep all current and necessary permits, licenses, and certifications related to fire, health and safety within the building and on school property.
12. The Charter School will meet or exceed the legally required minimum number of school days of instruction required by Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960, and for each fiscal year, offer, at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code §47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).
13. If a pupil is expelled or leaves the Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including report cards or a transcript of grades, and health information. [Ref. Education Code §47605(e)(3)]
14. The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. Education Code § 47612.5(a)(2)]
15. The Charter School shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents, legal guardians, and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs. [Ref. Education Code §47605(d)(2)]
16. The Charter School shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to the locations of its facilities. [Ref. Education Code §§47605, 47605.1] The Charter School will be located within the boundaries of the District as required by the Education Code.
17. The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. Education Code §§ 47612(b), 47610]
18. The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("ESEA"), as reauthorized and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA").
19. The Charter School may encourage parental involvement, but shall notify the parents and guardians of applicant pupils and currently enrolled pupils that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School. [Ref. Education Code §47605(n)]
20. The Charter School shall comply with the Public Records Act.
21. The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
22. The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.

23. The Charter School shall comply with all portions of Education Code and State Board Title 5 Regulations which are not otherwise waived under Education Code §47610.

July 27, 2020

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Lead Petitioner  
MARIE ISSA LVARADO-GIL



## INTRODUCTION

At **Rocketship Public Schools**, we believe in the infinite possibility of human potential. We believe that every student deserves the right to dream, to discover, and to develop their unique potential. And it is our responsibility and our privilege to unleash the potential inside every Rocketeer we serve. Our non-profit network of tuition-free, public elementary charter schools (TK-5th grades) propels student achievement, develops exceptional educators, and partners with parents who enable high-quality public schools to thrive in their community.

### Our Vision

Eliminate the achievement gap in our lifetime.

### Our Mission

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

### Our Values

- **Authenticity:** We deliver transparency in our work – assessing how we are growing and learning with honesty and humility.
- **Community:** We seek a diverse set of perspectives to build understanding as we work toward our greater purpose.
- **Tenacity:** We pursue our goals relentlessly and take courageous steps to reach ambitious outcomes.
- **Innovation:** We challenge the status quo and take responsible risks in pursuit of meaningful impact.
- **Excellence:** We believe all children can succeed and are committed to unleashing the potential inside every Rocketeer.

### Our Three Pillars

Our transformational public schools are built on three pillars.



#### PERSONALIZED LEARNING

Tailoring instruction, content, learning experience, and pace to unleash the potential of every student.



#### TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Investing in the growth and development of every team member to unleash their full potential in the classroom and beyond.



#### PARENT POWER

Unleashing the power of parents to champion their children's education, hold leaders accountable, and enable high-quality public schools to thrive.

## THE STORY OF ROCKETSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The story of Rocketship Public Schools began in 1999, when Father Mateo Sheedy, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in San Jose California, created the Juan Diego Scholarship for local, underprivileged students to attend Santa Clara University. After an extensive search for candidates, Father Sheedy was surprised to discover that among the hundreds of children in his parish, not one of them met the basic academic requirements to qualify them to attend their hometown college, or any other top-tier university in the area.

Father Sheedy immediately began researching ways to solve this problem. He soon became convinced that the public schools were failing to educate the children of his parish and prepare them for a college education. It was then, when he decided that the children of his parish deserved to have an alternative option to their neighborhood district school.

Father Mateo Sheedy subsequently focused on the founding of the Sacred Heart Nativity School, a private Catholic middle school focused on serving low-income youth within the Sacred Heart Parish community. In founding this school, Father Sheedy connected with an entrepreneurial alum from Bellarmine High School (a private Catholic high school) in hopes that he would support the founding of the middle school. John Danner was one of several philanthropic partners in this endeavor and the experience ignited John's passion for public education and began to catalyze new opportunities for children and families in the Sacred Heart community.

Unfortunately, Father Mateo Sheedy passed away but his legacy has continued to live on. In 2006, parishioners approached Preston Smith, a high-achieving principal at a promising public elementary school in San Jose, to continue to build on Father Sheedy's vision to create a K-12 education pipeline for children in low-income neighborhoods. Several public and private schools had already formed a strong 6-12 pipeline, but a high-quality K-5 option in the neighborhood was still missing. John and Preston focused on developing a new elementary school model. John focused on the ways new technology could boost personalized education. Preston recognized the impact empowered teachers and engaged parents can have on student achievement.

In the fall of 2006, the Santa Clara County Board of Education voted to authorize the first Rocketship school. Rocketship One Public School opened in a church on South 10th Street in downtown San Jose in August 2007. It was the same church in which Santa Clara County's first charter school, Downtown College Prep, had opened in 2000. In that first year, Rocketship One served 160 students in kindergarten through third grades. The school set a clear goal of college-readiness and data-driven instruction in order to realize the vision that Father Mateo Sheedy had for the children of his parish. Our supportive learning environment — defined by our core values of persistence, empathy, responsibility, and respect — has created a critical foundation for our Rocketeers' success in school and beyond. Our goal is to build a solid foundation for our Rocketeers so they can continue to grow when they move on to middle school.

## ROCKETSHIP FUTURO ACADEMY; FOUNDED IN 2016

In August 2016, Rocketship Futuro Academy (RFA) became the twelfth Rocketship campus to open in California, and the first in the East Bay region. Futuro Academy is located in Mt. Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD) boundaries in Contra Costa County. Under CA Prop 39, RFA has been operating at 2351 Olivera Rd, Concord, CA 94520 since 2017. The location is the former Glenbrook Middle School campus owned by MDUSD. The founding story of the parents, teachers, students, and school leaders who worked together to transform the future for underserved students in low-income communities began in the Monument Corridor of the City of Concord.

The Monument neighborhood makes up 12% of the total area and is the most populated region in the city of Concord.<sup>1</sup> Since 1980, the Monument neighborhood has seen a huge racial and ethnic demographic shift. In 2010 Latinos comprised 63 percent of the population while Whites only accounted for 20 percent. This is nearly the inverse of the city's racial and ethnic distribution. The majority of the immigrant population are from Mexico and Central America and tend to have lower educational attainment and income than the rest of the Concord population. Forty three percent of Monument residents born abroad are non-naturalized. Finally, residents in the Monument are significantly poorer than the rest of the city. In 2013 the Monument had a poverty rate of 23% -- over twice the poverty rate of the city.

At Rocketship, we don't believe one size fits all when it comes to student learning. The vision of the new Rocketship schools was to establish a learning community where teachers and parents could work together to proudly serve all students' unique needs, strengths and challenges.

One of the founding parents who organized to bring Rocketship to Concord was Cristina Gutierrez. Cristina has been a Concord resident all her life and attended local public schools in her community. For parents like Cristina, it was important that immigrants and children from low-income families have a voice and the necessary relationships to have equity in education attainment. Alongside other founding families, Cristina set out to collect signatures to open a charter school. More than 1,100 parents signed the petition to open a Rocketship elementary school in Concord. Cristina has been and continues to be a strong advocate for quality education in her community, catalyzing parent power and demand for equity in education.

When educational leader Jason Colón made the decision to move his family to Concord to open Futuro Academy, he was humbled to serve a school community that reflected many of his own experiences growing up in Puerto Rico. Coming to the US in high school, Jason understood first-hand the importance of a strong elementary school foundation, especially for English Learners and children of color. In 2005, Jason started his career in education as a Special Education teacher as part of the Miami Teaching Fellows. He continued mastering his craft within

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<sup>1</sup> Signs of Speculation in the Monument Corridor; Case study on Gentrification and Displacement Pressures in the Monument Corridor of Concord, CA

Miami public schools by teaching math to low-income, middle and high school students and getting a master degree in special education and urban studies. Coming to teach at Rocketship in 2013, Jason quickly rose to Assistant Principal by leading in English Language Arts and Mathematics achievement at Rocketship Fuerza in San Jose. Jason discovered the alarming SBAC data for socioeconomically disadvantaged students in the Concord community and was immediately moved into action as the founding Principal for Futuro Academy in Concord.

Principal Colón held numerous community meetings during the summer before the start of school to build relationships, listen to the voice of parents, and understand the needs of the community. Futuro Academy is a community where relationships with parents, teachers and school leaders propel our success. We understand the importance of the link between a trusted partnership with parents and academic achievement of students. By getting to know one another and really listening to parent's dreams for their children, we are better positioned to work together at home and at school and in the community.

Founding families voted to name their school Rocketship Futuro Academy as a reminder of the hope they have for their children's future, many of whom immigrated to the US for better educational opportunities. Parents are at the core of Rocketship schools.

## Our School's Core Values



All Rocketship schools are founded on four core values, and parents choose the fifth- specific to the vision of their school. Founding families of Futuro Academy adopted PURPOSE. The power of parents proves that regardless of where you come from and what you look like, you can be purposeful in building a school community that comes together to better understand the needs of our students and deliver strong results.

Futuro educators and families are one community; parents are actively encouraged to participate in the classroom and advocate for equity in the local educational systems as well as in their own community. One example is the Thunderbird Crosswalk project at Oliver Rd in Concord. Parents identified a problem in their neighborhood where frequent traffic incidents threatened pedestrian safety while walking to school. Parents contacted the City of Concord and partnered on several short-term solutions to increase safety for kids which included more police presence and raising awareness among the school community. MDUSD joined the coalition to implement long-term solutions including a new, state of the art crosswalk safety beacon and a plan to extend parking access at Glenbrook Middle School.

At Futuro Academy, we partner closely with parents to create a school where achievement is attainable and one that is deeply connected to the community we serve. Every year, we have a growing waitlist in all grades, further exemplifying the strong demand of parents. We attend birthdays together, grieve together at funerals and celebrate events as one community that grows together and learns together. We believe that parents are our students' primary teachers at home and in the community. By showing our Rocketeers that we believe in their potential from the moment they start school, they learn to believe in themselves. They learn that they are in control of their future. And at Futuro Academy, the future is bright.

“At Rocketship Futuro there isn't a 'one size fits all' when it comes to education. Every student is seen as unique, and the school believes in every child's capability to learn and to succeed in ways others might think to be impossible. Rocketship Futuro parents show how invested we are in our children's education so that they learn to stay invested in their own futures.”

— Vienna Bautista, Founding Parent

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

Rocketship Futuro Academy is part of a network of high-performing charter schools that is centrally governed and operated by Rocketship Education, Inc. d/b/a Rocketship Public Schools (“Rocketship” or “RPS”), a non-profit public benefit corporation with 501(c)(3) status. As further described in Element D below, Rocketship Public Schools is governed by a Board of Directors composed of diverse and experienced community leaders and Rocketship parents who demonstrate a broad range of expertise in relevant fields, including academics, education reform, community engagement, finance, management, real estate, law, and fundraising.

The Board is ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of each Rocketship school. Board members have a responsibility to solicit input from, and opinions of both school staff and students' parents regarding issues of significance and to weigh the input and opinions carefully before taking action. Parents are a fundamental pillar of the Rocketship Public Schools model. In 2019, the Rocketship Board took action to increase the voice of parents in governance by announcing an open a robust nomination process to subsequently appoint two parents to Board seats. Effective March 5, 2020, Rocketship was pleased to welcome Mai Huong Hi-Tran and Yolanda Bernal Samano to the Rocketship board.

Rocketship Education is governed by a single Board of Directors, and we believe it is critical that strong local partnerships inform our growth and maximize our impact in each of the communities we serve. To achieve this goal, each Rocketship region governed by the Rocketship Education Board of Directors shall establish an advisory board consisting of a diverse group of parents, teachers, and/or civic and business leaders committed to closing the achievement gap.

Each Rocketship regional Advisory Board (“Advisory Board”) structure will vary based on the needs and circumstances of each region. Each Advisory Board will consist of three to sixteen members and meet at least three times per year. Each Advisory Board will adopt bylaws, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors, that govern the structure and operation of the Advisory Board.

Each Advisory Board will include at least one parent or legal guardian representative from each school, either elected by the school’s School Site Council or designated by the school in another manner. The remainder of the Advisory Board may be comprised of local civic and business leaders appointed by Rocketship Regional Director. The Rocketship Education Board of Directors may appoint an Advisory Board Chair and who may be invited to serve on Rocketship Education’s Board of Directors.

The primary responsibility of the Regional Advisory Board is to serve as a formal structure giving voice to Rocketship students, family, and community needs in cities and counties where Rocketship operates a school. The Advisory Board frequently provides advice and counsel to Rocketship’s executive leadership; provides meaningful input to the Board of Directors on topics such as plans and strategies for parent engagement, program and operational improvements, and staff development; builds local partnerships to enhance the quality and sustainability of Rocketship schools; and speaks publicly at local events, political forums, and site visits to provide a local perspective to regional issues.

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

## CRITERIA FOR RENEWAL

In accordance with Education Code 47607 and 47607.2, as amended by Assembly Bill 1505 (effective July 1, 2020), RFA falls under the criteria for renewal for “Middle Performing” charter schools.<sup>2</sup>

EC §47607.2(b) applies to all charter schools for which EC §§47607(c)(2) and 47607.2(a) do not apply (i.e., “Middle Performing” charter schools). For these schools:

- “[T]he chartering authority shall consider the schoolwide performance and performance of all subgroups of pupils served by the charter school on the state indicators included in the evaluation rubrics adopted pursuant to Section 52064.5 and the performance of the

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<sup>2</sup> The California Department of Education released a list of performance category designations for all charter schools, as determined by the criteria outlined in AB 1505, available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ch/ab1505.asp>.



charter school on the local indicators included in the evaluation rubrics adopted pursuant to Section 52064.5.” (EC §47607.2(b)(1))

- “The chartering authority shall provide greater weight to performance on measurements of academic performance in determining whether to grant a charter renewal.” (EC §47607.2(b)(2))
- “In addition to the state and local indicators, the chartering authority shall consider clear and convincing evidence showing either of the following: (A) The school achieved measurable increases in academic achievement, as defined by at least one year’s progress for each year in school. (B) Strong postsecondary outcomes, as defined by college enrollment, persistence, and completion rates equal to similar peers.” (EC §47607.2(b)(3)).

*\*\*Please note that (B) will not apply to RFA, as it only serves students through grade 5.*

As detailed below, RFA’s charter should be renewed for another 5-year period based on an analysis of each criterion set forth in EC §47607.2(b). RFA has demonstrated strong performance on state and local indicators, both on a school-wide basis and among subgroup populations (referred to herein as “Student Groups”), and demonstrable academic growth based on DFS improvement and CAASPP proficiency, as well as NWEA MAP performance. Importantly, based on CAASPP and NWEA MAP performance data, RFA achieved at least one year’s progress.

## STUDENT PERFORMANCE DATA

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

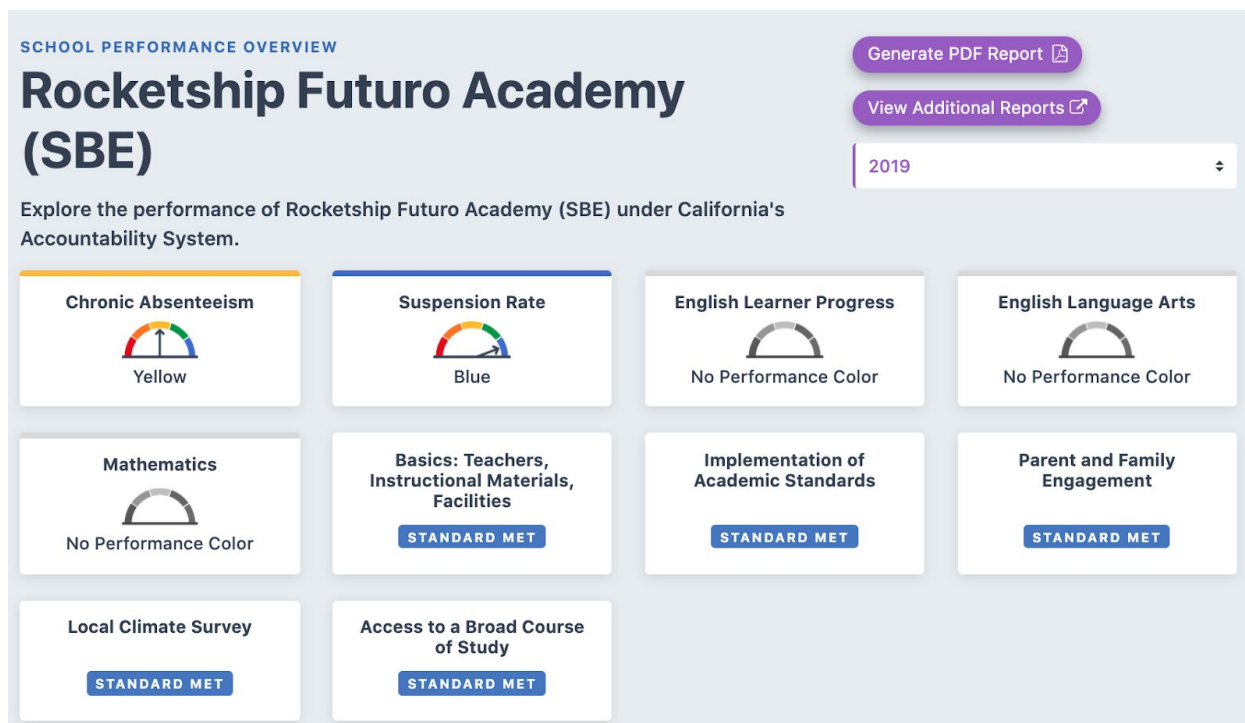
### CA DASHBOARD: STATE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

The three most recent California School Dashboard Reports for RFA are attached to this petition as Appendix 13, and a snapshot of the overview for RFA’s California School Dashboard Report is provided below.

The Dashboard data from 2020 is not presented in this petition for two reasons. First, the 2020 data would not yet be available at the time of submission even under typical (non-COVID) circumstances, as the Dashboard is traditionally not released until December of each year. This is consistent with the framework that was promulgated under AB 1505 used for determining a charter school’s performance status (“high,” “middle,” or “low”) for the purposes of renewal, which is based off of data from “the two consecutive years *immediately preceding* the renewal decision” (emphasis added), presumably due to the Dashboard release timeline. Secondly, all state testing was cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-related school closures.

We further note that the AB 1505 renewal framework does not set any minimum threshold, or any other objective standard of measurement, for Dashboard data for the purposes of determining renewal of middle-performing charter schools. Rather, EC §47607.2(b) instructs authorizers to *consider* the Dashboard data. Authorizers are further instructed to give greater weight to measures of academic performance under EC §47606.2(b)(2), but the statute remains silent on precisely what level of performance a charter school must show.

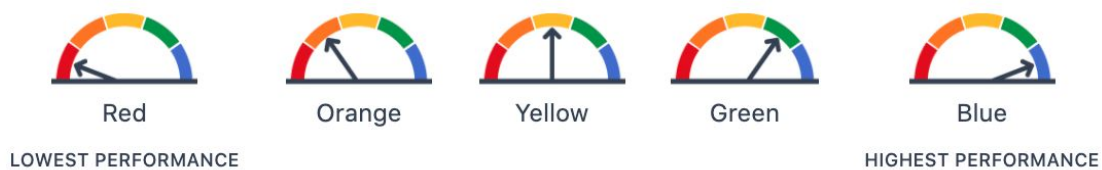
Therefore, the remainder of this section highlights the entirety of RFA's Dashboard data, through 2019, for all students and Student Groups. With respect to the academic measurement data, we note that RFA's Dashboards show exceedingly strong performance in Mathematics and strong performance in ELA, in both cases outperforming the Mt. Diablo Unified School District and also performing equally to or better than the State.



Per the California School Dashboard website, "Performance on state measures, using comparable statewide data, is represented by one of five colors. The performance level (color) is not included when there are fewer than 30 students in any year."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/about/accountability>.





RFA has received 'No Performance Color' on the academic indicators for English Learner Progress, English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (math). This is due to the class size (<30) at RFA in its first eligible year for state assessments.

### STATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS WITH COLOR PERFORMANCE LEVELS

RFA has received 'Yellow' for the Chronic Absenteeism and 'Blue', the highest performance level, for the Suspension Rate performance color indicators.

#### Chronic Absenteeism

*Table 1 - RFA Chronic Absenteeism Indicator*

Student Groups	2017	2018	2019
All	NA - 1st year of operation	Yellow	Yellow
English Learners		Yellow	Yellow
Hispanic		Yellow	Yellow
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		Yellow	Yellow

As shown in Table 1 above, RFA's Chronic Absenteeism Indicator has been consistently 'Yellow' for school-wide performance and All Students and reported Student Groups.

Importantly, RFA has worked to reduce chronic absenteeism and as a result its chronic absentee rate has declined each year. RFA's chronic absentee rates from 2016-2019 are as follows:

- 2016-2017: 28.7% (Very High)
- 2017-2018: 17.7% (High)
- 2018-2019: 13.0% (High)

Based on 2019-20 attendance records before the mandatory Shelter in Place and COVID school closures in March of 2020, RFA was on track to further reduce chronic absentee rates this past school year to 9.7% (Medium).

## Suspension Rate

Table 2 - RFA Suspension Rate Indicator

Student Groups	2017	2018	2019
All	NA - 1st year of operation	Green	Blue
English Learners		Green	Blue
Hispanic		Yellow	Blue
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		Green	Blue

As shown in Table 2 above, RFA's suspension indicators were 'Blue', the highest level of performance on the 2019 CA Dashboard for All Students and reported Student Groups, an improvement schoolwide and for all Student Groups from 2018. The 'Yellow' rating for the Student Group of Hispanic students in 2018 was not due to a higher suspension rate for that population, but rather because of a smaller year-over-year change, as the Student Group already had a lower rate than other Student Groups in the prior year. Looking at absolute levels, RFA's suspension rates have continuously declined over time.

- 2016-2017: 3.7% (High)
- 2017-2018: 1.7% (Medium)
- 2018-2019: 0.5% (Very Low)

As of the March 2020 school closures, no RFA student had been suspended in the 2019-20 school year.

### **STATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS WITH 'NO PERFORMANCE COLOR' LEVELS**

Although EC §47607.2(b)(2) assigns "greater weight" to a charter school's performance on measurements of academic performance for the purposes of charter renewal, RFA does not have any official color performance levels for its academic Dashboard indicators because it had fewer than thirty students tested on CAASPP during its first assessment year in 2017-18. Accordingly, RFA had insufficient data from which to calculate the change component of the performance level formula. For the 2016-17 school year, RFA opened under a small school model and did not serve any students in grades 3-5.

Nonetheless, RFA's academic achievement can be evaluated based on the school's "current status" levels. In contrast to the official performance indicator levels, which are contingent upon a valid change metric based on two years of state testing data, a school's "current status" can be calculated as the average Distance From Standard (DFS)--the difference between a student's scale score and the minimum threshold score grade level proficiency. RFA's current status levels for 2017-2019 are provided in Tables 3 and 4 below.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

*Table 3 - RFA English Language Arts Indicator: Current Status*

	2018 ELA Status	2019 ELA Status	Change	Overall Rating
<b>RFA</b>	-42.6 (<30 tested)	-7.7	+34.8 <sup>4</sup>	Yellow
<b>MDUSD (K-12)</b>	-4.7	-5.9	-1.3	Orange
<b>State (K-12)</b>	-6.0	-2.5	+3.7	Green

If RFA had met the State threshold for the number of students tested in 2018, it would have earned 'Yellow' on the ELA indicator in 2019 for All Students and Student Groups. Furthermore, RFA's ELA DFS was only 1.8 points lower than MDUSD's ELA DFS and 5.2 points lower than the CA state average. RFA was also within 3 points of the threshold for "Medium," which was a significant improvement from the prior year.

## MATHEMATICS

*Table 4 - RFA Math Indicator: Current Status*

	2018 Math Status	2019 Math Status	Change	Overall Rating
<b>RFA</b>	-11.5 (<30 tested)	24.2	+35.7 <sup>5</sup>	Blue
<b>MDUSD (K-12)</b>	-35.6	-36.4	-0.8	Orange
<b>State (K-12)</b>	-36.4	-33.5	+2.9	Orange

If RFA had met the testing threshold in 2017-18, the Charter School would have earned 'Blue', the highest level of performance on the Mathematics indicator in 2019 for All Students and Student Groups. Furthermore, RFA's Math DFS was categorized as "High" in 2019, up from "Medium" in 2018. RFA also outperformed MDUSD and the CA State average on Math DFS in 2018 and 2019, with a particularly strong current status in 2019.

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<sup>4</sup> Due to the small number of RFA students tested in 2018 (the first year RFA served grade levels with state testing), RFA does not have an official numerical change or rating for 2019. The number and rating presented here reflect the change and rating for 2019 if RFA had met the 30-student testing threshold in 2018 for official ratings.

<sup>5</sup> Due to the small number of RFA students tested in 2018 (the first year RFA served grade levels with state testing), RFA does not have an official numerical change or rating for 2019. The number and rating presented here reflect the change and rating for 2019 if RFA had met the 30-student testing threshold in 2018 for official ratings.

### English Learner Progress

Due to the assessment change from the CELDT to the ELPAC, all schools in California have only received current status levels for the ELPI as of this writing. RFA's status in 2019 was "Very Low" which corresponds to a 'Red' performance level in the absence of the Change metric.

Performance level notwithstanding, it is critical to note that RFA students in the English Learner Student Group have demonstrated tremendous progress in academic achievement, as further detailed and illustrated in Figure 3 below under "Increases in Academic Achievement."

### **LOCAL INDICATORS**

EC §47607.2(b)(1) also requires the authorizer to consider performance on the local indicators. Performance on local indicators is rated through one of three designations: (1) Standard Met; (2) Standard Not Met; or (3) Standard Not Met for Two of More Years.<sup>6</sup>

As shown in Table 5 below, RFA has met the standard in all categories of the five Local Indicators in all reported years.

*Table 5 - RFA Local Indicators (2017-2019)*

Category	Local Indicator	2017	2018	2019
Academic Performance	Implementation of Academic Standards	Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
Conditions and Climates	Basics: Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities	Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
	Parent and Family Engagement	Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
	Local Climate Survey	Standard Met	Standard Met	Standard Met
Academic Engagement	Access to a Broad Course of Study	NA	Standard Met	Standard Met

<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/about/faq>.

## MEASURABLE INCREASES IN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

EC §47607.2(b)(3) requires that charter schools provide “clear and convincing evidence” of academic progress of at least one year’s growth for each year that the school has been in operation, as measured by verified data. In contrast to the Dashboard requirements of EC §47606.2(b)(1) and (2), this component of the renewal framework does include a threshold - one year. However, this component of the framework does not yet include a specific list of assessments that must be used to provide such data (though the State is currently in the process of developing such a list at the time of our submission), nor does it describe the type of student groups that must meet this one-year standard.

Thus, the remainder of this section provides a multitude of data from various verified assessment measures and for different student populations. All of the data clearly demonstrates that RFA’s students - as a whole, as broken down by Student Groups, and as cohorts of students who have been at the Charter School throughout its entire tenure - have made at least one year’s growth for each year that the school has been in operation.

### ACADEMIC INDICATOR DFS

If a student’s individual DFS is constant or increases from the prior year, the student achieved at least one year of grade-level growth. Similarly, if the DFS of a school or Student Group is constant or increasing, the entity has met a year of growth on average. Furthermore, a DFS increase of 15 points or more is classified as “increased significantly” for the English Language Arts and Mathematics Academic Indicator change metrics. Table 6 below shows how RFA achieved substantial academic progress by significantly improving its DFS for all students and Student Groups more than 30 points in both subjects between 2018 and 2019.

*Table 6 - RFA Academic Indicators: English Language Arts and Mathematics (2016-2019)*

	Student Group	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Change
<b>English Language Arts</b>	All	No 3rd grade cohort	-42.6	-7.7	+ 34.8
	English Learners		-81.2	-23.4	+57.8
	Hispanic		-53.9	-7.9	+46.0
	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		-48.7	-8.7	+40.0
<b>Mathematics</b>	All	No 3rd grade cohort	-11.5	+24.2	+35.7
	English Learners		-31.9	+15.2	+47.1

	Hispanic		-10.3	+21.4	<b>+31.7</b>
	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		-13.3	+22.0	<b>+35.4</b>

Because the specific students included in a school or Student Group's DFS calculations will change each year, it is informative to look at how the average DFS progresses for continuously enrolled cohorts. RFA's first cohort with CAASPP growth demonstrated strong growth in 2018-19. As shown in Table 7 below, RFA's average DFS significantly improved by 48 points in ELA and 37 points in math for the 25 students who were continuously enrolled at RFA in 17-18 and 18-19. Each major Student Group within the continuously enrolled cohort also made substantial progress in each subject.

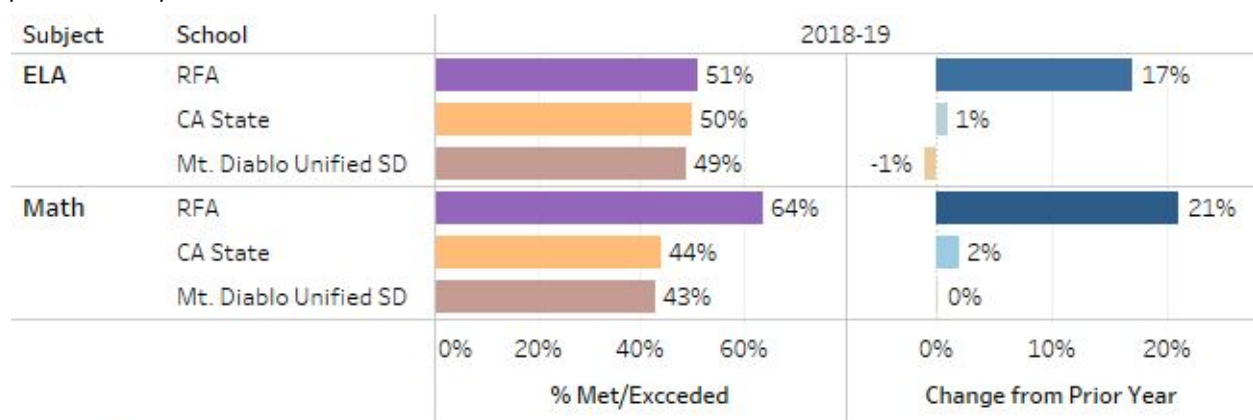
*Table 7 - RFA Growth of DFS (CAASPP) for Continuing Students Enrolled as 3rd Graders in 2017-18 and 4th Graders in 2018-19*

Student Group	# of students	3rd	4th	DFS maintained or improved
<b>English Language Arts</b>				
All	25	-42.3	+5.9	Improved by 48.2 pts
English Learners	18	-70.6	-14.8	Improved by 55.8 pts
Hispanic	22	-48.8	+8.0	Improved by 56.8 pts
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	20	-44.3	11.9	Improved by 56.2 pts
<b>Mathematics</b>				
All	25	-13.5	+23.6	Improved by 37.1 pts
English Learners	18	-29.2	+7.8	Improved by 37.0 pts
Hispanic	22	-10.1	+24.2	Improved by 34.3 pts
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	20	-13.8	+27.5	Improved by 41.3 pts

## CAASPP LONGITUDINAL

In addition to strong DFS improvement, RFA made substantial gains in CAASPP proficiency. Figure 1 below shows the percent of students who “Met” or “Exceeded” the standard on the CAASPP, as well as longitudinal growth on the CAASPP for RFA, MDUSD, and California. As shown in Figure 1, the majority of RFA students were proficient on grade-level standards in each subject in 2018-19, and demonstrated significant improvement from 2018 to 2019 in both ELA and Math. RFA had a 17 percentage point increase in ELA and a 21 percentage point increase in Mathematics.

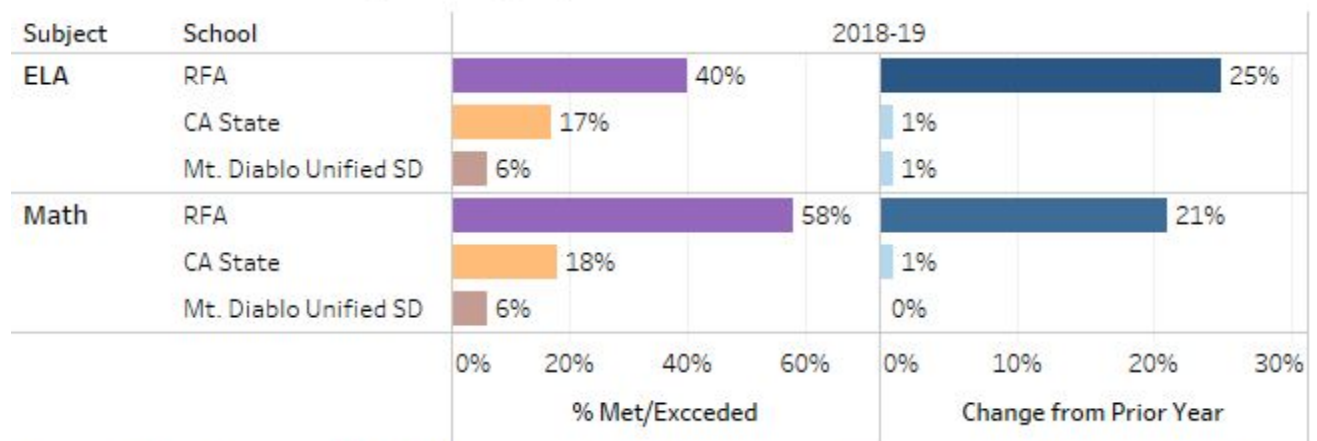
*Figure 1 - Percent Met or Exceeded Standard on CAASPP and Change from Prior Year, All 3rd-5th Grade (2018-2019)*



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

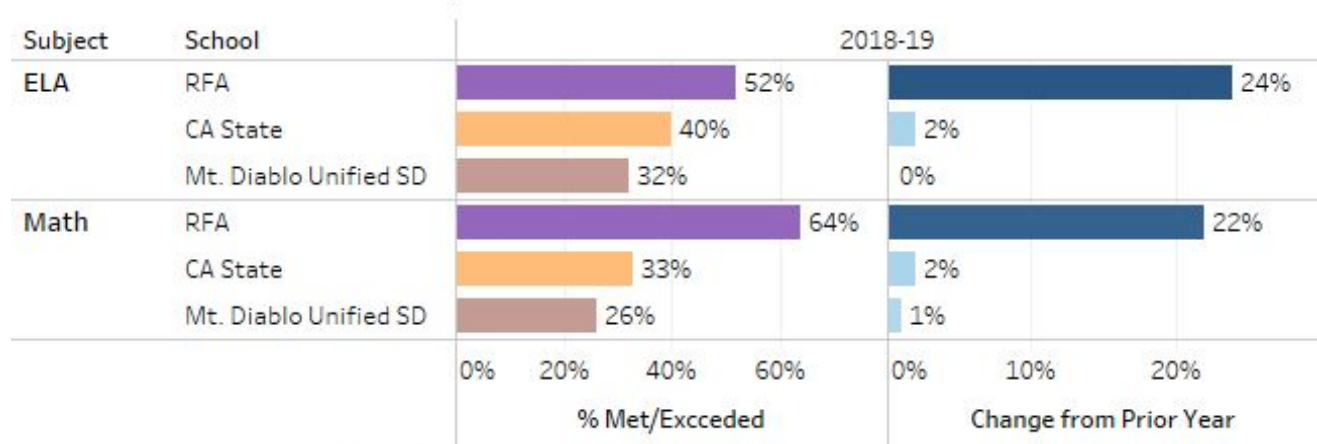
Moreover, as illustrated in Figures 2-4 below, RFA achieved significant improvements among EL, Hispanic, and socioeconomically disadvantaged Student Groups in both ELA and math from 2018 to 2019.

Figure 2 - Percent Met or Exceeded Standard on CAASPP and Change from Prior Year, 3rd-5th Grade English Learner Student Group (2018-2019)



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

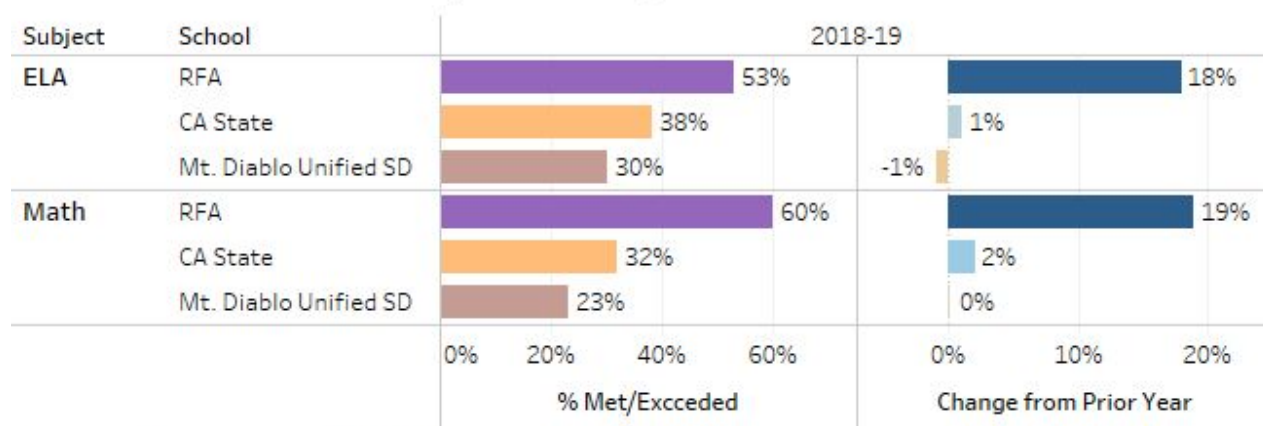
Figure 3 - Percent Met or Exceeded Standard on CAASPP and Change from Prior Year, 3rd-5th Grade Hispanic Student Group (2018-2019)



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



Figure 4 - Percent Met or Exceeded Standard on CAASPP and Change from Prior Year, 3rd-5th Grade Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Student Group (2018-2019)



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

As shown in Figure 4 above, socioeconomically disadvantaged students at RFA achieved an 18 percentage point increase in ELA. In 2018, RFA was just below the CA State average for 3rd-5th grade and just above the District. In 2019, RFA students scored 15 percentage points higher than the CA State average and 23 percentage points higher than MDUSD. In math, socioeconomically disadvantaged students increased proficiency by 19 percentage points and widened their lead over the state and local district.

## NWEA MAP

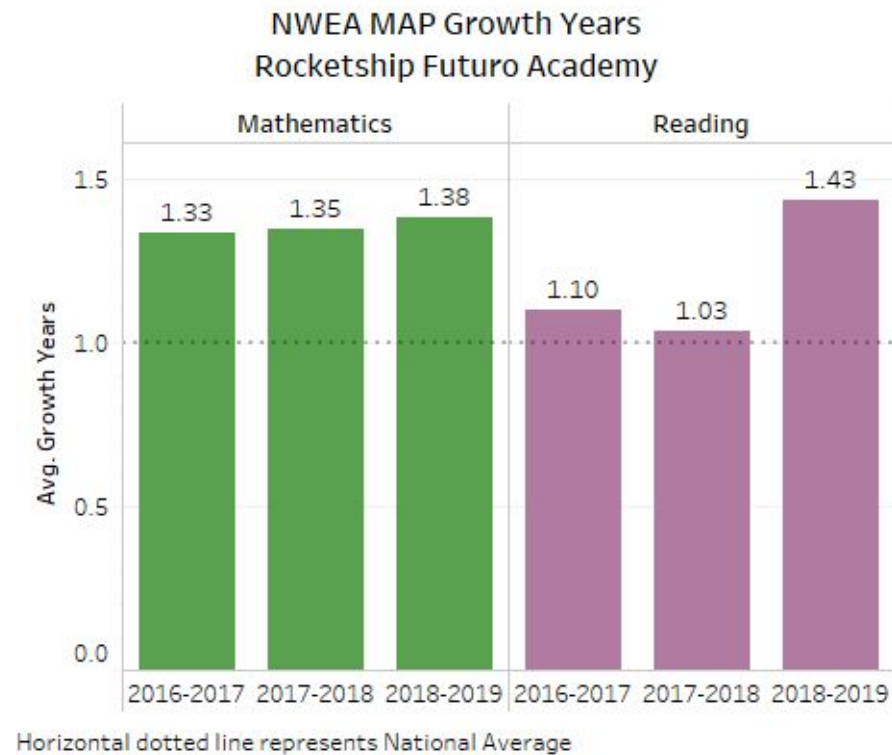
As described above, EC §47607.2(a)(3) requires charter schools to provide clear and convincing evidence of one year's progress for each year in school, as demonstrated by "verified data." EC §47607.2(c) further defines "verified data" as "data derived from nationally recognized, valid, peer-reviewed, and reliable sources that are externally produced." The SBE is scheduled to release an approved list of valid assessments by January 1, 2021, after the submission of this petition.

We anticipate that the Northwest Evaluation Association ("NWEA") Measures of Academic Progress ("MAP") will be on the SBE's list of approved assessments. NWEA MAP data meets the statutory definition of verified data. NWEA MAP is a nationally-normed assessment recognized across the nation as a high-quality and valid assessment. More than 8,500 schools in the United States, including more than 450 districts and school partners in California, use NWEA MAP.<sup>7</sup>

RFA's students have achieved at least one year of growth as demonstrated by the school's NWEA MAP data. Based on NWEA norms, students achieve one year of growth if they grow exactly the amount of the typical score increase of their national peers. Figure 6 below shows how RFA students made at least one year's progress as measured by the NWEA MAP assessment.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nwea.org/state-solutions/california/>

Figure 6 - NWEA MAP Growth Years at RFA (2016-2019)



In Math, RFA showed strong growth each year, leading to on-grade level improvements. In English Language Arts, RFA was always above 1.00 years of growth, with a large improvement in 2018-19.

Fall-to-Spring growth years are unavailable for 2019-20 due to the COVID-19 school closures in spring 2020. At the Winter 2019 NWEA administration, RFA was on-track to achieve more than one years of average growth in each subject. RFA's Fall-to-Winter growth was 1.27 years in Math and 1.20 years in Reading.

Table 8 below reports the average growth years by Student Group across RFA from 2016-2020. All Student Groups grew more than an average year of growth in each year of operation for both Math and Reading.

Table 8 - NWEA Growth Years at RFA (2016-2020)

Student Group	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20*
<b>Mathematics</b>				
All students	1.33	1.35	1.38	1.27
EL	1.29	1.34	1.35	1.24
Hispanic	1.32	1.35	1.35	1.27
FRL	1.36	1.33	1.37	1.23
<b>Reading</b>				
All students	1.10	1.03	1.43	1.20
EL	1.10	1.01	1.40	1.15
Hispanic	1.12	1.03	1.39	1.19
FRL	1.10	1.02	1.38	1.19
* Growth reported is Fall-to-Winter because spring assessment unable to be administered due to COVID school closures				

## ELEMENT A: THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

*A charter petition should include a reasonably comprehensive description of:*

- *The educational program of the charter school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the charter school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an ‘educated person’ in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.*
- *The annual goals for the charter school for all pupils and for each Student Group of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve those goals.”*

*Ref. Education Code §47605(c)(5)(A)(i)-(ii).*

## MISSION, VISION, AND MODEL

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

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

### MISSION STATEMENT

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

Rocketship's mission is to eliminate the achievement gap by graduating all students at or above grade level. Our goals include the following:

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

## VISION STATEMENT

Eliminate the achievement gap in our lifetime.

## ROCKETSHIP MODEL

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

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

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

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

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

As described above, Rocketship's program is designed to serve students who are or may be at risk of achieving below grade level. The average Rocketship student is between one and two years behind grade level upon entry. Although all Rocketship schools are open to all students, and we do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, or any other actual or perceived characteristic, we do target students from predominantly low-income neighborhoods where access to high-quality, high-performing schools is limited. We believe that these students will derive the most benefit from our model.

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

### Rocketship Futuro Academy Demographic Data\* 2016-2020

School Year	% Hispanic	% Black/ African American	% White	% Asian	% EL	% SED	% SPED
2016-2017	83.1%	4.0%	3.2%	4.8%	50.0%	90.3%	2.4%
2017-2018	89.3%	4.8%	1.8%	3.0%	65.3%	87.8%	6.6%
2018-2019	85.4%	4.0%	1.9%	3.1%	54.7%	77.6%	8.0%
2019-2020	86.9%	3.4%	1.5%	3.0%	63.1%	81.1%	8.9%

*\*Source: Rocketship official demographic data*

*Definitions: EL = English learner, SED = socioeconomically disadvantaged, SPED = special education students*

### ROCKETSHIP'S HISTORY SERVING OUR TARGET POPULATION

Rocketship has a long history of successfully serving our target population throughout the Bay Area and beyond. Since its inception, Rocketship has charged ahead to catalyze transformative change in low-income communities, with the goal of making high-quality education available to all children.

As of the 2019-20 school year, Rocketship operates 13 schools in California. In addition to RFA, Rocketship operates 10 schools in San Jose, where we have grown to become a well-established presence over the past decade. We also have a campus in Redwood City, which opened in 2015, as well as a campus in Antioch, which opened in 2018.

Five years ago, California launched a new state assessment aligned to Common Core State Standards. And for the fifth year in a row, our Rocketeers' performance improved in both Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA). Our Rocketeers continue to outperform similar students in every district where we operate by large margins. Based on student performance on CAASPP in 2018-2019, Rocketship ranked in the top 10% of all California elementary school districts and charter schools who serve a population of predominantly disadvantaged students.

Furthermore, our Rocketeers stay ahead in middle school. Rocketship engaged SRI International, an independent nonprofit research center, to conduct a three-year study on the performance of our Rocketeers in middle school. The study followed nearly 2,000 students in seven San Jose middle schools with high concentrations of Rocketship graduates. SRI rigorously investigated academic performance, social and emotional skills, and student confidence navigating the middle school transition. Rocketeers are a year ahead of their classmates in math and reading after the first and second years of middle school. Over 80% of Rocketeers reported high levels of key

character skills associated with long-term success including self-efficacy, motivation, and grit. And the vast majority of Rocketeers attribute their preparedness for middle school to their elementary experience on every factor examined, including: preparing them to work hard (91%), learn new things (90%), work in groups (89%), study for tests (85%), keep track of assignments (88%), and learn independently (77%).

We also have diverse experience opening new schools in other regions throughout the country. We opened our first school in Milwaukee in 2013, followed by two schools in Nashville in the subsequent two school years. During the 2016-17 school year, we opened our first school in Washington, D.C, followed by a second in 2017-2018. Most recently, in the 2018-19 school year, we opened a second school in Milwaukee.

Though geographically different, each of our school launches shares the common experience of profound community and parent involvement. As described above, we begin working with local community stakeholders, parent leaders, and prospective families well before our doors open for the first time. We host community meetings, informational sessions, and even educational events (e.g. family reading night) to establish meaningful connections with our Rocketeers.

## TARGET ENROLLMENT

The table below shows RFA's enrollment over a five-year period.

	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021*
<b>TK</b>	0	23	27	27	25
<b>K</b>	72	110	116	111	116
<b>1</b>	27	77	111	111	117
<b>2</b>	25	33	92	111	112
<b>3</b>	0	28	49	96	112
<b>4</b>	0	0	29	49	94
<b>5</b>	0	0	0	28	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>619</b>

*\*projected enrollment for the 2020-21 school year (official enrollment data not yet available)*

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

For more details on our enrollment projections and grade level breakdowns over the first five years of operation, please see our Budget Narrative attached as Appendix 1.

## OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

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

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

The critical life skills that we strive for our students to develop are rooted in a sense of self, relationship and social skills, and commitment to learning. We believe that students must be able to work cooperatively and collaboratively with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and cultures. They will need strong and resilient social and emotional skills to be prepared to formulate healthy relationships at school, at home, and in the workplace. Through it all, students must remain focused and motivated as they learn and grow both inside and outside the classroom. Students should be motivated to pursue goals and take responsibility for academic, social, and emotional self-development.

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

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## PERSONALIZED LEARNING

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

Personalization is critical to our Rocketeers' success. We enroll students at all grade levels every year. Many of our students, particularly those in the upper grades, arrive at Rocketship performing far below grade level and with a diverse set of needs. We address these gaps by coupling a holistic instructional model that addresses academic and social-emotional needs via purposeful student groupings in class with thoughtfully-planned instructional opportunities in the Learning Lab through adaptive online programs and tutoring. By providing multiple opportunities



to pursue mastery of content, Rocketship’s approach to personalized learning allows Rocketeers to make gap-closing gains in academic performance. Importantly, we strive for this growth for every single Rocketeer, every single school year. We do not just enroll kindergarteners and count on five years at Rocketship to realize the results we are after.

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

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

## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The Rocketship curriculum follows California’s adoption of the Common Core State Standards (“CCSS”) for English/Language Arts and Mathematics; the Next Generation Science Standards (“NGSS”); English Language Development (“ELD”) and state standards and frameworks for other content areas including Social Studies and Visual and Performing Arts.<sup>8</sup>

### STANDARDS-ALIGNED CURRICULUM

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

Along with our students, our teachers are required to make their own cognitive leaps as they align their classroom practices to the rigor of the CCSS and CAASPP. Rocketship’s centralized network Achievement Team is tasked with designing an intellectual preparation process to best set teachers and students up for short and long-term success. The Achievement Team partners with teachers and School Leaders (school principals and assistant principals) to develop plans and materials that span from long-term curriculum maps to daily lessons. Teachers also meet regularly throughout the school year with their school-based coaches and members of the Achievement Team to explore content covered in various units, thinking about questions like *“what are the key understandings and skills needed for the relevant standards?”* and *“what should students be able to*

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<sup>8</sup> Pursuant to CA Education Code 60605.

*do/produce if they have mastered the standard?”*

Additionally, the Achievement Team maps out the actual sequence of the particular unit, determining which content teachers will teach on each day to solidify student understanding. The Achievement Team works year-round to dissect, analyze, and further investigate the standards for all content areas that we teach, including English/Language Arts, English Language Development, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Visual and Performing Arts. The Achievement Team, along with Rocketship’s network Schools Team and Analytics Team, also design and analyze standards-based assessments throughout the year to help design instruction and track student progress. Through it all, we constantly share our learnings with teachers and School Leaders and develop processes for receiving feedback from the “ground level.” We make adjustments as necessary to ensure that our teachers continue to feel motivated, supported, and prepared and our students continue to make significant growth.

The below sections provide further details on our curriculum and instruction.<sup>9</sup>

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## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

### CCSS-ALIGNED INSTRUCTION

#### Core Beliefs about Literacy Instruction

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

Each of the elements of our reading and writing instruction are focused on the CCSS for English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy. For each of the strands called for in the CCSS (reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language, each further described below), our instruction includes the College and Career Readiness anchor standards and their accompanying grade-specific standards to ensure that our students are on track to meet end-of-year expectations. The ELA/ELD framework has also provided guidance to instructional materials and the key themes of the ELA/ELD framework are embedded throughout the instructional program. Specific ELD standards are selected for each unit to amplify the core CCSS-ELA standards and are sequenced to help students reach English proficiency as quickly as possible.

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<sup>9</sup> These sections describe our instruction as it is currently being implemented in accordance with the CCSS. We constantly monitor any changes in the state standards and assessment systems and may at times adjust elements of our instruction, curriculum, and/or teaching materials to ensure that teachers and students are best being equipped for mastery. In accordance with Education Code Section 47607, we will notify our authorizer at any time should any adjustment become of the magnitude that may constitute a material revision to our charter.

**Transitional Kindergarten:** In accordance with Cal. Ed. Code Section 48000(f), we have aligned our transitional kindergarten curriculum to the California Preschool Learning Foundations standards in the following areas: (1) develop an understanding of the organization and basic features of print, spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes); (2) extend their understanding and usage of language to communicate with others effectively, use an increasing variety and specificity of accepted words for objects, actions, and attributes encountered in both real and symbolic contexts; (3) develop age-appropriate grammar, recognize print conventions and understand that print carries meaning; (4) develop an understanding of age-appropriate text read aloud, motivation for literacy activities, and broad range of literacy activities; (5) demonstrate increasing writing skills.

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

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

**Speaking and Listening Strand.** Our speaking and listening instruction, which we integrate not only into our ELA/Literacy lessons but also throughout the entire school day, focuses on the anchor and grade-specific standards in the areas of (1) comprehension and collaboration (e.g., preparing for and participating in a wide range of conversations with diverse partners, integrating and evaluating integration presented in a variety of formats, and evaluating other speakers' reasoning and rhetoric); and (2) presentation of knowledge and ideas (e.g., presenting findings with supporting evidence, making strategic use of media and data displays to express ideas, adapting speech to a variety of tasks). By integrating the ELD standards focused on "collaborative conversations" and "interacting in meaningful ways," students can learn skills to help them engage in discourse.

**Language Strand.** Our language instruction focuses on the anchor and grade-specific standards in the areas of (1) conventions of standard English (e.g., grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation); (2) knowledge of language (e.g., understanding how language functions in different contexts); and (3) vocabulary acquisition and usage (e.g., using context clues to determine the meaning of

unknown words, understanding figurative language and word relationships, acquiring and using a range of academic language). The “How English Works” strand of the ELD standards are used in tandem with the CCSS language standards in both our curriculum and instruction to support language acquisition and use.

Additionally, we are committed to focusing our instruction on the three new emphases in the CCSS for ELA/Literacy (also called “shifts” from the previous standards). These emphases include (1) regular practice with complex texts and their academic language; (2) reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from texts, both literary and informational (e.g., asking students to answer not solely from their prior knowledge but rather from a close, careful reading of the text); and (3) building knowledge through content-rich information (e.g., students are immersed in information about the world around them, especially through content-rich nonfiction). We understand that these three emphases were developed in response to the growing literacy demands of college and the workforce, and we are committed to launching our Rocketeers on a path of long-term success beginning at the earliest age.

### COMPONENTS OF OUR LITERACY INSTRUCTION

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

***Explicit teaching of the building blocks of literacy.*** Our instructors teach phonics (sound-spelling relationships), phonemic awareness (distinguishing individual sounds within words), and language arts (word and structural analysis); and fluency.

- **Phonics:** Students learn to relate sounds to spellings to decode words. Our instruction includes concepts like the alphabetic principle, long and short vowel sounds, consonant and vowel combinations, consonant clusters, diphthongs, digraphs, and variant vowels.
- **Phonemic awareness:** Students learn how to distinguish individual sounds (phonemes) within words. Our instruction includes activities like categorization (recognizing the “odd” sound in a word), isolation (identifying a single sound in a word), rhyming, segmenting (separating spoken words into individual sounds), and oral blending (combining individual sounds in a word).
- **Language arts:** Our instruction zooms in on the concept of word and structural analysis, engaging in in-depth study of topics like morphemes (i.e. prefixes, suffixes, root words), compound words, homophones, and syllabication.
- **Fluency:** Our instruction focuses on helping students acquire automaticity (rapid and automatic word recognition) and prosody (reading with phrasing and recognition of punctuation). Our teachers build students’ fluency through modeling of good oral reading, teaching students phrasing, and offering many opportunities for students to practice with guidance and support (i.e. repeated reading). Additionally, students systematically learn high-frequency words and sight words in order to allow students to focus less energy on decoding and more on comprehension during their reading lessons.

***Explicit teaching of reading comprehension skills.*** Reading comprehension instruction occurs at all grade levels. Teachers identify a CCSS-aligned standard and objective for the lesson. Teachers model the skill as well as the metacognition (thinking about the comprehension that students will

be asked to do in their own reading). Teachers read with the students, making pre-designated stops to highlight the skill and ask students to also interact with the text themselves, either in small groups or individually, and practice the skill.

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

The read aloud is part of a thematic unit that gives students an opportunity to apply their key learners from connecting reading and writing standards. Each thematic unit includes project based learning opportunities, in which students work collaboratively and authentically apply focus skills and strategies. Thematic unit projects provide real world contexts and diverse tasks, that are both rigorous and engaging.

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

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

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

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

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

designated instruction.

## INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING AND PREPARATION

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

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

Resources for ELD planning include:

- Models of visual supports for Integrated ELD
- Designated ELD lesson plans
- ELD focused unit processing and planning questions

Appendix 2 includes a scope and sequence map for Humanities.<sup>10</sup>

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## MATHEMATICS

### CCSS-ALIGNED INSTRUCTION

Core Beliefs for Mathematics Instruction:

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

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

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

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them: Proficient students will be able to

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<sup>10</sup> The scope and sequence map included in Appendix 2 is based on a 100% in-person instructional model. To the extent RFA is unable to open 100% in person for the 20-21 school year due to the COVID pandemic, Rocketship will adjust the scope and sequence map accordingly.

explain to themselves the meaning of a problem, plan a solution pathway, consider analogous problems, monitor and evaluate progress toward a solution, and check their answers using a different method.

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

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

- Transitional Kindergarten: (1) developing important aspects of counting, including cardinality and 1:1 correspondence, (2) sorting & classifying objects by shared attributes, (3) developing a basic understanding of geometric properties of everyday objects. Note: Per Cal. Ed. Code Section 48000(f), we have aligned our transitional kindergarten curriculum to the California Preschool Learning Foundations standards.
- Kindergarten: (1) representing, relating, and operating on whole numbers, initially with sets of objects; and (2) describing shapes and space.
- Grade 1: (1) developing understanding of addition, subtraction, and strategies for addition and subtraction within 20; (2) developing understanding of whole number relationships and place value; (3) developing understanding of linear measurement and measuring lengths as iterating length units; and (4) reasoning about attributes of, and composing and decomposing geometric shapes.
- Grade 2: (1) extending understanding of base-ten notation; (2) building fluency with addition and subtraction; (3) using units of measure; and (4) describing and analyzing shapes

- Grade 3: (1) developing understanding of multiplication and division and strategies for multiplication and division within 100; (2) developing understanding of fractions, especially unit fractions; (3) developing understanding of the structure of rectangular arrays and area; and (4) describing and analyzing two-dimensional shapes.
- Grade 4: (1) developing understanding and fluency with multi-digit multiplication, and developing understanding of dividing to find quotients involving multi-digit dividends; (2) developing an understanding of fraction equivalence, addition and subtraction of fractions with like denominators, and multiplication of fractions by whole numbers; and (3) understanding that geometric figures can be analyzed and classified based on their properties, such as having parallel sides, perpendicular sides, particular angle measures, and symmetry.
- Grade 5: (1) developing fluency with addition and subtraction of fractions, and developing an understanding of multiplication of fractions and division of fractions; (2) extending division to two-digit divisors, integrating decimal fractions into the place value system and developing understanding of operations with decimals to hundredths, and developing fluency with whole number and decimal operations; and (3) developing understanding of volume.

**ELD Standards.** Each unit includes ELD Standards that will amplify the content and language acquisition in the unit. Teachers and leaders use the lesson framing questions from the ELA/ELD framework to plan opportunities for integrated language development. Specific GLAD strategies are also identified in the unit in order to aid teachers in supporting the vocabulary development and building of content knowledge by english language learners.

### COMPONENTS OF OUR MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTION

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

- Instruction and learning activities focused on math concepts and application of understandings
- Explicit instruction on math vocabulary and language
- Spiral review on concepts already covered, with a specific focus on application of understandings across a diverse range of concepts
- Protected intervention and corrective instruction time during the STEM block
- Well-designed counting routines in early-childhood grades to developing counting fluency, cardinality & 1:1 correspondence
- Daily Number Stories using a Cognitively Guided Instruction approach, designed to develop number sense and flexibility, as well as apply understandings of mathematical operations in context
- The purposeful and data-driven integration of online learning programs within the STEM classroom, to provide aligned and personalized practice that is incentivized, monitored, and aligned by the teacher

In order to accomplish all of these each day, it is imperative that our STEM blocks are designed to make the most of every minute, and ensure that the teacher is able to be as impactful as possible with their time and attention. It also requires homework to be considered as a component of the daily schedule and not a separate element or add-on to the classroom routines.

**Spiral review.** Spiral review is critical to ensure our learners are repeatedly engaging with content



and applying their burgeoning understandings to a wide assortment of contexts and challenges. This block also keeps skills fresh in the minds of students and allows teachers opportunities to shore-up small misconceptions, review key vocabulary, and investigate application of previously learned content in new situations. There are two main forms of spiral review: Math Meeting (Grades TK - G1) and Math Board (Grades 2 - 5).

- **Math Meeting:** Math Meeting is a daily routine in the early childhood classroom, where students practice routinized skills (e.g., oral counting), explore the calendar for math patterns, and spiral review previously taught content. At the beginning of the year, math meeting is a group exercise, while students become more independent as they become more familiar with the routine. Grade 1 students start the year with math meeting, and transition to math board by the end of the year in preparation for Grade 2.
- **Math Board:** Math Board is a review worksheet with 5-6 problems aligned to previous objectives and skills. Students complete the majority of their math board the previous evening as homework and then complete 1-2 additional problems for the first 5 minutes of their math block as their “Do Now” routine. Teachers then use the remaining 10 minutes of their spiral review time to review 1-2 targeted problems as a class, focusing on key misconceptions from their formative assessment data or important background knowledge required for upcoming content. For maximum effectiveness, math board can be differentiated to reach students at different levels.

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

**Counting Collections.** In TK & K, students engage in regular practice counting collections of objects and then share different ways to organize them. Counting Collections builds 1-to-1 matching, cardinality and eventually base-10 understanding.

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

**Small Group Instruction.** Every 3 to 5 days (based on the network-designed unit plan), teachers engage in a small group instruction day in lieu of a core lesson. This day of small group instruction serves the following purposes:

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

On these days, teachers leverage class time to work in depth with a group of students. They may

focus on needed intervention to fill-in content gaps from the previous grade-level, additional re-teaching on content from the current grade-level, or challenge and extension work for accelerated learners. There is no limit to the size of a small group -- it may consist of 2-3 students, or it may consist of 75% of the class. During this time, students not participating in the small group are working on extended application work, either independently or in groups.

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

## INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING AND PREPARATION

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

- **Scope and Sequence Maps:** This is a curriculum map that identifies the key practice and content standards, skills, and concepts to be taught throughout the year, organized into units and paced onto the yearly instructional calendar.
- **Content Modules:** We prepare comprehensive guide books, called “modules,” for various mathematical concepts that are designed to help teachers develop a profound and broad understanding of the math standards. Modules also reference a variety of resources that teachers can use to further their understanding and effectively teach the standard.
- **Unit Assessments** - Centrally created Unit Assessments to help instructional staff understand the bar for mastery and foster cross-network data analysis.
- **Unit Plans & Daily Lesson Plans** - Unit & Daily Lesson Plans help instructional staff understand how to work through the content within the unit, as well as structure and assess daily lessons.

Teachers plan for integrated ELD through a variety of actions, including:

- Unpacking aligned ELD standards for units
- Utilizing graphic organizers and visual support templates for explicit vocabulary instruction
- Discussing and planning supports, using the ELA/ELD framework “lesson plan framing questions”

For STEM scope and sequencing, please see Appendix 3.<sup>11</sup>

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## SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION

### INTEGRATED CONTENT INSTRUCTION

“Content instruction” describes the subject matter that students are learning about. Our primary goals for content instruction are to provide students with exposure to a wide breadth of science and social studies topics, build skills and competencies around learning investigations, foster

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<sup>11</sup> The scope and sequence map included in Appendix 3 is based on a 100% in-person instructional model. To the extent RFA is unable to open 100% in person for the 20-21 school year due to the COVID pandemic, Rocketship will adjust the scope and sequence map accordingly.

curiosity in various types of content, and provide opportunities for students to continually practice and utilize knowledge.

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

Our content instruction contains four main components:

1. **Skills and competencies.** We teach science and social studies skills that can be applied to various subject matter at any time (i.e. recording observations, reading maps, using timelines). We generally try to frontload skills and competencies related to our content instruction at the beginning of the school year so that students have the opportunity to apply them in an increasingly sophisticated manner.
2. **General content exposure.** As described above, we aim to expose our students to a wide variety of science and social studies content to bolster curiosity and broaden their horizons in an authentic way. This is often done through reading nonfiction text, which (as described in Section A above) is a key emphasis of the CA CCSS. We also explicitly teach science and social studies content during our ELA/Literacy and Mathematics instruction.
3. **Explicit vocabulary instruction.** Consistent with the goals of the CA English Language Development (ELD) standards to authentically expose students to academic vocabulary, we teach students vocabulary during our instructional blocks. For example, we often pre-teach the Tier 2 words and academic language that students need to access content and build background knowledge.
4. **Projects and investigations.** We provide students with opportunities to conduct research, do projects, and make observations while learning new content. This can occur during the Humanities or STEM block as well as through projects and investigations completed within our Learning Lab.

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

## SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION

Our social studies instruction is aligned with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy as well as the California History-Social Science framework. Our goal is for students to become proficient in social studies in order to achieve civic competence--the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of all students to be active and engaged participants in public life.

Some of the key concepts that our students will learn as they progress through Rocketship include investigations into the world's ancient peoples and civilizations; studies of ancient peoples of our own continent, Native Americans; native peoples in different areas of our continent; and early explorers, colonialism, and westward movement. Students will also explore topics like producers and consumers in society; social justice, including studies of pioneers like Rosa Parks and Cesar

Chavez; major historical conflicts such as the Civil War; and geography and map skills.

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

## SCIENCE INSTRUCTION

**NGSS-Aligned Instruction.** At Rocketship, we utilize the Next Generation Science Standards to develop teaching and coaching tools for NGSS-aligned instruction. We use resources that are available on the CA NGSS Digital Center, research best practices, and use high-quality sample CA NGSS-aligned assessment resources. We provide opportunities for hands-on experiments, supported by standards-aligned curriculum STEMscopes, which has been adopted by the California State Board of Education as a program that meets the components of the NGSS framework.

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

Our science instruction is focused on building content knowledge and schema including the use of GLAD strategies to support language acquisition. Our units encompass the three dimensions of the NGSS (Disciplinary Core Ideas, Science and Engineering Practices, and Crosscutting Concepts). Units are bundled according to the thematic model of the NGSS and include the following topics from the Disciplinary Core Ideas:

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

As described above, science instruction is also integrated into our Humanities and STEM blocks to ensure that students are having an authentic and meaningful experience with the content they are learning. Teachers use the CA-ELD Standards to amplify the science standards, develop language skills, and build content knowledge.

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## PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT

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

In addition to P.E., Rocketship schools have a variety of enrichment programs, such as Art, Science, Spanish, Urban Gardening, Folklorico Dance, and Engineering. The number and type of enrichment programs vary depending on enrollment each year at each school. We hire enrichment instructors who have demonstrated expertise and interest in a specific enrichment content area. Students will receive some type of enrichment during every full school day. (For RFA's bell schedule, please see Appendix 5.) Where relevant, our instructors strive to align their curriculum with the California Visual Performing Arts framework and the SHAPE standards. This framework provides guiding principles, planning and implementation strategies, curriculum development, assessment resources, and professional development for instruction in Physical Education and the arts. As with all members of our instructional staff, our enrichment instructors receive regular coaching, training, and professional development. We continually strive to ensure that all enrichment content is rigorous, standards-aligned, and data-driven.

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## LEARNING LAB

At Rocketship, we believe the Learning Lab must be a purposeful and diverse learning experience that further unleashes the potential of our Rocketeers through rigorous academic and non-academic experiences. The learning lab allows us to further enhance our Rocketeers classroom lessons and learnings, more widely expand their experiences in an even more holistic manner, and further develop the critical thinking and 21st century skills required for them to thrive at Rocketship and beyond.

In order to provide the diverse range of experience for our Rocketeers described below, we flexibly schedule different activities for the learning lab during a single school day, across a school week, as well as across the school year. On most school days, the learning lab will be running no more than three centers at any one time. Two of these centers will always be Tier II tutoring and an Online Learning Program (OLP) station with the third station being an experiential learning and skills center. Different students will be in different experiential learning and skills centers across grade levels, across the course of a week as well as across the course of the year. Currently, we also vary student experience over the course of the week with one day of the Learning Lab dedicated to science instruction in the upper grades and art, music, or Spanish in the lower grades.

In the Learning Lab, we reinforce concepts introduced in the classroom and provide repeated practice opportunities for students under the support and guidance of a trained tutor. The Learning Lab is like a high quality afterschool program that is integrated into a student's school day and tightly tailored to their unique learning process and needs. Our student's time in the Learning Lab does not replace any time with a teacher; rather, it augments their classroom learning by helping students learn at their own pace and develop more ownership of their learning.

Classroom instruction is complemented with a variety of Learning Lab activities, supporting students in multiple ways as they work to master standards. For example, while tutors spend time every day teaching small-group guided reading, students also use an Online Learning Program to read independently, leveraging the program's extensive library and using its assessments that check for comprehension. Similarly, students build fluency on math programs that allow tutors to assign work in specific areas where they see a student struggling, while others are adaptive, allowing Rocketeers to work through relevant content at their own pace. Our use of Online Learning Programs is further described below.

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

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

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

#### COMPONENTS OF OUR LEARNING LAB

**Experiential Learning and Skills Centers:** Students receive 60 minutes of Learning Lab time weekly dedicated to an experiential, hands on learning center focused on building and developing the 21st century skills of communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. Schools offer a variety of experiences including Legos/Lego Robotics, Strategy and Sportsmanship (Chess), or Art.

**Online Learning Program Center:** Rocketship's Online Learning Program (OLPs) suite provides students with personalized and adaptive programs to supplement learning both in and out of the classroom. Students receive a minimum of 60 minutes weekly of OLPs in the Learning Lab, combined with additional time in STEM and HUM classrooms.

**Tutoring/Tier II Instruction:** During the learning lab block, students will also participate in small group instruction with students with similar learning needs with the Learning Lab serving as the primary space for students to receive Tier II reading interventions. Based on academic performance, our students are grouped according to their academic need. In these leveled small groups, students receive regular tutoring on literacy skills by tutors who are utilizing research-based curricula to deliver lessons which align to students' specific learning needs.

**Project Based Learning:** When grade 3-5 students engage in Project Based Learning Units in their HUM classroom they will also have extended time within the Learning Lab for research, creation, and presentation on those same projects.

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

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## ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAMS (OLPs)

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

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

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

**Adaptability.** A program is adaptive if it automatically determines the gap in a student's understanding or mastery of a skill and systematically changes the pace or lessons to address that gap. Often, programs will assess student understanding through instructional lessons or intermittent mini-tests, adjusting as necessary to focus on that individual student. While our OLPs are always subject to change to reflect the latest advances in adaptive technology, our current programs that assess regularly in this fashion include Lexia and Freckle. Other programs, such as ST Math, utilize more extensive diagnostic assessments or pre-tests to gauge a student's level and assign appropriate instructional lessons. Through these intelligent adaptive systems, students focus on their own personalized levels, working on the skills that they need to practice most.

**Assignability.** Additionally, we leverage programs that allow for in-program assignability. Rather than giving online programs 100% control over the online content that students engage in, we

balance both online assessment systems as well as teacher input. Several of our current programs, including Freckle and Lightsail, allow teachers to assign lessons, reorder objectives or select books for students to see in their online portals. Through this balance of integrated adaptive assessments and teacher input based on other assessments, we can ensure that the programs truly match student needs, both inside and outside of the programs.

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

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

Our current OLP suite includes the following programs:

- ST Math (Grade TK/K) - A visual math program that builds deep understanding through creative problem solving.
- Reflex (Grades 1-5) - A math fluency program to help Grade 1-5 students practice math facts.
- Freckle (Grades 1-5) - An adaptive math program aligned to Common Core State Standards.
- Lexia Core 5 (Grades K-5) - An individualized reading program that covers the six areas of reading instruction.
- Lightsail (Grades 1-5) - An expansive digital library that provides books based on students' Lexile level.

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## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

We believe that students must master both academic and critical life skills to truly be successful participants in and contributors to society. To this end, our instructional program includes a social-emotional learning curriculum as well as other initiatives to help students develop into confident, competent, self-motivated, and productive lifelong learners.

## CORE VALUES

At every Rocketship campus, we teach four core values — respect, responsibility, persistence, and empathy. Additionally, most schools choose a fifth core value of its own.

Core values form the basis of our behavioral instruction and management systems. At the beginning of the school year, teachers explicitly teach core values lessons in which they demonstrate what different core values look like in action. Every school also has its own system to promote/reinforce the core values, such as providing students with Core Value Rockets, which can be redeemed at the school store or entered into a prize raffle. Furthermore, teachers try to identify which specific core values students are not demonstrating when students receive a



behavioral consequence (i.e. a student is moving down on the classroom behavior “clip chart” because his/her actions were not demonstrating our core value of respect).

## LAUNCH

Each Rocketship campus begins the school day with Launch, which is a period of time for the whole school to come together around some school wide foci. This usually includes one of the core values (i.e., a “core value of the month”). During Launch, the school may also promote a particular successful student habit, such as preparedness, going above and beyond, or urgency. Schools may also teach a new feature of an incentive or behavior management system. Launch is also a time to promote school-wide academic progress. School leaders may teach everyone a word or idiom of the day or celebrate progress toward achievement goals. Finally, schools may use Launch time to foster school culture and pride and student engagement. The whole school, including the staff, may learn a song or a dance together or celebrate a particular student or classroom’s recent accomplishment.

## POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

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

Each school has a PBIS Team comprised of a wide cross-section of staff members, including teachers, school leaders, and operational and support staff members. Each member of the team is tasked with overseeing a different PBIS component, further described below.

- PBIS Lead: The PBIS Lead, leads the PBIS team and is the point of contact with the entire school leadership team to make sure Tier 1 stays top of mind, regarding the reinforcement of positive behavior.
- Data Lead: The Data Lead will enter information on negative behaviors that occur at school into an online system to analyze trends and make data-based decisions about how to shift behaviors. For example, the Data Lead may analyze data that reveals that kindergarteners tend to get into trouble in the late afternoon toward the end of each week and help design a proactive strategy targeted for these students at this specific time period.
- Reinforcements Lead: The Reinforcements Lead is in charge of school-wide reinforcement programs such as Core Value of the Month and Student of the Month. The Reinforcements Lead also ensures that the school is reinforcing positive behaviors and giving consequences fairly and consistently.
- Staff: The Staff Lead oversees staff culture and designs programs to promote staff enjoyment, wellness, and ensure a positive environment.
- Character Education Lead: The Character lead oversees the fidelity of implementation of the social-emotional learning curricula, further described below.

## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL CURRICULUM

***The Shortest Distance.*** The Shortest Distance is an internally developed social-emotional curriculum with a detailed scope and sequence of SEL skills that we use across our schools for our daily SEL lessons. The curriculum’s name “The Shortest Distance” is inspired by the following

words, "The shortest distance between truth and a human being is a story." These words from Anthony de Mello inspire us to believe that our students are most deeply impacted by discussing SEL skills and actions through story and conversation, rather than solely relying on explicit instruction. We use this curriculum to reach all students at the Tier 1 level in order to increase our student's skills in regards to their SEL competencies. Our desire is for our students to be able to apply these skills and have conversations which link fiction and informational text stories to their own experiences in their classrooms and communities. The curriculum includes five units throughout the year.

Unit 1: Respect, Inclusion, and Welcome

Unit 1.5: Mindful of Myself and My Feelings

Unit 2: Kindness, Empathy, and Friendship

Unit 3: Persistence, Grit, and Patience in Growth

Unit 4: Mindful of Myself, Others, and the Environment

Unit 5: Responsibility, Problem-Solving, and Community Action

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

- **The Class Charter:** Each class comes together to name the feelings that the students want to feel at school, the actions they will take to produce these feelings, and the actions they will take if someone is not showing these feelings. The purpose of the charter is to establish an environment where students feel safe talking about feelings at school.
- **The Mood Meter:** The mood meter is a coordinate grid that plots students' levels of pleasantness/unpleasantness against their energy levels. Each grid quadrant is associated with a color. Students are taught to identify how they feel in relation to the grid. Students are also taught vocabulary associated with these feelings and regulation strategies to introduce actions they can take to change their feelings.
- **The Meta-Moment:** For students who find themselves angry or anxious, the meta-moment is a tool for students to use to stop themselves from reacting, picture their "best selves," and pick a strategy to become their "best selves."
- **The Blueprint:** The blueprint is a conflict management tool that teaches students to take others' perspectives and react to a situation based on how another person is feeling.

Teachers spend the first part of the school year introducing these tools and getting students well-versed in them. Students then use these tools the rest of the year.

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

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

respectful and responsible way, and be open in negotiating.

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

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

## SCHOOL DAY AND INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES

### SCHOOL DAY

Students start the day with Launch, often with parent participation and observation, where Schools Leaders and teachers engage all students in building their social emotional learning skills. Students spend about half of the day in a Humanities block and a quarter of the day in a STEM block, with separate teachers who specialize in their respective subjects. Students receive whole group instruction, experience small group and team learning, and receive targeted intervention from their classroom teacher. Students rotate into the Learning Lab for enrichment, adaptive online learning, additional small group instruction, as well as participation in experiential learning and a skills center. In addition to a daily recess block at each grade-level, every Rocketeer has regular access to physical education.

### INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES

RFA will have at least 180 days of instruction and for each fiscal year offer, at a minimum, the following number of minutes of instruction:

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

The number of instructional minutes that we offer for all grades will meet or exceed the state requirements (described above and found in Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)).<sup>12</sup> All components of the day counting towards instructional minutes are led by credentialed teachers who utilize curricular resources aligned to CCSS to guide their instruction.

We expect a significant number of our students to arrive at Rocketship below grade level, and so we aim to provide students with maximal time to make the progress that they need to catch up. Therefore, we extend the school day beyond the required number of instructional minutes. During our extended school day students engage in independent and small group learning in the Learning Lab and participate in P.E. or other enrichment activities. While the exact bell times vary by year and grade level, for the current (2019-20) school year, RFA operates from 7:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The table below delineates subject areas and approximate time per grade level as a general example, but we reserve the right to adjust students' instructional minutes in each subject and

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<sup>12</sup> In accordance with Education Code Section 47612.5(e)(1), we define instructional minutes as minutes spent under the direct supervision of a certificated teacher.

learning space based on students' personalized learning needs. RFA's bell schedule for the 19-20 school year is attached in Appendix 5.<sup>13</sup>

#### **Rocketship Daily Minutes (Illustrative)**

	Instructional Minutes				Non-instructional Minutes			Total Daily Minutes
	Humanities	STEM	Launch/Social Emotional Learning	*Total Daily Instructional Minutes	Learning Lab	P.E./ Enrichment	Lunch/ Recess	
<b>TK</b>	175	80	70	325			50	375
<b>K</b>	175-180	85-90	40	305-310	55-60	30	50	445
<b>1</b>	180-185	90-95	40	310-315	60-65	30	50	455
<b>2</b>	185	90-95	40	315-320	60-65	30	45	455
<b>3</b>	185	90-95	40	315-320	60-65	30	45	455
<b>4</b>	190	95	40	325	60-65	30	45	465
<b>5</b>	190	95	40	325	60-65	30	45	465

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

### **DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION**

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

### **ASSESSMENT**

We use an assortment of assessments to measure students' achievement levels. These include the NWEA MAP assessment, which allows us to measure our students' proficiency against national

<sup>13</sup> To the extent RFA is unable to open 100% in person for the 20-21 school year due to the COVID pandemic, Rocketship will adjust the bell schedule accordingly. However, we anticipate the bell schedules during other years to be similar to the 19-20 bell schedule.

norms for CCSS performance, and the STEP assessment developed by the University of Chicago, which provides teachers with a granular breakdown of students' reading ability in terms of "fundamental skills" and general comprehension skills. We also administer assessments under the CAASPP as well as the state-mandated English language assessments.

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

### ANALYSIS

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

Following administration of our bi-monthly interim assessments, Rocketship holds two full days of professional development for teachers, Assistant Principals, and the Principal to take a deep dive into the analysis of the data.

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

### GOAL SETTING AND PROGRESS

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

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

**Classroom Tracking.** Each classroom or grade-level publicly tracks a number of class-based and individual goals, including progress toward ELA/Literacy and Mathematics benchmarks, as well as other measures such as sight word recognition, progression in STEP reading levels, and letter/sound mastery. Each teacher defines his/her specific data-tracker approach, but all

Rocketship classrooms display individual student goals and progress to student goals. For example, some classrooms use frogs that jump from lily-pad to lily-pad; others use “rocket ships” to align with school mascots.

**Online Learning Programs.** Each student also receives individualized Online Learning Program (OLP) goals for the week, which focus on individual progress during computer-based learning time both in the classroom and at home. Students track their individual progress in our internally-created Rocketship Goals platform. Rocketship Goals also helps teachers hold their students accountable for their independent work. Rocketship Goals also helps build communication between classroom and home with progress emails and texts sent twice a week to families.

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

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

**Report Cards.** Students’ progress is shared with parents through CCSS-aligned report cards that are shared with parents online as well as printed out for parent conferences which occur at least three times annually.

## DATA TRACKING TOOLS

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

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

**Schoolzilla.** Rocketship also uses the cloud-based Schoolzilla data warehouse and reporting system to collect and organize student achievement, enrollment, and attendance data. Rocketship partners with Schoolzilla to build toolkits and user-friendly reports and dashboards that translate

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

simple data into actionable information that educators can use to modify their instructional approaches. Schoolzilla incorporates data from state assessments, student assessments in Illuminate, and a broad set of other data systems across the organization to allow educators to access and understand the needs of their students in real time. Through the use of Schoolzilla, a teacher can quickly gain an understanding of which students have mastered a particular standard, and the next day group them differently for small group instruction, to re-teach to students who have not yet gained mastery.

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

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

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

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

## SPECIAL POPULATIONS

### AT-RISK STUDENTS

#### MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT: OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

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

1. Universal Screening: a systematic process for identifying a subset of students from the entire student population who are struggling academically and/or behaviorally, and are at-risk of negative short- or long-term outcomes
2. Multi-Level Prevention System: the service delivery model of providing a graduate

- sequence of intensifying interventions in order to match services to student need
3. Ongoing Progress Monitoring: the continual monitoring (using research-based assessment methods) of the ongoing progress of students participating in intervention, in order to assess the effectiveness of interventions for specific students and overall
  4. Data-Based Decision Making: the utilization of student progress monitoring data to make decisions whether to intensify, modify, keep in place, or remove particular interventions or supports.

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

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

#### MTSS AND THE SPECIAL EDUCATION IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

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

Rocketship also responds formally to all parent and staff requests for special education evaluation in accordance with state and SELPA guidelines and regulations. If a verbal request for special education evaluation is made by a parent or staff member, the receiving staff member assists the parent in putting their request in writing. Written requests are day and time stamped by the receiving staff member and immediately delivered to the special education team, including a special education teacher, a school leader and a school psychologist. The school team then schedules a formal SST meeting, which includes the parent, to respond to the formal request for evaluation. During that meeting, if it is determined that there is reason to suspect the child may have a disability, an assessment plan is drafted and provided to the parent. Parents will receive a written Assessment Plan within 15 days. Parents will be given at least 15 days to provide



consent. If the parent provides consent to proceed with the evaluation, the special education team completes the evaluation and schedules an IEP meeting to discuss the results, including a recommendation for eligibility for special education services, within 60 days of the receipt of written consent to an Assessment Plan. Assessment Plans and Prior Written Notice documents are always provided to parents in their primary language, and are accompanied by a current copy of the SELPA's Procedural Rights and Safeguards.

### MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT (MTSS) AT ROCKETSHIP

Rocketship has adopted a MTSS framework to serve our at-risk students. Our model encompasses each of the essential MTSS components outlined above.

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

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

- Tier I - Primary Level of Supports for All Students: All Rocketship students participate in and benefit from the instruction and support that takes place at the Tier 1 level. Examples of academic supports that take place at the Tier 1 level include homogenous guided reading groups in the English Language Arts classroom, CCSS-aligned units in the math classroom, and adaptive online learning programs in the learning lab. Examples of behavioral and social-emotional supports that occur at the Tier 1 level include school wide positively stated behavior expectations, access to a school wide incentive system, and social-emotional curriculum that are implemented as a component of our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model.
- Tier II - Supplemental Small Group Supports: Even in the best of instructional models, some students will require additional supports in order to reach grade level proficiency. At Rocketship, we have a number of evidence-based interventions that are delivered in a small group setting to students at the Tier II level, including but not limited to small group literacy intervention in the learning lab as well as small group behavior interventions such as Check-in/Check-out and social skills groups.
- Tier III - Intensive Individualized Supports: Students who don't respond favorably to supports at the Tier I and Tier II levels may be referred for a more intensive level of intervention. Intervention at the Tier III level is more intensive, targeted and individualized. At Rocketship, we may use an alternative curriculum which is more specifically focused on an area of skill deficit (for example, Seeing Stars, a Lindamood Bell

curriculum that addresses phonemic awareness), and our interventions will also be more specifically targeted to the individual student (for example, developing and implementing an individualized behavior intervention plan). At the Tier III level, we may also make a referral for further assessment and evaluation to determine if the student is presenting with a disability that requires special education services and supports.

**Evidence-Based Interventions.** Rocketship utilizes a suite of evidence-based intervention resources to support students across all tiers of intervention. These include (but are not limited to):

- Academic Interventions: Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention System (LLI), Systematic Instruction in Phonics and Phonemic Awareness (SIPPS), HELPS fluency routines, Seeing Stars and On Cloud 9 (Lindamood Bell), Sound Partners.
- Behavioral/Social-Emotional Interventions: Check-in/Check-out (CICO), social skills, groups, individual counseling, functional behavior assessments and behavior intervention plans.

**Ongoing Progress Monitoring.** Rocketship utilizes a variety of tools to conduct ongoing progress monitoring of students participating in interventions. Students participating in Tier II and Tier III academic intervention engage in weekly progress monitoring activities using curriculum-based measurements. The STEP assessment (further described above) is also utilized to monitor the progress of students participating in reading comprehension intervention. The progress of students participating in Check-in/Check-out is tracked daily by CICO coordinators. For our students who have a behavior intervention plan, we regularly progress-monitor the frequency and duration of key student behaviors.

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

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

**Problem-solving.** Rocketship uses a variety of structures to engage in the problem-solving component of the MTSS process. Our pre-referral process consists of Student Huddle meetings, wherein grade level teams and school leaders meet to discuss and plan supports for individual students, followed by formal SST meetings where more intensive and targeted supports can be planned. Rocketship's current "Pre-Referral Handbook" can be found in Appendix 8.

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

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## ACADEMICALLY HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Daily Enrichment.** The Learning Lab is an additional space where high-performing students can read a variety of leveled literature and use adaptive software that challenges them. We also

provide other activities to our high-achieving students during Learning Lab which let them examine the current grade-level concepts in more depth.

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

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## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

RFA will comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR). Furthermore, RFA will comply with authorizer guidelines, and all California laws pertaining to special education students.

Rocketship's commitment to eliminate the achievement gap extends to all students, including students with unique learning and behavioral needs. The mission of the Integrated Special Education (ISE) department within Rocketship Public Schools is to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education within the least restrictive environment. Towards this end, we develop rigorous, individualized educational programming for all students with disabilities. We will accomplish this through several means: high quality direct services provided to students, strategic professional development of our ISE and general education staff members, and a consultation and coaching model that empowers classroom teachers, school leaders, and families to appropriately support each student's individualized education plan.

In order to fulfill this mission, Rocketship seeks to apply current, research-based best practices in order to create individualized plans that support students with disabilities in working to their full potential. We believe that all students are best-served within an inclusive model, and our service delivery model is grounded in team-based decision making. We approach educational programming for our students from a positive, strength-based perspective. Our ISE staff members serve as coaches and consultants who empower key stakeholders to support the academic and social development of our students both within the classroom and in their communities. We believe that our families are our students' greatest advocates, and we strive to support them in becoming experts in their children's needs and educational programs.

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

As an LEA, RFA will be solely responsible and liable, the same as a school district, for providing special education and related services to its students. As an LEA pursuant to 47641(a), Rocketship will assume full responsibility for providing special education and related services to eligible charter school students, in accordance with state and federal law. Rocketship agrees to follow policies and procedures of the SELPA in which it is a member and shall utilize SELPA forms and

information systems necessary to identify and serve students who qualify for special education. Rocketship agrees to collaborate with the SELPA to respond to inquiries and requests and provide access to information and records, as needed, and shall be responsible for maintaining confidentiality of students' records.

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

### INTEGRATED SPECIAL EDUCATION

**ISE Model.** 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. Special and general education teachers work in collaborative arrangements designed to bring appropriate instructional supports to each child in the general school environment. Support is built on culturally relevant differentiation and instruction through universal access to content-driven curriculum.

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

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

- Accommodations based on a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework
- Homogenous small group reading instruction using texts at students individual instructional levels
- Modified homework and independent classwork
- Visual supports, such as visual schedules or visual behavior supports
- Assistive technology supports
- Testing accommodations

We believe these supports benefit all learners, and the close collaboration between general and

special education professionals to serve any student who is experiencing learning challenges will help us meet our goal of helping every student with a disability to achieve 1.5 years of growth in each grade.

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

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

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

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

***Educationally Related Mental Health Services.*** As an LEA for the purposes of special education, Rocketship is responsible for the provision of Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) for any student who requires this related service in order to access and benefit from his or her educational program. Rocketship conducts Social-Emotional and Behavior assessments and develops recommendations for ERMHS provision in accordance with state regulations and SELPA guidelines. ERMHS services are provided by a combination of Rocketship Mental Health Providers and contracted NPAs, depending on the recommendations of the IEP team and needs of the individual student. See Appendix 7 for additional information regarding ERMHS procedures.

***Transportation.*** Rocketship will provide transportation to any student if required by a written statement in the student's IEP, and only with the written consensus of the IEP team as needed, for any eligible child to and from school and all school related activities. A transportation assessment

will guide the determination.

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

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

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

In order to proactively identify students who have already been found eligible to receive accommodations and/or services via an IEP or Section 504 plan, Rocketship includes a “Child Find Supplement,” which asks families to indicate if the enrolling student has a current IEP or 504 plan, has recently been evaluated for any purpose, or if the family has additional concerns. (For a sample Child Find Supplement, please see Appendix 7.) This information is entered into our student information system, and our special education staff work with office managers and families to secure copies of IEPs, 504 plans, and/or evaluation reports in order to ensure that a student’s identified supports and services are in place at the start of the school year. In accordance with California state special education regulations, an interim IEP meeting is held within the first 30 days of school for any student enrolling with a current IEP; however, services are provided as outlined in the current IEP and in accordance with SELPA guidelines immediately upon the start of the school year for all identified students.

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

- A “student huddle” process, wherein grade level teams and school leaders collaborate to plan classroom-level supports for students with identified academic and/or behavioral needs.

- A formal Student Study Team (SST), which includes family members, classroom teachers, school leaders, and other staff as necessary, which plans targeted, individualized students who present with more significant academic, social-emotional, and/or behavioral needs. (For our current SST process, please see Appendix 8.)
- Tier II and III behavior and academic interventions, further described above, delivered to students identified as needing them through the universal screening process

Students who do not respond to targeted pre-referral interventions that are delivered with fidelity may be referred for formal evaluation to determine whether they meet criteria for special education services or accommodations under a Section 504 plan. Rocketship doesn't have an explicit rule regarding the exact time frame during which interventions must be implemented before special education evaluation is considered, as this timeline will vary depending on the need of the individual student participating in intervention. However, as a general rule, if a student has participated in two cycles of interventions that have been implemented with fidelity, and the student has not demonstrated adequate responsiveness to those interventions, the SST or intervention team may consider whether a referral for special education evaluation is appropriate.

Generally, students who do not respond to targeted pre-referral interventions after two cycles that have been delivered with fidelity may be referred for formal evaluation to determine whether they meet criteria for special education services or accommodations under a Section 504 plan. Intervention cycles can range from 6-10 weeks and may align with Data Days set by the Academic Calendar. If the student has not demonstrated adequate responsiveness to interventions during these cycles, the SST or intervention team may consider whether a referral for special education evaluation is appropriate.

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

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



parents in their primary language, and are accompanied by a current copy of the SELPA's Procedural Rights and Safeguards.

All Rocketship staff, including Office Managers and Business Operations Managers, are trained in the Child Find mandate and pre-referral process prior to the start of each school year.

### ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW

An assessment for special education services is a comprehensive, in-depth evaluation of a student's school, health, and family history, and present academic and social-emotional functioning. An assessment is the same as evaluation in IDEA (CFR Section 1414, Title 20). At Rocketship, students are assessed by a multidisciplinary team in all areas of suspected disability. The assessment team includes a lead assessor (generally the School Psychologist or the Speech Language Pathologist), the family, the Education Specialist, classroom teachers, and any other individual knowledgeable of the student. Additional specialists, such as occupational or physical therapists, adapted PE teachers, mental health providers, etc. may be involved depending on the student's needs. Rocketship will inform parents that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

IDEA mandates that "No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for an individual with exceptional needs." Consequently, the assessment team utilizes many data sources (record reviews, interviews, observations, formal and informal testing, etc.) to make a recommendation regarding eligibility for special education services. All assessments used by Rocketship are validated for the specific purpose for which they are used, and assessors take particular caution when selecting assessments that reliably evaluate the performance of culturally and linguistically diverse students.<sup>15</sup> Students are also assessed in their primary language, and Rocketship employs bilingual school psychologists and speech language pathologists to accommodate this requirement. Hearing and vision assessments are also conducted as a component of all formal special education evaluations. In the case that a parent provides outside evaluation information, the IEP team also considers this information as a component of the formal evaluation.

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

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

- After the student has received a formal assessment or reassessment;
- Within 30 days of a parent's request;

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

- When an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) is required at the appropriate age;
- If a manifestation hearing is required.

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

Every three years, a student with an IEP is re-evaluated. The triennial assessment serves two purposes: to review progress made since the last formal evaluation, and to determine if the student continues to be eligible to receive special education services. Prior to the triennial IEP, the IEP team reviews existing evaluation data, including evaluations and information provided by the parents of the student, current classroom-based assessments and observations, and teacher and related service providers' observations. On the basis of that review and input from the student's parents, the IEP team identifies what additional information is needed to establish the present levels of performance and determine the educational needs of the student. An assessment plan reflecting proposed assessment in these identified areas is presented to the parent, and assessment is conducted within the same timeframe as initial evaluations (60 days).

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

### IEP DEVELOPMENT

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

Rocketship follows all applicable federal and state laws governing the IEP process and procedural safeguards. Parents, general education, special education services staff, other professionals and other service providers or professionals as appropriate will be involved throughout the IEP process. As a member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA, all of the current Rocketship schools use the Special Education Information System (SEIS) electronic IEP form for documenting this process. The IEP will include a child's present level of academic performance, annual progress

goals and the way that they will be measured, dates, frequency and duration of services to be provided, and the degree of inclusion for this student in the general education classroom. Our current forms are all on SEIS.

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

In the case that a student is exhibiting behaviors that significantly impede the learning of him/her or others, the IEP team develops a behavior intervention plan (BIP) as a formal component of the IEP. When necessary, the IEP team will conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) to determine the function of the child’s behavior, as well as environmental conditions that may be contributing to the behavior. The FBA consists of observations, interviews, record reviews, and formal testing as necessary. The results of the FBA are then used to develop the BIP, which outlines a functionally equivalent replacement behavior, specific behavior goals, services and supports (including necessary environmental changes) needed to make progress towards the goal, and a clear response plan should the behavior occur again in the future.

In the event that a student may transfer out of Rocketship, our practice is to notify the student’s district of residence. The student record and all relevant files, including the most recent IEP, is transferred to the appropriate school in a timely manner in compliance with all requirements of student record governance.

#### INTERIM AND INITIAL PLACEMENTS OF NEW CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS

Rocketship shall comply with Education Code Section 56325 with regard to students transferring into the Charter School within the academic school year. Rocketship shall provide transferring students with free and appropriate public education, including services comparable to those listed in the existing IEP. If transferring from another school within the same SELPA, Rocketship shall continue to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP, unless parents/guardians and school agree otherwise.

If transferring from another school within a different SELPA, Rocketship, pursuant to Education Code Section 56325(a)(1), shall continue to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP for a period of up to 30 days, by which time Rocketship shall adopt the previous IEP or, in consultation with parents/guardians, develop and implement a new IEP that is

consistent with federal and state law.

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

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS WHO ARE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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

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

### STAFFING

Our ISE team is typically comprised of a Program Director, Program Specialist, School Psychologist, Education Specialists (mild to moderate and moderate to severe), Paraprofessionals, Speech Therapists, Speech and Language Pathologist Assistants, Occupational Therapist, and other specialists as might be required by a student's IEP.

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

The Education Specialist is responsible for managing the IEP caseload for Rocketship students who need ISE/SPED services as outlined in their IEPs. This role improves 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.

The ISE Paraprofessional is responsible for providing individual and small group instruction for students with special needs, students with typical learning needs, students with behavioral needs, and students with emotional needs in the general education environment including, but not

limited to: the Learning Lab, recess, the lunch area, and in the classroom setting. This role is responsible for implementation and recording of data for personalized instructional programs and positive behavior support plans. The paraprofessional works under the supervision of ISE teachers who will provide weekly oversight, training and direction.

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

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

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

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

**Participation and Training.** Rocketship parents are encouraged to participate in the school community through optional volunteer hours and monthly community meetings. Parents of students with IEPs are full members of the parent/school community. Parents are invited to participate in Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings through the SELPA, either in person at the school site or via online connection, to learn more about topics related to special education needs. All meetings requiring translation are translated. These meetings provide additional training to parents in collaboration with our Charter SELPA. Lastly, we combine additional parental training workshops on numerous subjects for all parents—those with IEPs and those without—with our monthly school community meetings.

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

In addition, all students' progress is updated in writing on a trimester basis. In addition to a progress report on the IEP goals, the Education Specialist will participate in these quarterly parent teacher conferences. This allows for total involvement of the entire IEP team throughout the year rather than just on an annual basis.

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

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

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

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

### SECTION 504 PLANS

In addition to IDEA, Rocketship follows Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits discrimination based on a disability.

A 504 team will be assembled by the Assistant Principal and shall include the parent/guardian, 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 and/or supports is appropriate. If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under IDEA, those evaluations can be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team who will evaluate the nature of the student's disability and the impact upon the student's education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities.

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

- Tests and other evaluation materials that have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel.
- Tests and other evaluation materials including those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need, and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.
- Tests are selected and administered to ensure that when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level, or whatever factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills.

The final determination of whether the student is eligible for accommodations under Section 504 must be made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of

the student in their primary language along with the procedural safeguards available to them. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEA, a referral for assessment under the IDEA will be made by the 504 team.

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

The 504 Plan describes the Section 504 disability and any program accommodations, modifications or services that may be necessary. All 504 team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the student’s education, including substitutes and tutors, will be provided with a copy of each student’s 504 Plan. The site administrator will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that he/she review the 504 Plan with a long-term substitute. A copy of the 504 Plan will be maintained in the student’s file. Each student’s 504 Plan will be reviewed at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the plan, needed modifications to the plan, and continued eligibility. Any student with a 504 Plan has a Confidential File Folder maintained by the 504 Case Manager. This folder is a supplement to the student’s cumulative folder.

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## ENGLISH LEARNERS

Many Rocketship students are English learners.<sup>16</sup> As such, our instructional model is targeted toward ensuring that all of our students become Lifelong Language Learners who have reached full proficiency in the English language. Rocketship will follow all applicable laws and regulations in serving its ELs as they pertain to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing and reporting requirements. Rocketship will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELs and the rights of students and parents. Rocketship provides access to grade-level core curriculum for all ELs.

### IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

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

State and federal laws require that schools administer a state test of English language proficiency.

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<sup>16</sup> Legal guidelines clarify that an English learner is a TK-12 student who, based on the ELPAC, has not developed listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency in English sufficient for participation in the regular school program.

Pursuant to California law, we will administer the ELPAC once each year to ELs until they are Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP), unless a student is classified as Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) upon the initial ELPAC administration.<sup>17</sup> For more details on these classifications, please see below. ELPAC scores will be placed in the student's cumulative file.

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

### CLASSIFICATION OF INITIAL FLUENT ENGLISH PROFICIENT

A student's initial ELPAC score determines whether the student is classified as an English learner or whether the student is classified as Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP). The student is classified as IFEP if he/she meets the ELPAC initial assessment proficiency criterion set by the state.

### RECLASSIFICATION AS RECLASSIFIED FLUENT ENGLISH PROFICIENT

In general, English Language Learners are no longer classified as "EL" once they have attained the language skills necessary to compete with mainstream English speakers in age and grade appropriate settings in all areas of language development without the use of modified English materials. Under current state law, students who are identified as English learners must participate in the annual administration of the ELPAC until they are identified as Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP).

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

Once students have met the reclassification criteria, they will move into the reclassification monitoring system. We use the ELlevation platform to determine which students are eligible for reclassification and document the reclassification process. When a student meets all criteria, reclassification monitoring forms are sent to teachers to provide input and evaluate student's curriculum mastery. The reclassification monitoring form uses the same rubric found in the Observation Protocol for Teachers of English Learners (OPTTEL), rubric to determine a student's ability to participate in grade-level curriculum with the same level of proficiency as their native-language peers. Once the monitoring forms are submitted, a school leader will facilitate a reclassification meeting, with the student's family to review assessment results, student work, and

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



other relevant evidence to make the decision about reclassification.

Once the reclassification meeting process and meeting are complete, the school leader will work with the SIS team to appropriately update their EL status. Students who are moved from EL status or RFEP are documented in online databases including PowerSchool and CALPADS. Rocketship will monitor reclassified students' performance for four years after reclassification in accordance with California regulations and Title III of the ESSA.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

At Rocketship, English Language Instruction is a core part of the instructional program and provides access and equity for English Learners. Students at RFA are enrolled in a Structured English Immersion program. All classroom instruction is provided in English with curriculum and presentations designed for students who are learning English. Students receive instruction in designated and integrated English Language Development (ELD) based on the state adopted CA ELD standards and grade level content instruction based on the state-adopted academic standards. The CA ELA/ELD Framework provides guidance on implementation of the ELD standards across the grade level and context areas. We use the EL Roadmap to evaluate programming for English Learners and establish goals to improve student outcomes. This program is designed to support ELs in making adequate progress in English language proficiency and grade level academic competency.

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

- **Part I:** We focus on meaningful interaction with the English language, both orally and in written texts, via three modes of communication- collaborative, interpretive, and productive. We will teach students how to use comprehension strategies and analytical skills to understand the meaning of various texts. We will also teach students how to analyze and evaluate the way writers and speakers utilize language to effectively convey meaning.
- **Part II:** We focus on learning how English works to make meaning via three broad language processes – structuring cohesive texts, expanding and enriching ideas, and connecting/condensing ideas. We will teach students how to organize text as they read so they can better grasp the structure. We will also teach students how to adjust their own language choices as they speak and write. We expect students to apply their growing knowledge of language resources to create and comprehend precise and detailed texts that accurately convey meaning.
- **Part III:** We provide foundational skills for ELs. We will differentiate instruction based on a variety of factors including age, similarities between the student's primary language and English, and oral language proficiency in English. We will teach students the meaning of words that the students are learning to decode to emphasize the importance of meaning-making.

Our instructional materials for ELD instruction are prepared by Rocketship's Achievement Team, in the same manner as our core content instruction, as described in the Curriculum and Instruction

section of this petition above.

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

*Integrated instruction* occurs throughout the school day in every subject area. Teachers use the CA ELD standards in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content areas to ensure that students are strengthening their ability to use the academic English that they are learning. Integrated instruction emphasizes language development skills in the speaking and listening domains, as students engage in rigorous discourse and collaborative conversations. Students use the ideas and information they discuss to deepen their content understanding and express ideas.

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

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

- **Emerging:** Students are learning to use English for immediate needs and beginning to understand and use academic vocabulary and other features of academic language. Students at the Emerging level will likely need substantial teacher support, to develop the schools necessary to demonstrate proficiency in English.
- **Expanding:** Students are increasing English knowledge, skills, and abilities in more contexts. Students are learning to apply a greater variety of academic vocabulary, grammatical structures, and discourse practices in more sophisticated ways, appropriate to age and grade level. Students at the Expanding level will likely need moderate teacher support, to develop the schools necessary to demonstrate proficiency in English.
- **Bridging:** Students are continuing to learn and apply a range of advanced English knowledge, skills and abilities in a wide range of contexts including comprehension and production of highly complex texts. The "bridge" is the transition to full engagement in grade level academic tasks and activities without specialized instructional support. Students at the Bridging level will likely need light to minimal teacher support, to develop the schools necessary to demonstrate proficiency in English.

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

During designated ELD, there is a strong emphasis on oral language development as well as reading and writing tasks designed to develop awareness of how English works. For example,

teachers may work with ELs at the expanding or bridging level to more closely examine the language used in a text that they have already read; teach the meanings of some of the general academic vocabulary and use the vocabulary in different ways in speaking and writing over the course of the next few weeks; and discuss the structure and type of text or engage in a debate about the text's content to reinforce language. Teachers may also write prompt sentences from a text and have students combine them into more complex sentences.

For a schedule of RFA's designated ELD for the upcoming (2020-2021) school year, please see Appendix 6.<sup>18</sup>

***Scaffolding.*** Teachers will be trained to scaffold ELD instruction to meet the needs of individual ELs depending on their proficiency levels (emerging, expanding, or bridging). Scaffolding can be substantial, moderate, or light. In any case, scaffolding is intended to be temporary, and independence can be promoted and increased through gradual release of responsibility. Teachers are intentional about the scaffolding they provide, in order to support students in moving along the language proficiency continuum and reach their language proficiency goals.

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

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

- Vocabulary development: Teachers will introduce new vocabulary words while introducing a new concept.
- Guided interaction: Teachers will structure lessons so that students work together to understand what they are learning.
- Metacognition and authentic assessment: Teachers will model and explicitly teach thinking skills and use a variety of activities to check for understanding.
- Explicit instruction: Teachers will utilize direct teaching methods to teach concepts, academic language, reading comprehension, text patterns, vocabulary, writing, and decoding skills needed to complete classroom activities.
- Meaning-based context and universal themes: Teachers will incorporate meaningful references from students' everyday lives and create classroom environments that provide authentic opportunities to learn the English language.
- Modeling, graphic organizers, and visuals: Teachers will regularly utilize a variety of visual aids, graphic organizers, diagrams, summaries, and charts to help ELs easily recognize

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<sup>18</sup> To the extent RFA is unable to open 100% in person for the 20-21 school year due to the COVID pandemic, Rocketship will adjust the ELD schedule accordingly.

essential information and its relationship to supporting ideas.

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

### PARENT COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION

As described above, parents play a significant role in the reclassification process. Teachers also provide information about student progress toward English language proficiency at each parent teacher conference. Beyond that, however, we strive to find ways to engage and involve parents of our EL students. We are committed to communicating with parents in their primary language; as such, we will provide translations of all major documents, notices, public meetings, and workshops in Spanish and any other languages as needed.

In accordance with California law, RFA will establish an English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) if the Charter School enrolls 21 or more EL students, as further described in Element D below. For the current (2019-20) school year, RFA operates an ELAC. Parents are encouraged to participate in the ELAC as well as the School Site Council (SSC), further described in Element D below. Parents are also *encouraged* - though never required - to volunteer in their children's classrooms and attend community meetings, parent coffees, and school events. Community meetings will advise parents on programs and services for EL students. We will inform parents on programmatic and assessment issues that affect EL students as well as relevant programs, funds, and instructional strategies.

## COVID RESPONSE

### SPRING 2020 RESPONSE

On March 13, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, we announced our decision to temporarily close physical campuses to preserve the health and safety of our families and staff. Within a matter of days, we launched an online distance learning program on March 17, 2020 to serve our students during school closures. Our distance learning program consisted of teachers teaching synchronous and asynchronous lessons via video, resources and assignments posted on private community Facebook pages and on Google classrooms, and students continued use of our suite of online learning programs. Students had individual goals for their work and progress. They connected with their teachers at least twice a week for 1:1 check-ins on these goals.

Our school days started with virtual Launch and ended with Landing, where our full community came together to discuss values, dance, and celebrate the day via live streams on our schools' Facebook groups. At Landing, we celebrated students who met their goals and continued to nurture those informal interactions that occur during school dismissal. This helped create stability, routines, and joy for our Rocketeers even in a virtual setting. In addition, we offered videos covering a range of topics (e.g., science, PE, cooking, robotics, dance, and more) that were recorded by our incredible teachers and teams, daily social-emotional lessons, regular calls and personal check-ins for each family (3-4x/ week), as well as small group online interventions or social skills groups for some of our Rocketeers.

We quickly distributed all existing laptops to students and proactively worked with families to solve any internet connectivity issues. For our relatively small number of families who were not quickly able to access distance learning online, we provided instructional work packets and worked with them to find solutions so that they can access online distance learning content.

Our distance learning strategy allowed us to offer individualized support for all students, including English learners, students with disabilities, and low-income students, through elements such as individual communication with students and families, personalized technology, data driven instruction, and personal feedback. Additionally, school leadership met regularly to discuss students who are struggling and how to offer additional assistance.

To support teaching aligned to students' individual level of English proficiency, teachers used various strategies that could be integrated into daily distance learning activities, including both recorded and live lessons. Examples of these strategies include use of input charts in videos and online lessons and language use opportunities (Turn and Talks, Say it With me/Read it with me, Total Physical Response, Cite your source). We made members of our teams who are bi-lingual available to translate and support families with navigating technology, student online learning programs, and expectations sent by teachers. Additionally, Rocketship Public Schools developed a publicly-available EL Distance Learning Toolkit to support educators in designing and delivering instruction and communicating with families. Due to the suspension of the 19-20 ELPAC assessment, Rocketship used the Observation Protocol of Teachers of English Learners (OPTTEL) to create a progress monitoring tool. Teachers received training and calibrated their scores, prior to administering the assessment.

To the greatest extent possible, Rocketship implemented student IEPs and 504 plans. Students with disabilities received both individualized synchronous instruction and services from special education teachers and related service providers as well as co-taught core content lessons with accommodations and modifications. Rocketship continued to complete all SSTs, evaluations, and IEP meetings which were still meaningful in a virtual setting. IEP meetings were held via Zoom and parents and IEP team members were provided with electronic copies of documents.

Additionally, we reached out to parents daily through our CareCorps survey, which was used to identify any immediate needs to support their student's educational progress or to support their family in any other ways, and then connected families with appropriate school and local resources. We designated CareCorps staff who were focused on meeting the needs of students and families that surfaced through surveys and referrals. They worked one on one with families to problem solve and to connect them with needed resources (e.g., local food banks, rent assistance, etc.). As a result of our CareCorps work, Rocketship created a Family Relief Fund from philanthropic donations and as a result was able to provide 40+ families at RFA with \$500 each to support their needs.

## 20-21 SY PLAN

While there is continued uncertainty about local health conditions during the 20-21 SY as well as local and state guidance for schools continues to evolve, we do know that many of our students will likely return further behind academically than ever before and the needs of our students, families, and staff (social-emotional, housing, food, employment) will be greater than they have ever been before. As a result, there are a number of action steps we know we will be taking in the 20-21 SY:

1. Fully leverage our beginning of year universal assessments (STEP, NWEA, Social Emotional Screener) to identify those in need and our tiered suite of interventions to provide targeted interventions for those who need it.
2. Continue our CareCorps program to continue to provide supplemental support for our families and connect them to the appropriate community resources.
3. Proactive support for our staff to navigate their personal needs.
4. By utilizing the guidance of local authorities, we have updated all school systems and procedures to incorporate social distancing guidelines and thereby improve the health and safety of our campuses.
5. Despite challenging budgets, we have identified the funding to purchase the necessary personal protective equipment as well as provide 1:1 devices for every student.
6. We have increased the amount of dedicated time during every school day we will provide SEL lessons.

Due to the significant uncertainty about the 20-21 SY, Rocketship has engaged in extensive scenario planning for the most likely operating scenarios in the 20-21 SY. We have fully developed plans for having 100% of students in person, 100% of students virtual, as well as approximately only 50% of students in person at any one time. Currently, we anticipate reopening the 20-21 school year with a 100% virtual model in compliance with the California school reopening guidelines announced by Governor Newsom on July 17, 2020. However, we believe we are well-prepared to adjust the school model during the year to cater to our students' and families' needs as the health climate surrounding the Charter School evolves. Throughout the scenario planning process, we have deeply engaged with staff and families as well as other community stakeholders in order to inform our plans and develop the best plans possible.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

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

### RECRUITMENT

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

We develop a broad pipeline of educators and principals by cultivating candidates through diverse channels such as local college career fairs, Teach For America, referral programs for our current teachers, and use of social media. We aim to hire well-qualified candidates with a focus on those

who have connections to our students' experiences and communities. Throughout our recruitment process, we build excitement for the meaningful work that we are doing to transform education and eliminate the achievement gap.

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

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

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Rocketship is dedicated to providing robust professional development opportunities every year for its teachers and school leaders. The professional development schedule Rocketship offers during a typical year is described below, with sessions taking place on campus during the summer and throughout the school year. For the 20-21 school year, Rocketship will make adjustments to account for the unique circumstances brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as hosting virtual sessions and including topics related to teaching in a virtual environment.

**Summer.** Each summer, Rocketship hosts an intensive three-week training for all teachers that emphasizes foundational knowledge related to our culture and instructional model. This summer training allows staff to build a collaboration while creating a strong school culture shaped around personalized learning and a Rocketship identity. We provide training in both classroom management and effective unit, lesson, and yearlong planning. We also introduce foundational components of the Rocketship program, including the process for the use of data, instructional techniques, and the scope and sequence of curricula. Educators also learn strategies to effectively engage parents, including how to empower them as key supporters of their children's education. This helps ensure that our students succeed on their path to, and ultimately through college and post-secondary life. 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 prepared to be effective instructional leaders while establishing a school culture that enables student success. In that vein, we also introduce key priorities that are aligned to organizational and instructional goals; for example, we make time for coaching and processing around ideas of equity, diversity, and inclusion so that everyone, staff and students, can feel welcomed, valued, and appreciated in bringing their authentic selves to work each day.

**Yearly.** In addition to summer training, Rocketship schools dedicate time every week throughout the school year for staff professional development, for a total of 300+ hours per teacher each year. 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, which include personalizing supports for teachers. Topics have included analyzing and planning using formative assessment data, creating rigorous independent work, exploring whole brain teaching, launching literature circles, culturally responsive teaching, and facilitating small group instruction for struggling readers in the upper grades.

We believe that often the most effective professional development session is collaborative and meant to be facilitated by colleagues who know the school, the students, and the priorities. However, to develop the necessary subject expertise for our teachers as well as provide ongoing support for Assistant Principals, Rocketship partners with several outside professional development organizations and higher education institutions to conduct in-depth professional development in various content areas. These organizations have included Project GLAD, the Santa Clara County Office of Education, Uncommon Schools, and the Lavinia Group. We also have an internal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) team that has cross-functional representation, and that also partners with external organizations on a consultative, coaching, and facilitative basis. Rocketship is constantly reflecting on student achievement data and teacher instructional needs in order to further develop the professional development program and coordination of resources in order to ensure that all student, teacher, and school needs are addressed in order to realize significant gains in student achievement.

## COACHING

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

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

We implement a variety of coaching strategies and practices. Coaches observe and provide written feedback, deliver in-the-moment feedback (i.e. speaking into an earpiece that the teacher wears during instruction), model instruction, and engage in co-observations with the teacher (i.e. watching a video of the teacher or observing a different teacher). All teachers receive at least four hours of support per week outside the classroom, get observed at least twice a week, receive at least two hours of professional development per week, and have a weekly one-on-one meeting with their coaches.

## TEACHER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

Our teachers are evaluated based on the four components described below.<sup>19</sup> Each of these was developed with the goal of promoting transparency, consistency, and communication.

***Student Achievement.*** Teachers are evaluated based on both absolute and growth metrics. Absolute metrics evaluate the percentage of students at national norms on objective assessments such as the NWEA MAP. Growth metrics evaluate the percentage of students meeting growth

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<sup>19</sup> Rocketship requires valid and reliable data to calculate and implement the evaluation components listed. If there are shifts in the school environment due to COVID-19 that impact the reliability and validity of data used for evaluations, Rocketship may seek alternative measures to evaluate staff and provide feedback.



goals and the average years that students grow on objective assessments such as the MAP.

**Family Engagement.** Teachers are also evaluated on the percentage of home visits completed, in accordance with Rocketship's Home Visit Policy, and the percentage of parents completing partnership hours. (For more information on parent participation at Rocketship, please see Element D below.)

**Core Characteristics.** Teachers are evaluated on their ability to demonstrate the five Rocketship Core Characteristics of pursuit of excellence, innovation, authenticity, community, and tenacity. The Rocketship Core Characteristics outline our network's expectations for professionalism and ways of operating our schools. Managers use a performance rubric outlining examples of ways teachers can exemplify the Core Characteristics in their work.

**Teaching Performance Rubric.** The Rocketship teacher performance rubric outlines the expectations for teacher performance. The rubric is derived from the 2013 Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching* with added descriptors to reflect Rocketship's specific academic model and instructional priorities (e.g., serving all students).<sup>20</sup> The performance rubric examines teaching performance in four domains: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities.

For a copy of the Rubric, please see Appendix 9.

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

## TEACHER RETENTION AND COMPENSATION

Rocketship staff go above and beyond on a daily basis to serve our students and families and are a critical factor for student growth and operating an excellent school. While we expect a certain level of staff turnover each year, Rocketship utilizes numerous school staff retention strategies, and principals create customized retention plans to meet the unique needs of different teachers. Our network also maintains a focus on retaining high-performing teachers who have the most significant impact in improving student growth.<sup>21</sup>

**Strengthening Management Practices at School Level:** To strengthen management practices, Rocketship employs surveys with staff twice per year to provide managers upward feedback. The Talent team also facilitates monthly meetings with each school leadership team to partner on management issues and regular Leadership Labs focused on the management skills. Strong management practices on diversity, equity, and inclusion are also a lever for boosting retention of teachers of color.<sup>22</sup> Rocketship has launched a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion program which includes trainings with managers and staff to facilitate conversations on how diversity, equity, and inclusion affects us, our colleagues, and our work in schools.

**Developing Career Pathways and Network Supports:** Providing staff with meaningful development and career pathways is another lever Rocketship utilizes to retain great teachers.

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<sup>20</sup> The *Framework for Teaching*, The Charlotte Danielson Group, <https://danielsongroup.org/framework>

<sup>21</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The Learning Policy Institute, *Diversifying the Teaching Profession: How to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color*, 2018

Managers discuss with staff at all levels individual professional goals and opportunities for staff to take on new and higher-level responsibilities. As described above, Rocketship also has developed a robust Rising Leaders initiative. More than half of our new APs for the 19-20 school year were promoted from within the network through our Rising Leaders program.

**Supporting Teacher Career Sustainability and Flexibility:** We hold our teachers to high standards and we consistently see the ways in which our staff work to go above and beyond. Rocketship has implemented structures to help promote teacher sustainability including flexible days during the month when teachers can work off campus or attend to personal errands.

**Competitive Compensation, Incentives, and Benefits:** Rocketship offers competitive pay structures and incentives to attract and retain high-quality and high-performing teachers. Rocketship uses a performance-based pay system, which allows teachers demonstrating strong results to move up quickly within our compensation bands. The performance-based pay structure is also a key lever for retaining our highest-performing teachers. Rocketship also provides incentives and competitive benefits to create opportunities for additional growth within their profession, including a teacher professional development fund and financial support with meeting state credential requirements.

#### LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS

**Rising Leaders Program.** In an effort to cultivate strong internal teacher-leader pipelines, Rocketship provides the opportunity for high achieving teachers to participate in a leadership development program called *Rising Leaders*. As part of this program, teachers engage in monthly sessions that are focused on both instructional and adult leadership. Participants get exposure to diverse content, with some prime examples including strategies for peer observation and feedback, influencing others, and developing coaching goals for teachers. In addition to this monthly programming, Rising Leaders are provided with additional responsibilities on campus, like supporting data-driven instruction, facilitating grade-level meetings on culture and instructional practices, or project management of grade-level events.

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

**Targeted Training for School Leaders:** Rocketship Public Schools invests in developing school leaders as leaders and managers of adults through our Leadership Labs program. The Leadership Lab program is a four-part series that focuses on developing a leader's skills in communication, feedback, staff motivation and development, and problem solving.

**Supporting All Students:** A core component of our professional development for both school leaders and teachers is preparing them to effectively support all of our students successfully including our English Learners and Students with Disabilities. Recent training for school leaders and teachers have included Addressing the English-Language Development Standards and Instructional Strategies, Coaching Small-Group Special Education Instruction, Understanding and Responding to the Behavior Escalation Cycle, as well as Trauma Informed Education.

**Coaching:** Rocketship also has a comprehensive development system for its Principals and Assistant Principals. (Qualifications and responsibilities for these roles are further described below in Element E.) These school leaders receive ongoing individualized coaching as well as professional development centered on key levers, which include data-driven instruction; coaching and observation; school culture; staff culture; and (for principals) school leader team management.

School leaders who manage special education teachers also receive a special strand of professional development.

Our Principals all spend approximately ten hours each month receiving professional development from Rocketship's centralized Schools Team. Our Assistant Principals receive approximately two hours of professional development directly from the Schools Team and also get regular training and support from Principals. Members of the Schools and Achievement Teams also attend meetings between school leaders and teachers to provide feedback on meeting facilitation and coaching. School leaders also do monthly school walk-throughs with the Schools and Achievement Teams. All of our school leaders are also developed in content areas through our 3-5 hours per month of development from our Humanities, STEM, and Special Education content teams. These development sessions ensure that our School Leaders are not only instructional leaders, but have in depth content knowledge and are developed to build that knowledge in their teachers.

#### ANNUAL GOALS AND ACTIONS IN THE STATE PRIORITIES

In accordance with the Local Control Funding Formula ("LCFF") requirements enacted into the Charter Schools Act, Rocketship creates annual goals for all pupils and for each Student Group of pupils identified pursuant to Education Code Section 52052, to be achieved in the applicable state priorities, as described in Education Code Section 52060(d), and specific annual actions to achieve those goals.

Additionally, RFA has a comprehensive Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for the 2019-20 school year and continues to annually update the plan in accordance with California laws. Please see RFA's LCAP, attached as Appendix 12. Please also see Elements B&C below, which further describe the school's goals and actions to achieve those goals in the state priorities. The goals and actions described below are subject to modification as our LCAP is updated annually, without need for material revision of the charter petition.

## ELEMENTS B & C: MEASURABLE STUDENTS OUTCOMES AND METHODS OF MEASUREMENT

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

– Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(B).

**Governing Law:** “The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.”

– Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(C).

### ELEMENT B: MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

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

<b>State Priority 1 – Basic Services</b> 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))	
<b>Subpriority A: Teachers</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship will identify, attract, and build the capacity of teachers, leaders, and classified staff, in order to support students and families. All students will be exposed to teachers that are innovative, culturally competent, and deliver instruction that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. All teachers will be appropriately assigned and credentialed.
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 100% of teachers will be appropriately assigned.</li> <li>2. 100% of teachers will be appropriately credentialed.</li> </ol>

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

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

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

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

#### Subpriority A: CCSS Implementation

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All Rocketship curricula will be aligned to the CCSS. The School will ensure that 100% of students, including 100% of students in all Student Groups, engage in rigorous, motivating, personalized learning experiences that integrate collaboration, communication, creativity, and the use of technology.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	All instructional materials in ELA/Literacy and math will be aligned to CA CCSS.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Rocketship's Achievement and Schools Teams, in collaboration with School Leaders, will plan and prepare CCSS-aligned intellectual preparation and unit planning materials as described in this	Annual review (and periodic reviews as necessary) of curriculum to ensure that all instruction is standards-aligned.	RPS Achievement Team; RPS Schools Team; School Leaders

charter.		
<b>Subpriority B: EL Students and Academic Content Knowledge</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	100% of English learners will access a CCSS-aligned curriculum. Rocketship will provide specific support for struggling students in English learner and other Student Groups.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rocketship EL Students perform at levels of proficiency equal to or exceeding the local school district on annual CAASPP tests.</li> <li>2. 100% of students, including 100% of all Student Groups, have access to CCSS-aligned instruction and materials.</li> <li>3. 100% of teachers receive professional development on scaffolding CCSS instruction for ELs.</li> <li>4. 100% of teachers receive training in best practices to improve English language proficiency.</li> </ol>	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Analyze data and monitor English Learner progress in academic content knowledge to provide timely interventions	Baseline, formative, and interim assessment data in all subjects, and Smarter Balanced assessment results; EL student cumulative folders	Principal; teachers
<p>Require all staff (teachers and school leaders) to receive training in CCSS-aligned best practices in curriculum and instruction highlighting needs of all Student Groups.</p> <p>Train teachers in best practices to improve academic achievement among ELs, including the strategies as described in this charter.</p>	Professional development schedules.	RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders
<p>Provide professional development for teachers and administrators on how to scaffold the CCSS for access for ELs.</p> <p>Provide a broad range of high-quality, standards-aligned instructional resources</p>	<p>Professional development schedules.</p> <p>Annual inventory of instructional materials and assessments.</p>	RPS Achievement and Schools Teams; School Leaders

that facilitate ELs' access to core curriculum and expand their knowledge of the world. Provide curriculum and unit development aligned to both CCSS and ELD standards.		
<b>Subpriority C: EL Students and English Language Proficiency</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All Rocketship students make progress to become proficient in English.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	English Learner Progress Indicator will be above 70%	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Align curriculum to ELD standards.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily plans.	RPS Achievement Team; Principal; teachers
Analyze data and monitor English Learner progress in language development and provide timely interventions. Conduct ongoing assessments with special attention to fluency and correctness in reading, writing, speaking.	ELPAC results.  Results from other interim assessments as described in this charter.	RPS Achievement Team; RPS Analytics Team; School Leaders; teachers
Train teachers in best practices to improve English language proficiency among ELs. Provide professional development for teachers and administrators on how to scaffold the CCSS for access for ELs. Provide training on integrated/designated ELD instruction and targeted interventions.	Professional development schedules	RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders

<b>State Priority 3 – Parental Involvement</b> Parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation.	
<b>Subpriority A: Achieving/Maintaining Parental Involvement</b>	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Parents will be an integral part of the Rocketship community and will participate in the governance and operation of the school. Parents will view Rocketship as receptive to their input and involvement.



<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parent service on the regional advisory board, as prescribed by this charter and Rocketship policies.</li> <li>2. Parent service on the School Site Council, as prescribed by this charter and Rocketship policies.</li> <li>3. Parent service on the English Learner Advisory Council, as prescribed by this charter and Rocketship policies.</li> <li>4. Parent participation in community meetings.</li> <li>5. Parent responses on the annual Parent Survey indicate satisfaction with their relationship with Rocketship teachers, staff members, and community.</li> </ol>	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Hold elections and other selection processes for parent service on the SSC, ELAC, and Regional Advisory Board as described in this charter.	Membership rosters.	RPS Board of Directors; RPS Growth & Community Engagement Team; RPS Schools Team School Leaders
<p>Solicit parent feedback through annual (or more frequent) Parent Surveys.</p> <p>Conduct regular Advisory Board, SSC, and ELAC meetings as described in this charter.</p> <p>Conduct regular community meetings.</p>	<p>Parent Surveys.</p> <p>Meeting minutes.</p> <p>Attendance rosters at school events.</p>	RPS Growth & Community Engagement Team; RPS Schools Team School Leaders
<b>Subpriority B: Promote Parent Participation</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Parents will feel welcome and encouraged to participate in classroom and community events.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Percentage of parents attending an average of at least one school event per month will be at least 75%</li> <li>2. Parent satisfaction will be above 85%</li> </ol> <p>Note: In accordance with Ed Code 47605(b) and (n), parental involvement shall not be a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School.</p>	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>

Welcome and encourage parental volunteerism by keeping parents informed of volunteer opportunities, parent educational offerings, and informational/ community meetings	Parent participation logs.  Attendance roster at school events.	RPS Growth & Community Engagement Team; RPS Schools Team School Leaders
Provide translation services for school newsletters, parent meetings, and parent-teacher conferences as needed.	Translated documents provided to parents.	School Leaders; Office Manager
<b>Subpriority C: LCAP</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship will consult with parents on LCAP goals, actions, outcomes, and metrics.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Input from parents representative of all student Student Groups, including Hispanic, Asian, and Special Education, on LCAP goals generated during in-person community meetings, SSC meetings, and LCAP take-home surveys.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Conduct parent meetings to consult with parents (including non-Board and non-Leadership Council parent members) during the LCAP development process. Conduct parent survey to gather feedback.	Annual LCAP. Parent meeting minutes. Parent Survey.	RPS Growth & Community Engagement Team; RPS Schools Team School Leaders

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

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

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

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

C. Percentage of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC)

D. EL reclassification rate

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

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

Subpriority A: CAASPP																	
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Rocketship students will exceed the average performance levels of students in schools with similar demographics in the local school district on state assessments.																
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	CAASPP Proficiency Rates: <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td><td colspan="2">2018-19 (Targets)</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>ELA</td><td>math</td></tr> <tr> <td>CAASPP Overall</td><td>36%</td><td>45%</td></tr> <tr> <td>CAASPP EL</td><td>&gt;15%</td><td>39%</td></tr> <tr> <td>CAASPP SED</td><td>36%</td><td>43%</td></tr> </table>			2018-19 (Targets)			ELA	math	CAASPP Overall	36%	45%	CAASPP EL	>15%	39%	CAASPP SED	36%	43%
	2018-19 (Targets)																
	ELA	math															
CAASPP Overall	36%	45%															
CAASPP EL	>15%	39%															
CAASPP SED	36%	43%															
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>															
Implementation of the CCSS aligned curriculum and instructional strategies.  Teachers will receive training on the CA Common Core Standards.  Student support structures (differentiated instruction, online learning programs, ILSs) Curriculum designed to support ELs and other struggling Student Groups. Implementation of assessment software that mimics the online testing format and rigor of the CAASPP. ISE services as described in this Charter.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily planning and preparation materials.  Review of assessment materials.  Professional development schedules.  Collaborative meetings among school leaders, teachers, and other service providers (e.g., ILSs, Education Specialist)	RPS Achievement Team; RPS Schools Team; School Leader; Education Specialist															
Analyze student CAASPP test	Interim standards-aligned benchmark	RPS Achievement															

scores and other diagnostic results and adjust instruction to ensure proficiency in ELA/Literacy and math.	assessments.  CAASPP results.	Team; RPS Schools Team; RPS Analytics Team; School Leaders
<b>Subpriority C: EL Proficiency Rates</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	EL students will make progress toward EL proficiency each year.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	English Learner Progress Indicator will be above 70%	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Monitor EL students to assure they are making expected progress.  Train teachers in SDAIE and GLAD strategies.	Reading, Writing, and math formative assessments, ELPAC scores. Student progress reports.  Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; teachers
<b>Subpriority D: EL Reclassification Rates</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	RFA EL students will become proficient in English and reclassified such that they are no longer designated as English learners.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Reclassification rate increases by one percentage point per year above the average for the next three years (i.e. Year 1 = average rate + 1; Y2 = avg. rate + 2; Y3 = avg. rate + 3)	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Classroom teachers and ILSs provide scaffolded supports to EL students to help them to become proficient in English and to become reclassified.  Students continue to be monitored classroom teachers	Reclassification statistics. Formative assessments in reading, writing, math.  ELPAC	RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; teachers

<p>after becoming reclassified. Teachers give individualized instruction with focused English Language support.</p> <p>Train teachers in SDAIE and GLAD strategies.</p>		
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### State Priority 5 – Student Engagement

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

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

#### Subpriority A: Student Attendance Rates

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	RFA will maintain a high average daily attendance rate, school wide and for all Student Groups.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	ADA rates will be above 95% school-wide	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Monitor attendance reports.</p> <p>Educate parents and students about the importance of daily attendance.</p>	<p>Monthly attendance reports.</p> <p>Parent outreach materials.</p>	RPS Operations Team; School Leaders; Business Operations Manager; Office Manager
Provide a safe and engaging learning environment for all its students and families, including those of the various Student Groups enrolled.	<p>Satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>Community meetings.</p>	RPS Schools Team; School Leaders
Hold conferences with parents of students who regularly miss school.	Parent conference records	Principal; teachers

#### Subpriority B: Student Absenteeism

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	RFA will have no chronic absenteeism (defined as missing 10% or more of school days) for reasons other than illness or approved leave.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Student chronic absenteeism < 10.0%	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Incorporate social-emotional curricula as outlined in this petition. Conduct regular community and culture-building events.	Review of instructional plans and materials.  Bell schedules.	RPS Schools Team; School Leaders; Teachers

### State Priority 6 – School Climate

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

A. Pupil suspension rates

B. Pupil expulsion rates

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

#### Subpriority A: Pupil Suspension Rates

<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	RFA will minimize pupil suspension rates by implementing various methods to help students who are struggling school wide and for all Student Groups.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	Suspension rates lower than surrounding district schools with similar demographics, school-wide and for all Student Groups.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Utilize Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports framework as outlined in this charter.  Social-emotional curriculum incorporated into instructional plans.	PBIS team meetings.  Instructional plans/bell schedule.  Collaborative meetings involving teachers, school leaders, and service providers.	RPS Schools Team; School Leaders; Teachers

<p>Tiered interventions for struggling students.</p> <p>Community events/parent engagement opportunities to foster a sense of belonging and dedication to the school</p>	Annual School Accountability Report Card.	
<b>Subpriority B: Pupil Expulsion Rates</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	RFA will minimize pupil expulsion by implementing various methods to support students who are struggling.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	RFA will maintain an annual expulsion rate of 0.0%, school-wide and for all Student Groups.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Utilize Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports framework as outlined in this charter.</p> <p>Social-emotional curricula are incorporated into instructional plans.</p> <p>Tiered interventions for struggling students.</p> <p>Community events/parent engagement opportunities to foster a sense of belonging and dedication to the school</p>	<p>PBIS team meetings.</p> <p>Instructional plans/bell schedule.</p> <p>Collaborative meetings involving teachers, school leaders, and service providers.</p> <p>Annual School Accountability Report Card.</p>	RPS Schools Team; School Leaders; Teachers

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

State Priority 8 – Other Student Outcomes								
Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.								
Subpriority A: English								
Goals to Achieve Subpriority	All students, including all Student Groups, will become competent readers, writers, and speakers of the English Language.							
Measurable Outcomes	CAASPP Proficiency Rates 2018-19 Targets (from LCAP): <table><tr><td>CAASPP Overall</td><td>36%</td></tr><tr><td>CAASPP EL</td><td>&gt;15%</td></tr><tr><td>CAASPP</td><td>36%</td></tr></table>		CAASPP Overall	36%	CAASPP EL	>15%	CAASPP	36%
CAASPP Overall	36%							
CAASPP EL	>15%							
CAASPP	36%							



	SED							
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>						
<p>Use CCSS to guide ELA/Literacy instruction.</p> <p>Utilize a variety of instructional strategies (e.g., phonics, reading comprehension instruction, guided reading, Writer’s Workshop) as described in Element A of this petition.</p> <p>Provide supports to EL students, students with disabilities, and other struggling Student Groups.</p> <p>Systematically monitor progress of all students.</p>	<p>Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans, as well as formative and interim assessment data.</p> <p>CAASPP and ELPAC.</p>	<p>RPS Schools Team; RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; Teachers</p>						
<b>Subpriority B: Mathematics</b>								
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	All students, including all Student Groups, will acquire mathematical skills.							
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	CAASPP Proficiency Rates 2018-19 Targets (from LCAP): <table><tr><td>CAASPP Overall</td><td>45%</td></tr><tr><td>CAASPP EL</td><td>39%</td></tr><tr><td>CAASPP SED</td><td>43%</td></tr></table>		CAASPP Overall	45%	CAASPP EL	39%	CAASPP SED	43%
CAASPP Overall	45%							
CAASPP EL	39%							
CAASPP SED	43%							
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>						
<p>Use CCSS to guide Mathematics instruction.</p>	<p>Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans, as well as formative and interim</p>	<p>RPS Schools Team; RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders;</p>						

<p>Utilize a variety of instructional strategies as described in Element A of this petition.</p> <p>Provide support to EL students, students with disabilities, and other struggling Student Groups.</p> <p>Systematically monitor progress of all students.</p>	<p>assessment data.</p> <p>CAASPP.</p>	<p>Teachers</p>
<b>Subpriority C: Social Studies</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	<p>All students will develop an awareness of social studies in order to achieve civic competence—the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life.</p>	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School provides standards-aligned instructional materials with focus on nonfiction and vocabulary study in social studies</li> <li>2. School provides standards-aligned professional development with focus nonfiction and vocabulary study in social studies</li> <li>3. 100% of full-time teachers have appropriate credentials</li> </ol>	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Social Studies will be incorporated into ELA/Literacy instruction.</p> <p>Nonfiction blocks will include social studies texts.</p> <p>EL students will receive scaffolded language support.</p> <p>Teachers and service providers will provide other necessary supports and interventions to struggling Student Groups.</p>	<p>Yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.</p>	<p>RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; teachers</p>
<b>Subpriority D: Science</b>		

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

	classes.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	100% of students, including 100% of students in all Student Groups, will receive at least two enrichment courses during the week.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<p>Offer at least two enrichment subjects to students.</p> <p>Enrichment teachers participate in professional development and school wide data analysis to ensure rigor and effectiveness.</p> <p>Incorporate visual and performing arts activities and projects into the school day.</p>	<p>Yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.</p> <p>Bell schedule.</p>	RPS Achievement Team; School Leaders; teachers
<b>Subpriority F: PE (Physical Education)</b>		
<b>Goals to Achieve Subpriority</b>	Students, including all Student Groups, will receive physical education instruction each week.	
<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	100% of students attending school, including all Student Groups (with the exception of students excused for medical reasons) participates in an average of 200 minutes of PE every two weeks.	
<b>Actions to Achieve Goal</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
Schedule PE classes amounting to an average of 200 minutes of PE every two weeks.	Bell schedule	RPS Schools Team; School Leaders

## ELEMENT C: ASSESSMENT MEASURES

RFA affirms that, to the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state

priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.

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

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

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

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

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

As further described in Element B above, teachers will analyze assessment results to identify student, class, and school trends, to find specific areas of instructional strengths and weaknesses, identify students who need additional support, and ensure children are making progress towards grade-level proficiency as measured by the CCSS. Assessments will be used to inform instruction as well as to track and monitor student growth and learning.

Rocketship's current assessments are as follows:

- State-mandated Assessments (summative)—Students will be expected to meet statewide standards for academic achievement. Specifically, students will take the Smarter Balanced assessments for English Language Arts and Mathematics each spring. Additionally, the California Science Test will be administered annually in the spring to students in grade five. These tests will help monitor progress on grade level content and skill development, and will be reflected in meeting state and federal measurements. The ELPAC will be administered to English Learners annually.
- Leveled Reading Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)—All students in grades TK-5 will be assessed regularly throughout the year using the STEP Literacy and Fontus and Pinnell Literacy assessment.
- Writing Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)—A writing sample will be collected and assessed for each student several times a year. Students will be instructed on how to use writing checklists throughout the writing process. Students will use these writing checklists for self-review and self-assessment on writing projects throughout the year.

Teachers will also use these checklists to assess student writing.

- Mathematics Assessments (formative, summative)—Throughout the year, student progress in math will be measured using formal and informal formative assessments. Ongoing assessment will take the form of teacher observations, daily exit tickets, assignments, and performance-based assessments involving problem-solving. At the end of each unit, student understanding and mastery will be measured through network-created unit assessments. Additionally, students take a quarterly “cumulative” assessment created by the network. This assessment is aligned to CCSS and assesses all content taught up to that point in the year - allowing teachers to measure student retention of content past the unit cycle.
- Standardized Assessments in Language Arts & Mathematics (interim)—In addition to leveled reading assessments and math assessments, students will also take NWEA MAP Interim Assessments three times per year in Reading and Mathematics to assure they will be prepared for Smarter Balanced Assessments.
- Science Assessments (formative, summative)—We will assess student progress toward the Next Generation Science Standards using unit assessments from the science program we choose. Teachers will also use a variety of formal and informal assessments such as responses to academic prompts, informal checks for understanding, and assessment of presentations or projects. There will also be assessments at the end of transdisciplinary units such as project rubrics, written checklists, and/or performance tasks.
- Social Studies Assessments (formative, summative)—We will assess student progress toward California History–Social Science Standards using a variety of formal and informal assessments such as responses to academic prompts, informal checks for understanding, and assessment of presentations or projects.
- Social Emotional Learning Assessments (formative, summative)—Teachers will explore and develop tools, some of which will be aligned with the RULER Approach and Kimochi curriculum, to identify and support students’ social-emotional growth.

## USE AND REPORTING OF DATA

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

## REPORTING TO PARENTS, AUTHORIZERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Rocketship places a high value on communication between parents and teachers. We have regular parent/teacher conference periods and progress reports each year. Rocketship will promptly meet all reasonable inquiries for data from the Authorizer and assure timely scheduled data reporting in compliance with the law. In accordance with Title III, Rocketship will adhere to all mandated reporting guidelines in relation to English learners, including notification to parents regarding

ELPAC results and reclassification. In accordance with IDEA, Rocketship will comply with all state and federal laws regarding reporting requirements for children with IEPs.

## ELEMENT D: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

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

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

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

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

## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Rocketship Education, d/b/a Rocketship Public Schools is a non-profit network of public elementary charter schools that has exclusive responsibility for charter schools in California and Tennessee.

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

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

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



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

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

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

For bios of our current SLT members, please see Appendix 10.

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

Rocketship's Bylaws state that the Board must consist of at least three (3) and up to twenty-five (25) members. Board members serve for staggered terms of two years. This staggering of terms will create a natural flow for future elections and ensure that the Board does not experience full turnover at once. At least two of these Board members will be parents of a student currently enrolled at Rocketship.

For bios of our current Board members, please see Appendix 10.

The Board will be comprised of the following individual officers:

- Chairman of the Board, responsible for presiding over Board meetings and performing various duties as assigned by the Board.
- Secretary, responsible for keeping account of Board minutes, Articles and Bylaws, and

notice of Board and committee meetings.

- Treasurer, responsible for overseeing and validating audits, federal and state annual information return filings, and corporate filings.

The Bylaws also authorize the Board to appoint one or more Vice Presidents, one or more assistant secretaries, one or more assistant treasurers, and other officers as deemed necessary.

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

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

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

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

## BOARD DUTIES

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

- Adopting policies that offer guidance and interpretation of the charter and procedures to assist the staff in facilitating the implementation of such policies.
- Setting Rocketship’s enrollment and grade-level configuration;
- Approval of annual school budget, interim budgets, calendar, salary schedules, and fundraising plans;
- Monitor negotiation and approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) or other contracts with school authorizers;
- Approval of all financial policies that set the processes and controls for contracts, expenditures, and internal controls;
- Hiring and firing of the CEO and oversight over other personnel actions;
- Approval of bylaws, resolutions, and policies and procedures of school operation;
- Oversee material changes to school charters;
- Participation as necessary in dispute resolution;
- Monitoring overall student performance;
- Monitoring Rocketship’s performance and taking necessary action to ensure that the school remains true to its mission and charter;
- Monitoring Rocketship’s fiscal solvency;

- Participation in Rocketship's annual independent fiscal audit;
- Participation as necessary in student expulsion matters pursuant to Rocketship policy;
- Increasing public awareness of Rocketship.

Rocketship will update the District on any changes to the bylaws or composition of the Rocketship Board of Directors.

The Board may execute any powers delegated to it by law and shall discharge any duty imposed on it by law. The Board may delegate to an employee of Rocketship any of those duties with the exception of those listed in the Bylaws as non-delegable. The Board, however, retains ultimate responsibility for the performance of those powers or duties so delegated. Where the Board has formally taken action to delegate authority to staff, changes must:

- Be in writing;
- Specify the designee;
- Describe in specific terms the authority of the Board being delegated, any conditions on the delegated authority or its exercise and the beginning and ending dates of the delegation; and
- Require an affirmative vote of a majority of present Board members, with the presence of a quorum as required by the Brown Act.

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

Moreover, Rocketship agrees to comply with the requirements of the Brown Act, the Public Records Act, Government Code Section 1090 et seq. and the Political Reform Act. Rocketship also has adopted the Fair Political Practices Commission Model Conflict of Interest Code, pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 2, Section 18739, including the formal designation of reporters and reporting categories and the forms to be filed thereunder, and requires all designated Charter School employees and governing board members to comply therewith. The Rocketship Board shall also comply with Education Code 47604.1. Please see Appendix 10 for a copy of the Rocketship Conflict of Interest Code.

### BOARD MEETINGS AND TRAININGS

The Board will meet regularly to review and act on its responsibilities. All meetings shall be held in accordance with the Brown Act, and thus be held openly and easily accessible to the public. Rocketship will establish an annual calendar listing the dates of its regular meetings and provide the locations of those meetings. Rocketship will ensure that a teleconference location, which will be manned by a Rocketship staff member, is available at each school site for every governing board meeting. The notice and agenda of each meeting will provide for public comment from each physical and teleconference location. Materials will be available online and by request at teleconferencing sites. In accordance with Education Code 47604.1, Rocketship shall hold its Board meetings within the physical boundaries of the county in which the greatest number of Rocketship pupils reside. At the time of this writing, that county is Santa Clara County. However, members of the Board and the public may choose to participate at any Rocketship school

teleconferencing site.

Furthermore, in accordance with Education Code 47604.1, Rocketship shall audio record and/or video record all the governing board meetings and post the recordings on the Charter School's website.

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

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

Meetings of the governing Board will not include discussion of topics not related to the governing of Rocketship Public Schools. Neither will a quorum of the Board discuss business outside of public meetings.

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

#### REGIONAL ADVISORY BOARDS

Rocketship is governed by a single Board of Directors, and we believe it is critical that strong local partnerships inform our growth and maximize our impact in each of the communities we serve. To achieve this goal, the Rocketship will put in place an East Bay Regional Advisory Board consisting of a diverse group of parents, teachers, and civic and business leaders committed to closing the achievement gap.

The Regional Advisory Board will consist of three (3) to twelve (12) members. At all times, at least 50% of the membership of the Board will be populated by parents of current Rocketship students. Each school will have one representative, elected from the school's School Site Council or equivalent body. The remainder of the Advisory Board may be made up of local civic and business leaders appointed by Rocketship Regional Director.

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

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

## PARENT PARTICIPATION

We understand that a parent is a child's first teacher and lifelong advocate. We strive to partner with parents in a variety of ways so that they can become active participants in the school and the community as they promote their children's education. As described in Element A, our teachers and school leaders conduct home visits and conferences and regularly communicate with parents via emails, phone calls, and notes home.

We provide numerous opportunities for parents to get involved in the operations and governance of the school. Parents can become members of the Advisory Board (further described above) or become involved with the School Site Council or English Language Advisory Committee (further described below).

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

We also have special processes in place to involve families in the creation of the LCAP. In addition to the regular community meetings and parent meetings, RFA holds meetings specifically designed to help parents understand the components of the LCAP and to discuss the best ways for the school to use LCFF funds to serve students in alignment with the state priorities. RFA also has developed a survey, translated into English and Spanish, to ask parents about their preferences regarding the allocation of LCFF funds for various services and resources.

### SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL

Each Rocketship school forms a School Site Council (SSC), which will be comprised of the following:

- The school Principal;
- The school Office Manager;
- School personnel, 75% of which are classroom teachers;
- Parents of students attending the school, or other community members selected by parents.

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

The SSC will participate in the development and approval of the school's Local Control and Accountability Plan, which governs how the school will spend its state categorical funding.

Beyond fulfilling its legal obligations as described above, the SSC will seek to empower parents in the education of their children. The SSC may engage in a number of activities and initiatives, including, but not limited to:

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

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

### ENGLISH LEARNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Under Education Code Section 52176(b), traditional public schools with more than 20 students of limited English proficiency (“English learners,” or “ELs”) shall establish a school level advisory committee on which parents/guardians of such students constitute membership in at least the same percentage as their children represent of the total number of students in the school. Other members of the English Learners Advisory Committee (ELAC) can be parents/guardians of non-EL students, school staff, and/or community members as long as the minimum percentage requirement for EL parents is maintained. RFA chooses to comprise an ELAC.

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

In accordance with Education Code Section 52176, the ELAC shall be responsible for advising the principal and staff on programs and services for English learners and the School Site Council on the development of the SSD and LCAP.

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

- The school's needs assessment.
- The school's annual language census.
- Ways to make parents aware of the importance of regular school attendance.

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

### DETERMINING SUCCESS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

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

- Enlisting parent leaders at each campus: These individuals will help lead various activities at school as well as be key liaisons within the community to help inform other parents about Rocketship and promote grassroots, community efforts to help Rocketship eradicate the achievement gap in the community.
- Achieving strong family attendance at school community events: These events include community meetings, exhibition nights, and other school events. A high percentage of participation demonstrates a deep parent engagement and commitment to RFA.
- Encouraging each RFA family to complete volunteer hours at the school per year: As described above, RFA parents will be encouraged to volunteer at the schools to help tighten the link between the families and the school as well as assist RFA teachers and staff with various school operations. However, in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iv), parental involvement is NOT required for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, any Rocketship charter school. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(n), the Charter School will affirmatively notify current and prospective parents of this during the application and enrollment process and at the beginning of every school year.

## ELEMENT E: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS

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

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

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

All Rocketship teachers will hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. Rocketship will maintain current copies of all teacher credentials, and they will be readily available for inspection and monitoring. Rocketship teachers will be in compliance with AB 1505.

RFA acknowledges that, pursuant to Education Code Section 47605.6(l), there is no flexibility in credentialing at the Charter School. All teachers at the Charter School are required to be credentialed in the same manner as are teachers at public non charter schools.

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

### PRINCIPAL

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

The Principal is the instructional, cultural, managerial, and community leader of the school. The Principal sets the vision for the school and ensures that the school is a high-achieving college preparatory environment where all students finish the fifth grade at or above grade level. Additionally, the Principal directly manages, supports, and develops the Assistant Principal, Business Operations Manager 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:**

- 3+ years of experience teaching in an urban school classroom delivering significant achievement gains
- 2 years of experience as a Principal, Assistant Principal (or equivalent) or a similar administrative position at an urban elementary school serving a diverse student population with a track record of realizing significant achievement gains
- Experience managing, coaching and developing teachers
- Strong leadership skills with ability to inspire and motivate staff and families
- Personal drive for high expectations
- Results-oriented, using data to make decisions
- Adaptable and able to thrive in a dynamic, fast-paced environment
- Spanish and/or Vietnamese language skills are a plus
- Experience in building and maintaining outstanding school culture

- Excellent time management and organizational skills
- Commitment to parent partnership
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required
- BA from accredited university
- Possession of a valid California teaching credential or permit that would qualify the individual to hold a credentialed teaching position in a California public school.

### ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

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:***

- Rocketship Assistant Principals are deeply committed to the success of each Rocketeer and the daily workload reflects that commitment.
- Foster a rigorous and college preparatory culture of excellence in every classroom that ensures high levels of student achievement.
- Coach grade level teams (5-9 educators) to build content expertise in Humanities or STEM.
- Engage in cycles of data driven instruction and assessments to inform planning and personalize instruction to student needs.
- Ensure at least 1.5 years of progress for all Rocketeers annually through management and planning.
- Collaborate with the Special Education team to ensure teachers are receiving the necessary support and training to maximize the delivery of instruction in our full inclusion model.
- Essential Functions: Student and Parent Partnership
- Rocketship Assistant Principals succeed in partnership with all students and families through frequent communication, building trusting relationships, and embracing the knowledge parents have as their child's first teacher.
- Create a school community that fully involves parents in student achievement through multiple outlets including home visits, regular community meetings, and parent/family meetings.
- Rocketship Assistant Principals are deeply committed to doing and being their best, and to growing their skills as professionals and as individuals, so our daily and annual expectations reflect that commitment.

- Exhibit a high level of honest and humble self-reflection owning good and bad outcomes; effectively respond to and implement constructive feedback.
- Create a healthy, high-achieving, urgent environment where staff and students feel challenged and also fully supported and valued.
- Promote and participate in collaborative opportunities across schools to share best practices, problem solve, and gather feedback.

**Qualifications:**

- 3+ years of experience teaching in an urban city classroom and realizing significant gains.
- Deep knowledge of elementary instruction and planning skills.
- Strong leadership skills and personal drive.
- Relentless pursuit of high expectations.
- Result-oriented and data-driven.
- Ability to inspire, motivate and develop others.
- Adaptable and able to thrive in a dynamic, fast-paced environment.
- Ability to engage and empower parents and families.
- Experience in building and maintaining outstanding school culture.
- Excellent time management and organizational skills.
- Strategic planning and project management experience.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills.
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required
- BA from Accredited University
- Possession of a valid California teaching credential or permit that would qualify the individual to hold a credentialed teaching position in a California public school.

**CORE CLASSROOM TEACHERS**

RFA shall comply with Education Code Section 47605.6(l), which states:

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

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

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

**Responsibilities**

- A full day of teaching, primarily within the academic areas in which they focus their

teaming;

- Build a classroom culture of excellence and deliver rigorous instruction by building content expertise in humanities or STEM that is captured in units of study and daily plans.
- Engage in cycles of data driven instruction to inform planning and personalize instruction to student needs.
- Collaborate with special education staff so students identified as needing extra support are meaningfully included.
- Partner with all students and families through frequent communication, building trusting relationships, and embracing the knowledge parents have as their child's first teacher.
- Build authentic relationships with families beginning with home visits that form the foundation for frequent ongoing communications to support student success.
- Engage with families on academic and behavioral goals and transparently share student progress so that both parents and teachers own each child's successes and challenges.

**Qualifications:**

- Demonstrated mastery of classroom skills including classroom management, planning, assessment and instructional practice;
- Possession of a valid California teaching credential or permit that would qualify the individual to hold a credentialed teaching position in a California public school.
- Demonstrate the potential to make significant gains for students.
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

Teachers assigned to a TK classroom will have been issued at least one credential by the CTC and shall, by August 1, 2021, as amended by SB 98, have at least one of the following:

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

**EDUCATION SPECIALIST**

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

***Responsibilities***

- Ensure that all students realize rigorous academic goals outlined in their IEP along with our core content. Our goal is each Rocketeer grows at least 1.5 years.
- Collaborate with school team, families, and related service providers for the purpose of improving the quality of student outcomes, developing solutions and planning curriculum.
- Provide one-to-one or small group instruction, direct services and push in or pull out instruction as required by IEP
- Co-teach with general educators and related service providers to ensure inclusive education practices for all students
- 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' academic abilities for the purpose of collaboration with team members to create and implement the best educational program like the diagnosis of learning disabilities, development of intervention plans for foundational needs and/or student progress
- Collaborate with Psychologists and Related Service Providers for evaluations and when needed, administer academic assessments. Review and interpret the results to determine our learners' strengths and areas of need for initial, annual and triennial IEP meetings.
- In collaboration with general educators, provide accommodations and/or modifications to learners with disabilities to provide access to grade level content and demonstrate her or his true understanding on assessments as determined by the IEP team
- Draft and write professional and compliant IEPs, facilitate IEP meetings and ensure our online IEP system and school based files are compliant and reflect a Rocketeer's Individual Education Program
- Develop Behavior Support Plans (BSPs) or Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) as needed with School Team
- Manage student behavior for the purpose of providing a safe and optimal learning environment
- Engage with families on academic and behavioral goals and transparently share student progress so that both parents and teachers own each child's successes and challenges.

### ***Qualifications***

- 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
- Possession of a valid California Education Specialist credential or permit that would qualify the individual to hold a credentialed Education Specialist position in a California public school.
- Bachelor's degree required; Advanced Degree optional

### **INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING SPECIALISTS**

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

### **Responsibilities**

- Motivate students to participate in learning activities; create a positive student culture around centers, 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 guide students in collaborative centers and on online learning programs; perform targeted individual interventions and assist struggling students in both centers and online programs
- Tutor small groups of students on literacy and/or math skills; use Rocketship-adopted curricula to deliver lessons which align to students' Individualized Learning Plans
- Interpret and manage online student data generated by Rocketship's suite of online learning programs
- Conduct weekly progress monitoring assessments of progress for students participating in intervention; communicate progress monitoring results to families and classroom teachers; work with grade level teams to interpret progress monitoring data and use it to make intervention decisions for students
- 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 all Learning Lab materials including 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
- Interest in becoming a credentialed teacher is a plus, but not required.
- Bachelor's Degree is a plus, but not required
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required
- Copy of High School Diploma or equivalent

### **PARAPROFESSIONAL**

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

**Responsibilities**

- Implement individual and small group instruction for students special education needs under the direction of the special education case manager
- Collaborate with students' case managers to assess student progress towards goals on a consistent basis; communicate student progress with case managers and general education teachers
- Collaborate with all staff members to ensure that all students have consistent and well-coordinated support and communicate effectively with colleagues and contribute to positive staff culture
- Partner with families on the academic and social progress and needs of a student
- Provide accommodations and/or modifications to learners with disabilities to provide access to grade level content and demonstrate her or his true understanding on assessments as determined by the IEP team in collaboration with general educators
- Ensure that all students realize rigorous academic goals outlined in their IEP along with our core content. Our goal is that each Rocketeer grows at least 1.5 years.
- Implement behavior management strategies during small group and individual instruction in order to support student engagement
- Manage student behavior for the purpose of providing a safe and optimal learning environment
- Collect and provide feedback for the development of Behavior Support Plans (BSPs) or Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) as needed
- Assist in the implementation of BIPs, which may involve positive reinforcement strategies, behavior modification, or other skills to maintain appropriate behaviors
- Record data for individualized instructional programs and positive behavior support plans
- Support a spectrum of needs for life skills, including but not limited to: toileting and diapering, assist with hygiene, feeding and other daily life skills.
- Provide appropriate crisis intervention as necessary using the least restrictive method by anticipating and responding quickly and appropriately to escalating behaviors

**Qualifications**

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

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST**

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

**Responsibilities:**

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

**Qualifications:**

- Must possess a Bachelor's or Master's degree in occupational therapy from an accredited four year college or university and have a valid license of proficiency in occupational therapy services issued by the California Board of Occupational Therapy
- Experience working with elementary-age students (preferred)
- Experience working with students with a range of disabilities (learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, autism, etc.)
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Embrace the mission of Rocketship Education
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Ability to be flexible and adaptive in a work environment that is still evolving.
- Perform a variety of specialized and responsible tasks: maintain records, establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with students, parents, other school personnel, meet schedule and compliance deadlines
- Possession of a valid driver's license: willingness to provide own transportation in conduct of work assignments as you will be required to travel from site to site to work with students and faculty at all sites
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

**SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST**

The School Psychologist is an exempt position that will work under the direction and supervision of the Associate Director of Social Emotional Learning and will work with elementary school students. Rocketship School Psychologists are responsible for providing both direct and indirect support to students, families, and staff members in order to ensure high quality programming for students with disabilities.

**Responsibilities:**

- Lead psycho-educational and formal behavior assessments; write quality, compliant



assessment reports.

- Attend IEP meetings; present assessment findings to the team.
- Assist in the implementation of assessment recommendations as needed.
- Participate in the pre-referral process and provide consultation to school teams regarding intervention supports for struggling students.
- Work with parents to build knowledge of disability and inclusive support for students with disabilities.
- Assist in providing consultation and advice to administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the general and special educational programs as appropriate.
- Assist in coordinating, communicating and seeking consultation with community agencies as appropriate.
- Maintain a compliant practice.
- Some campuses may require consultation, collaboration, creation, and implementation of 504 plans
- Some campuses may require additional consultation around social emotional and behavioral systems and structures
- Perform other duties as assigned or requested by the Associate Director of SEL.

**Qualifications:**

- Required: Valid California Pupil Personnel Services credential (or applicable state credential); Master's degree in School Psychology
- Bilingual, Spanish (preferred)
- Experience working in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (highly preferred)
- Experience working with elementary-age students (preferred)
- Experience working with students with a range of disabilities (learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, autism, etc.) (highly preferred)
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Commitment to Rocketship's special education inclusion model and overall mission to close the achievement gap within our lifetime.
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Ability to be flexible and adaptive in a work environment that is still evolving.
- Perform a variety of specialized and responsible tasks: maintain records, establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with students, parents, other school personnel, meet schedule and compliance deadlines.
- Possession of a valid California driver's license (or applicable state equivalent): willingness to provide own transportation in conduct of work assignments as you will be required to travel from site to site to work with students and faculty at all sites.
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

**SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST**

The Speech-Language Pathologist will work with elementary school students in screening, evaluating, diagnosing, and treating disorders of communication. This is a school-based position.

**Responsibilities:**

- Address child's speech production, vocal production, and language needs through speech therapy
- Deliver direct services via pre-referral interventions; monitor student progress

- Document and collect data on all consultation sessions and provide regular assessments
- Conduct student screenings and/or assessments of language, voice, fluency, articulation, or hearing
- Develop and implement high quality, legally compliant IEPs
- Maintain compliance with all special education laws and policies
- Maintain client files and treatment logs in an organized manner
- Communicate with program manager in regards to any change of status, problems, or intent to change the educational program
- Attend and participate in meetings as required
- Develop instructional materials and evaluate commercially available material for treatment
- Keep current on latest developments in the field of speech therapy by attending professional seminars, reading literature, and participating in professional organizations as assigned
- Provide professional development support to school staff and families
- Manage time efficiently

#### **Qualifications**

- Valid Clinical Clear Rehabilitative Services Credential; Master's Degree required
- Bilingual in English and Spanish (or Vietnamese) (strongly preferred)
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Commitment and passion for Rocketship's mission and goals
- Thrive in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment
- Ability to demonstrate skills necessary for fulfilling the job responsibilities of this role
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

#### **OFFICE MANAGER**

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

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Build strong working relationships with parents and families
- Create and maintain complete and current student cumulative files
- Enter student information into our student information system and keep this information up-to-date throughout the school year as enrollment or information changes
- Manage the Attendance process including contacting absent parents on a daily basis
- Coordinate the school's truancy process and communicate with parents as needed
- Administer Independent Study process for students with planned absences
- Maintain emergency medical and contact information for all students
- Maintain complete and current immunization records for all students
- Administer basic first aid, distribute medication, maintain injury reports
- Be knowledgeable of all content in school safety binder, including emergency procedures
- Report all injuries and other school incidents to Human Resources
- Supervise students sent to the office for discipline and health reasons

- Collect payments from parents
- Manage collection of free/reduced-lunch application forms from all families during the school year
- Collect lunch, uniform sales money from parents and provide receipts for payments
- Execute responsibilities related to emergency situations as assigned by the Principal
- Perform general clerical duties including answering phones, taking and distributing messages, sorting mail, translate documents from English to Spanish and prepare general correspondence
- Facilitate arrangements for school activities, logistics, teacher development, parent development and other activities
- Act as an interpreter, when necessary, in whole-school functions and smaller meetings

***Qualifications:***

- Spanish/English bilingual fluency required, with excellent written and oral communication skills
- Knowledge and cultural competence of the local student and parent community
- Highly developed interpersonal skills using tact, patience, and courtesy
- Effectively prioritize and juggle multiple concurrent projects
- Comfort in a start-up environment and ability to work independently with minimal direction
- Ability to use a variety of software programs and quickly learn new ones
- Managerial skills preferred
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

**BUSINESS OPERATIONS MANAGER**

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

***Responsibilities***

- Own the logistics, staffing, and daily management of arrival, lunch, recess, dismissal and physical space at your campus.
- Coach Operations Specialists daily in behavior management techniques, through both “in-the-moment coaching” and planned 1:1s.
- Design and lead professional development for Operations Specialists focused on behavior management skill development.
- Manage the physical space of the building and all facilities-related needs, including scheduling/meeting vendors and handling after-hours facilities emergencies.
- Manage food service operations, including managing staff, serving as the main contact with meal vendor, ensuring compliance, conducting internal audits, and ensuring meal program financial health.

- Ensure your campus is financially responsible by providing support to the Principal on finance-related topics, including around budgets, cash collection, and invoice approval.
- Serve as the main owner of school safety processes and compliance, including administering training and running safety drills. Partner with the Principal to respond to emergencies.
- Own procurement and purchasing for the school site. Work with the Principal to understand needs, place orders, inventory items received, handle returns/exchanges, etc.
- Serve as on-site IT contact, including managing IT assets, assisting staff with IT issues as able, and serving as the main touchpoint to central IT staff.
- Support the logistical, compliance, and technology side of administration of Rocketship's assessments, including NWEA MAP and state tests, and health screenings like hearing and vision.
- CA Only: Own free/reduced-price lunch application process, including validating forms and running income verification process.
- Exhibit Rocketship's core values daily: authenticity, community, innovation, tenacity, and pursuit of excellence.
- Hire, manage, and evaluate all hourly school Operations Specialists. Drive Operations Specialist satisfaction and development through active investment in your team.
- Be a collaborative and supportive partner on your school's leadership team and the national Business Operations Manager team.
- Engage with parents on operational topics, demonstrating a clear customer service mindset that honors and engages our students' families.

### **Qualifications**

- Minimum 5 years of relevant experience, with school-based experience strongly preferred. Many of our most successful BOMs have previously been teachers and/or School Leaders in other roles.
- Managerial experience is strongly preferred. Leadership and/or coaching roles among other adults can potentially substitute for this.
- Experience in a fast-paced, highly analytical, entrepreneurial environment. Ability to proactively manage multiple critical deadlines and quickly and confidently adapt to changing school needs, independently prioritizing and following through on completion of tasks and responsibilities. Demonstrated ability to be detail-oriented, organized, and resourceful.
- Team-player attitude and strong customer-service orientation. Skill at communicating respectfully and empathetically with students' families. Spanish language proficiency preferred in many of our communities, but not required.
- Skilled at building strong and trusting working relationships with people in both senior- and junior-level roles, both within and beyond Rocketship. Ability to treat sensitive issues with respect and empathy, and maintain strict confidentiality where required.
- Strong PC-based computer skills, including the ability to use spreadsheets and the Google Suite, and ability to quickly become proficient in new software programs.

- Passion for Rocketship’s mission, and the belief that all students can achieve high levels of academic success.
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required
- Bachelor’s degree required

### OPERATIONS TEAM MEMBER

This position is responsible for ensuring that the day-to-day operations of lunch, recess, and arrival/dismissal at the school site run safely and smoothly. Furthermore, support staff members are also responsible for ensuring that students maintain appropriate behavior in all operational activities.

#### ***Responsibilities***

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

#### ***Qualifications***

- Commitment to Rocketship’s mission, vision, and goals
- Passion for working with children
- Previous experience managing and/or teaching groups of elementary-age students is strongly preferred
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with ability to engage and work closely with a wide range of staff members
- Ability to learn laws, rules, practices and procedures related to public education and specific to Rocketship Public Schools
- Basic fluency in English
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn
- Background check, TB test and fingerprinting required

## ELEMENT F: HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

*"The procedures that the charter school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall require all of the following:*

- (i) That each employee of the charter school furnish the charter school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237.*
- (ii) The development of a school safety plan, which shall include the safety topics listed in subparagraphs (A) to (J), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 32282 and procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents.*
- (iii) That the school safety plan be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the charter school."*

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

Please see Appendix 11 for a detailed description of a sample of Rocketship health and safety policies, including its School Safety Plan. Rocketship may revise and create additional policies and procedures as the need occurs and to stay in compliance with changes to local, state and federal laws and regulations. The following provides a brief summary of relevant current Rocketship health and safety policies and procedures, in accordance with California law.

### FINGERPRINTING/BACKGROUND CHECK

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

Employees and contractors of Rocketship Public Schools are required to submit to a criminal background check and to furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1. Applicants for employment, including employees being rehired, must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Charter School shall not hire any person, in either a certificated or classified position, who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony except as otherwise provided by laws, pursuant to Education Code Sections 44830.1 and 45122.1. All prospective employees must abide by all applicable laws and agree to abide by the policies of Rocketship, including the submission of fingerprints and the approval for Rocketship or its designee to perform background checks. This requirement is a condition of employment.

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

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

The Principal of the Charter School shall monitor compliance with this policy. The Chief Executive Officer of Rocketship Public Schools shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Principal.

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

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

#### TUBERCULOSIS RISK ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION

Employees, and volunteers who have frequent or prolonged contact with students, will be assessed and examined (if necessary) for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with students, and for employees at least once every four years thereafter, as required by Education Code Section 49406 in requiring tuberculosis testing of all employees.

#### IMMUNIZATIONS

All students enrolled and staff will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075.

#### MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

Rocketship will adhere to Education Code Sections 49423 and 49414 regarding administration of medication in school.

In accordance with Education Code Section 49414, RFA will stock emergency epinephrine auto-injectors to be used by the school nurse or trained personnel on persons suffering or reasonably believed to be suffering from an anaphylactic reaction. A school nurse or, if the school does not have a nurse, a volunteer trained in accordance with this policy, may administer an epinephrine auto-injector to a person exhibiting potentially life-threatening symptoms or anaphylaxis at school or at a school activity when a physician is not immediately available.

RFA will store the epinephrine auto-injectors in a secure but accessible, well-marked, unlocked location.

#### VISION/HEARING/SCOLIOSIS

Students will be screened for vision, hearing, and scoliosis. Rocketship shall adhere to Education Code Section 49450 *et seq.* as applicable to the grade levels served.

#### COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

Rocketship shall adopt a Comprehensive School Safety Plan, to be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year, which shall include, but not be limited to: (1) an assessment of the current status of school crime committed on Rocketship facilities and at Charter School-related functions;

and (2) identifying appropriate strategies and programs that will provide or maintain a high level of school safety and address Rocketship's procedures for complying with applicable laws related to school safety, which shall include the development of all of the following pursuant to Education Code Section 32282(a)(2)(A)-(J):

- child abuse reporting procedures
- routine and emergency disaster procedures
- policies for students who committed an act under Section 48915 and other Charter School-designated serious acts leading to suspension, expulsion, or mandatory expulsion recommendations
- procedures to notify teachers of dangerous students pursuant to Education Code Section 49079
- a discrimination and harassment policy consistent with Education Code Section 200
- provisions of any school wide dress code that prohibits students from wearing "gang-related apparel," if applicable
- procedures for safe ingress and egress of students, parents, and employees to and from the Charter School
- a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning
- the rules and procedures on Charter School discipline
- procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents

### BULLYING PREVENTION

Pursuant to Education Code 234.4, Rocketship shall adopt procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying, prior to December 31, 2019. Pursuant to Education Code 32283.5, Rocketship shall annually make available the online training module on bullying developed by the CDE to certificated school site employees and all other school site employees who have regular interaction with pupils.

### NUTRITIONALLY ADEQUATE MEALS

RMS participates in the School Nutrition Program (SNP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP). We provide all students with universal breakfast. We also provide all students, including those who qualify for free and reduced meals through the FRL process, school lunch every school day. All of our meals meet SNP and NSLP guidelines for nutrition.

As required by state law, Rocketship shall provide students who meet federal eligibility criteria for free and reduced price meals with at least one nutritionally adequate free or reduced-price meal, as defined in Education Code Section 49553(a), during each school day.

### BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS

Rocketship shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with blood-borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace. The Board has established a written "Bloodborne Pathogens" policy designed to protect employees from possible infection due to contact with blood-borne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV") and hepatitis B virus ("HBV").

Whenever exposed to blood or other body fluids through injury or accident, students and staff



should follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

#### DRUG-FREE/SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Rocketship shall maintain a drug, alcohol, and smoke-free environment.

#### FACILITY

All facilities utilized by Rocketship must be in compliance with either the Field Act or the California Building Standards Code in accordance with Education Code 47610. All Rocketship facilities will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act access requirements. Rocketship maintains accessible records documenting all such compliances. Rocketship has ensured the receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy prior to the start of school.

Rocketship complies with the requirement contained in Education Code Section 47610 by utilizing private facilities that are compliant with the California Building Standards Code. However, Rocketship reserves the right to build a facility in compliance with the Field Act or to request Field Act compliant facilities from the District in the future under Proposition 39 and its implementing regulations. Rocketship agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. Rocketship shall conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001.

#### COMPREHENSIVE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Rocketship is committed to providing a school that is free from discrimination and sexual harassment, as well as harassment based upon the actual or perceived characteristics of race, religion, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, national origin, ancestry, ethnic group identification, genetic information, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, sex and pregnancy, physical or mental disability, childbirth or related medical conditions, military and veteran status, denial of family and medical care leave, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation.

Rocketship shall comply with all applicable changes to the federal Title IX laws.

#### SUICIDE PREVENTION

Pursuant to AB 1767 and EC §215(a)(2)(A) , Rocketship has adopted an age-appropriate policy on pupil suicide prevention. This policy is also included in Appendix 11.

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

Governing Law: “The means by which the charter school will achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils...that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted.

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

As further described in this charter petition, Rocketship shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, ethnicity, or any of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220, including immigration status. Furthermore, the Charter School shall strive to achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils, among its students that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the District.

Specifically, the means by which Rocketship will strive to achieve these balances are described below. This list is not meant to be exhaustive. Any such strategies will comport with all federal and state laws and Rocketship policies prohibiting discrimination in admissions.

- Printing and distributing materials in English, Spanish, and any other languages reflecting the needs of the community.
- Cultivating strategic partnerships with community organizations that serve diverse constituencies.
- Recruiting and retaining a diverse, highly-qualified recruitment and community engagement staff that is primarily composed of individuals who reside in the local community.
- Holding focus groups with parents and community organizations in the local community.
- Employing an enrollment process that is well-publicized, scheduled, and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based application process.
- Developing and distributing promotional and informational material that reaches out to all of the various racial and ethnic groups represented in the territorial jurisdiction of the District.
- Developing and distributing promotional and informational material that reaches out to families of students with special needs.
- Conducting continuous outreach activities throughout the community. These activities will be held at a wide range of times and locations to ensure that community members and Rocketship families have sufficient opportunities to attend.
- Conducting ongoing data-based research into the demographics of the District.

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

## ELEMENT H: ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Governing Law: “Admission policies and procedures, consistent with [Education Code Section 47605] subdivision (e).”

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

The Charter School shall strive to achieve a student population that understands and values Rocketship’s mission and vision statements and is committed to our instructional and operational philosophy.

The Charter School shall be an open enrollment and tuition-free charter public 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.

Pursuant to Education Code 47605(e), Rocketship shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all operations, shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, immigration status, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

Pursuant to Education Code 47605(e)(4), Rocketship shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the charter school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the following characteristics: pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Rocketship shall not request a pupil’s records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit the pupil’s records to the charter school before enrollment. Rocketship shall not encourage a pupil currently attending the charter school to disenroll from the charter school or transfer to another school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code 47605(d)(2).

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

### APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION PROCESS

The application process begins with the completion of a student interest form, which includes basic student and family identification information for the purposes of entry into public random drawing. Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open application period each year for enrollment in the following school year. Following the open application period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether more students have applied than the Charter

School has capacity. The Charter School shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School subject only to capacity. In the event that capacity is exceeded, the Charter School will hold a public random drawing, further described below, to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students (2<sup>nd</sup> year forward) who are guaranteed admission in the following school year.

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

- Student enrollment form which contains student name, address, and other identifying and demographic information;
- Proof of Immunization;
- Home Language Survey;
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form;
- Proof of minimum age requirements.

#### LOTTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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

1. Siblings of students currently admitted to or currently attending RFA
2. Children of staff, teachers, and founders of RFA (not to exceed 10% of total enrollment)
3. Residents of MDUSD
4. Other California residents

Pursuant to Education Code 47605(e)(2), preferences shall be consistent with federal law, the California Constitution, and Section 200. Preferences shall not result in limiting enrollment access for pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

Public random drawing rules, deadlines, dates and times will be communicated on the Charter Schools 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.

The Charter School will likely conduct the lottery in the late winter or early spring for enrollment in fall of that year.

The Board of Directors will take all necessary efforts to ensure lottery procedures are fairly executed. Lottery spaces are pulled in order of grade level by the designated lottery official. Separate lotteries shall be conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than students interested in attending. All lotteries shall take place on the same day.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a wait list in the order of their draw in the public random drawing. This wait list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the school year. Students may also apply to Rocketship after the open application period and will be placed on the waitlist if all seats are full in a particular grade level.

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

## ELEMENT I: FINANCIAL AUDIT

Governing Law: “The manner in which annual, independent financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.”

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

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

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

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

The annual audit will be completed and forwarded to the Authorizer, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The Business Committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Board with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Rocketship Business Committee will then make a recommendation to the Board on whether to approve the audit. By March 15<sup>th</sup>, the Board will submit a report to the Authorizer describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved along with an anticipated timeline for the same. Rocketship will work with the Authorizer to ensure all audit exceptions and deficiencies are resolved to the satisfaction of the Authorizer. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel (“EAAP”) in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

## ELEMENT J: STUDENT SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES

**Governing Law:** *"The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled from the charter school for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed from the charter school for any reason. These procedures, at a minimum, shall include an explanation of how the charter school will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements that is consistent with all of the following:*

- (i) For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, provide oral or written notice of the charges against the pupil and, if the pupil denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the pupil to present the pupil's side of the story.*
- (ii) For suspensions of 10 days or more and all other expulsions for disciplinary reasons, both of the following: (I) Provide timely, written notice of the charges against the pupil and an explanation of the pupil's basic rights. (II) Provide a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer within a reasonable number of days at which the pupil has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the pupil has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate.*
- (iii) Contain a clear statement that no pupil shall be involuntarily removed by the charter school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian or, if the pupil is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the pupil's educational rights holder, and shall inform the pupil, the pupil's parent or guardian, or the pupil's educational rights holder of the right to initiate the procedures specified in clause (ii) before the effective date of the action. If the pupil's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder initiates the procedures specified in clause (ii), the pupil shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For purposes of this clause, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions specified in clauses (i) and (ii)."*

*-- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J)*

When disciplinary infractions occur on campus, our Principals are expected to respond in accordance with our Student Discipline Policy, which encourages positive behavioral interventions and supports and outlines available in-school disciplinary actions. The decision to pursue a suspension is, in most circumstances, largely at the discretion of the school leadership team and should only be considered in cases of egregious behavioral infractions, in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws, as we believe that our students are best served when they are present at school every day. Recommendations for expulsion should not be pursued except in the most extreme cases, in accordance with state law, as our policy is to do whatever it takes to serve every student who enrolls in a Rocketship school.

If a situation does arise where a Principal believes that the student should be suspended and/or recommended for expulsion, this policy was written to guide the process. The policy has been written in accordance with relevant federal and state laws and regulations and after review of Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.*, which describes the non charter schools' list of offenses and procedures to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. The

language of the Rocketship policy closely mirrors the language of Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* It addresses grounds for suspension and expulsion; suspension and expulsion procedures; the maintenance of disciplinary records; student appeal rights; rehabilitation and readmission; and special procedures for the consideration of suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities. This policy may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comply with legal requirements.

Rocketship administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline and involuntary disenrollment policies and procedures. The notice shall state that this policy is available on request at the Principal's office.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Rocketship has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to general education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. Rocketship will follow all applicable federal and state laws including but not limited to the California Education Code, when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

Note that no student shall be involuntarily removed by a Rocketship school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder, and shall inform him or her of the basis for which the student is being involuntarily removed and the right to request a hearing to challenge the involuntary removal. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, Rocketship shall utilize the same hearing procedures specified below for expulsions, before the effective date of the action to involuntarily remove the student. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include removals for misconduct which may be grounds for suspensions or expulsions as enumerated below.

### **Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion**

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



### Discretionary Suspension or Expellable Offenses

Please note that if it is determined that a student has engaged in any of the following behaviors, the decision to suspend and/or recommend for expulsion is discretionary and in the judgment of the school Principal after considering all surrounding circumstances.

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
2. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any type of knife or blade unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal/Administrator or designee's concurrence.
3. Unlawfully possessed, used, or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code §§ 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
4. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code §§ 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
5. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
6. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
7. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
8. Possessed or used tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a student.
9. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
10. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code § 11014.5.
11. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
12. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
13. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
14. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
15. Engaged in or attempted to engage in hazing of another. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

16. Aiding or abetting as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, pursuant to this section, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to suspension or expulsion.
17. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of \$1000, with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
18. Committed sexual harassment, as defined in EC § 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in § 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section does not apply to students in grades K-3.
19. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section does not apply to students in grades K-3.
20. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated school personnel or volunteers and/or a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting classwork, creating substantial disorder and invading the rights of either school personnel or volunteers and/or student(s) by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This does not apply to students in grades K-3.
21. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261 of the Education Code, directed specifically toward a student or school personnel.
  - A) "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
    - i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or

- students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
  - ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
  - iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
  - iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.
- B) "Electronics Act" means the creation or transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
- i. A message, text, sound, video, or image.
  - ii. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
    - a. Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
    - b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
    - c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
  - iii. An act of cyber sexual bullying.
    - a. For purposes of this clause, "cyber sexual bullying" means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in subparagraphs (i) to (iv), inclusive, of paragraph (1). A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.
    - b. For purposes of this clause, "cyber sexual bullying" does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.

- C) Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

### Non-Discretionary Suspension and Expellable Offenses

In California, in accordance with Education Code Section 48915, a student must be suspended and recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined that the student:

1. Possessed, sold or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certified school employee, with the Principals or designee's concurrence.
2. Brandishing a knife at another person.
3. Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code Section 11053, et seq.
4. Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900(n).

If it is determined by the Academic Affairs Committee that a student has brought a firearm or destructive device, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, on to campus or to have possessed a firearm or dangerous device on campus, the student shall be expelled for one year, pursuant to the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994. In such instances, the student shall be provided due process rights of notice and a hearing as required by this policy.

The term "firearm" means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The term "destructive device" means (A) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including but not limited to: (i) bomb, (ii) grenade, (iii) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, (iv) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (v) mine, or (vi) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses.

### **Suspension Procedures**

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

Suspensions at Rocketship will adhere to the following procedures:

**Conference.** In accordance with Ed Code 47605(c)(5)(J)(i), suspensions of less than 10 days will be preceded by a conference conducted by the Principal or designee with the student and his/her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor, or school employee who referred the student to the Principal. The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this

conference due to an emergency situation, both the parent/guardian and student shall be given the opportunity to conference within two school days.

At the conference, the student shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him/her and shall be given the opportunity to present his/her version and evidence in his/her defense in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J)(i).

Absent an emergency situation, the Principal will attempt to hold the conference before the student is sent home on suspension.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### Homework Assignments During Suspension

In accordance with Education Code 47606.2 and 48913.5, Rocketship shall adhere to the following regarding homework assignments during suspension:

- (a) Upon the request of a parent, a legal guardian or other person holding the right to make education decisions for the pupil, or the affected pupil, a teacher shall provide to a pupil in any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, who has been suspended from school for two or more schooldays, the homework that the pupil would otherwise have been assigned.
- (b) If a homework assignment that is requested pursuant to subdivision (a) and turned into the teacher by the pupil either upon the pupil's return to school from suspension or within the timeframe originally prescribed by the teacher, whichever is later, is not graded before the end of the academic term, that assignment shall not be included in the calculation of the pupil's overall grade in the class.

#### **Authority to Expel**

In accordance with Ed Code 47605(c)(5)(J)(iii), no student will be involuntarily dis-enrolled, dismissed, or transferred by the charter school for any reason, unless the parent or guardian has been provided written notice at least five school days before the effective date of the removal. For all involuntary removals, including expulsions and dismissals for non-disciplinary reasons, parents must be informed of their right to a hearing before the effective date of the removal. If the student's parent or guardian initiates the hearing procedures, the student must remain enrolled until the charter school issues a final decision.

The full authority of the Rocketship governing Board of Directors ("the Board") to hear and conduct expulsions shall be granted to the neutral and impartial Academic Affairs Committee, a committee of the Board. The neutral and impartial Academic Affairs Committee shall consist of three board members. A student may be expelled either by the Academic Affairs Committee following a hearing before it or upon the recommendation of a neutral and impartial administrative panel as described below. The Academic Affairs Committee will pre-appoint a panel of at least five certificated Rocketship staff members, each from different Rocketship school sites. Should any of the persons appointed to the panel work at the school in which the student is enrolled, he/she will recuse him/herself from the proceedings.

#### **Expulsion Procedures**

**Hearing:** In accordance with Ed Code 47605(cb)(5)(J)(ii), students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. The hearing shall be held within 20 school days after the Principal or designee determines that the student has

committed an expellable offense, unless the student requests, in writing, that the hearing be postponed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Presentation of Evidence

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel and decision by the Board to expel must be supported by a preponderance of the evidence that the student committed an expellable offense.

Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay and written declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Board, Panel or designee determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

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

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

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

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

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. The Charter School must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the entity conducting the expulsion hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
4. The entity conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.



5. The entity conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.
6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the Administrative Panel or the Academic Affairs Committee from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The Administrative Panel or the Academic Affairs Committee conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.
7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, the Charter School must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to the Charter School. The entity presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.
8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the room during that testimony.
9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.
10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the entity conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstances can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

#### Record of Hearing

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

### Presentation of Evidence

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

If, due to a written request by the expelled student, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and a written recommendation to the Academic Affairs Committee, which will make a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the Academic Affairs Committee shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing.

If the Administrative Panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the student shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

### **Written Notice to Expel**

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

- notice of the specific offense committed by the student and
- notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with Rocketship.
- notice of the right to appeal and the process
- information regarding rehabilitation and readmission
- information regarding alternative education.

### **Right to Appeal**

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

### **Expelled Students/Alternative Education**

With the exception of students with disabilities under IDEA, students who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within their school district of residence. The Charter School shall work cooperatively with parents/guardians to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.

### **Rehabilitation and Readmission**

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

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

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

### **Notice to Teachers**

Rocketship shall notify teachers of each student who has engaged in or is reasonably suspected to have engaged in any of the acts listed in Education Code Section 49079 and the corresponding enumerated offenses set forth above.

### **Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion or Involuntary Removal of Students with Disabilities**

### Services During Suspension

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

### Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

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

If Rocketship, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team will (a) conduct a functional behavioral assessment 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.

The conduct will be considered a manifestation of the child's disability if it is determined that (a) the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or (b) the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP/504 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 in accordance with

state and federal law, including 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k), until the expiration of the 45 day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise. . Rocketship shall comply with 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k)(2), which states that interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the IEP team.

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

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

### Special Circumstances

Rocketship personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct. The Principal or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student: a) carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 U.S.C. Section 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 U.S.C. Section 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

### Interim Alternative Educational Setting

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

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

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

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

- The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of Rocketship, or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education and related services;
- The parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child; or

- The teacher of the child, or other Rocketship personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the director of special education of the agency or to other supervisory personnel of the agency.

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

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

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

## ELEMENT K: RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

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.”*

*-- Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(K)*

All full-time employees of Rocketship will participate in a qualified retirement plan. All full-time employees will be offered a 403(b) program. All eligible employees shall also participate in the State Teachers’ Retirement System (“STRS”), and all other employees will participate in the federal social security system. Rocketship employees may have access to additional Rocketship-sponsored retirement plans according to policies developed by the Board of Directors.

The Director of Human Resources shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for coverage are made.

## ELEMENT L: PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES

Governing Law: *"The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools."*

-- Code Section 47605(c)(5)(L)

No student may be required to attend the Charter School. Students who reside within the District may attend other district schools or pursue an intra- or inter-district transfer in accordance with existing District enrollment and transfer policies.

Parents and guardians of each student enrolled in 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: EMPLOYEE RETURN RIGHTS

Governing Law: *"The rights of an employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school."*

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

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

Sick or vacation leave or years of service credit at the school district or any school district will not be transferred to Rocketship Public Schools. Employment by Rocketship Public Schools provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of the Charter School.

## ELEMENT N: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

Governing Law: “The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the chartering authority to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.”

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

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

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

The staff and governing board members of Rocketship agree to attempt to resolve all disputes with the authorizer 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 Rocketship’s adopted policies. Rocketship maintains a Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures as required by state law. Parents, students, Board members, volunteers, and staff at Rocketship shall be provided with a copy of the School’s policies and internal dispute resolution process. MDUSD (or the applicable authorizer) will promptly refer all disputes not related to a possible violation of the charter or law to Rocketship.

### DISPUTES BETWEEN THE CHARTER SCHOOL AND AUTHORIZER

In the event of a dispute between the Charter School and the authorizer, the staff and Board members of Rocketship and the authorizer agree to first frame the issue in written format (“dispute statement”) and refer the issue to the Superintendent and the Principal of the Charter School 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, the Charter School 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 and its implementing regulations.

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

If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and Principal or designees shall jointly identify a neutral, third party mediator. The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and the Principal(s) or designees. Mediation shall be held within 30 school days of the joint meeting. All dates or procedures within this section can be amended by written mutual agreement or necessity due to mediator scheduling. Each party shall bear its own costs of dispute resolution with the cost of the mediator being split equally amongst the Parties. If mediation fails, either Party will have been deemed to have exhausted the administrative remedies within this charter and may pursue any alternative legal options for resolution.

## ELEMENT O: CLOSURE PROCEDURES

Governing Law: *"The procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the charter school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records."*

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

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 Rocketship Board of Directors. 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 Charter School will promptly notify parents and students of the Charter School, the District, the SELPA, the retirement systems in which Charter School 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 Charter School will ensure that the notification to the parents and students 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 Charter School 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 it will provide to the entity responsible for closure-related activities. As applicable, the Charter School will provide parents, students, and the Authorizer with copies of all appropriate student records and will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. As allowable by the Authorizer, the Charter School shall transfer all appropriate student records to the Authorizer and shall otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. If the Authorizer will not or cannot store student records, the Charter School will discuss an alternative arrangement with the Authorizer and shall provide a copy for parents/guardians of the student record of their child prior to closure. All transfers of student records shall be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g.

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

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

Rocketship 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 Rocketship Education and upon dissolution of the corporation, shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and applicable law upon dissolution. Any Authorizer property will be promptly returned upon Charter School closure. 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.

As the Charter School is operated by a nonprofit public benefit corporation, should the corporation dissolve with the closure of the Charter School, the Board will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a nonprofit public benefit corporation and file all necessary filings with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

## BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Governing Law: “The petitioner or petitioners also shall be required to provide financial statements that include a proposed first-year operational budget, including startup costs, and cashflow and financial projections for the first three years of operation.” -- Education Code Section 47605(h)

## BUDGETS AND CASH FLOW

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

- A projected multi-year budget;
- Cash flow and financial projections;
- A narrative describing the above.

These documents are based upon the best data available to the Petitioners at this time. The budget is based on the governor’s proposed May Budget Revision, which included an 8 percent year-over-year reduction in per pupil funding. The recent late June FY20-21 Budget Act maintains funding levels. However, it also caps ADA at FY20 levels and includes Principal Apportionment deferrals. We have calculated the difference in revenue impact between May Budget and the recent revision, and have found that our CA CDE submission is slightly conservative fiscally.

## FINANCIAL REPORTING

Rocketship shall provide reports as required by Education Code Section 47604.33 as follows, and shall provide additional fiscal reports as requested by SCCOE:

- By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year.
- By July 1, an annual update required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5.
- By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the Charter School’s annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the County Office of Education, State Controller, and State Department of Education.
- By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
- By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the Authorizer shall include an annual statement of all the Charter School’s receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.
- All attendance reports: 20 day, P-1, P-2 and annual.
- All additional reporting as agreed to, in writing, as part of an MOU between Authorizer and Rocketship.

## INSURANCE

Rocketship shall acquire and finance general liability, workers compensation, and other necessary

insurance of the types and in the amounts required for an enterprise of similar purpose and circumstance. The Authorizer 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 charter school are to be provided." -- Education Code Section 47605(h)*

Administrative services will be managed in-house and contracted with appropriately qualified and/or credentialed (as necessary) outside providers to address all administrative services. Please see above Element D for the role of Rocketship Public Schools as the predominate provider of administrative services. We do not anticipate purchasing any services from the Authorizer, but we will fairly evaluate any offer of services from the Authorizer against any other offers for similar services from third party providers. Administrative services which we have experienced to be required for Rocketship include but are not limited to the following:

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

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

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

## FACILITIES

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

Under CA Prop 39, RFA has been operating at 2351 Olivera Rd, Concord, CA 94520 since 2017. The location is the former Glenbrook Middle School campus owned by MDUSD. The Charter School has reached an agreement with MDUSD to remain at this site for the 20-21 school year. Further, the Charter School is working with District staff to determine whether a longer term lease of the campus can be arranged, in lieu of the Prop 39 annual process.

## POTENTIAL CIVIL LIABILITY EFFECTS

Governing Law: “[P]otential civil liability effects, if any, upon the charter school and upon the school district.” -- Education Code Section 47605(h).

The Charter School is operated by Rocketship Public Schools, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701d. The specific purposes for which the corporation is organized are for the operation of public charter schools for educational services in accordance with the Education Code Section 47600, *et seq.*

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c), an entity that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit public benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by the Charter School if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. The Rocketship Public Schools Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are attached as Appendix 10. Rocketship shall work diligently to assist the Authorizer in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other requested protocol to ensure the Authorizer shall not be liable for the operation of the Charter School.

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

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

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



## CONCLUSION

By approving this charter, MDUSD will be fulfilling the intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 to improve student learning; increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning opportunities for all students who are identified as academically low-achieving; create new professional opportunities for teachers; provide parents and students with expanded choices in education; and be following the directive of law to encourage the creation of Charter Schools. The Petitioners are eager to work independently but cooperatively with the District to set the gold standard for charter schools. To this end, the Petitioners pledge to work cooperatively with the District to answer any concerns over this document and to present the District with the strongest possible proposal for renewal of a charter for a five-year term to begin July 1, 2021. In order to comply with rigorous charter approval requirements, the Petitioners have attached a comprehensive series of detailed appendices. These appendices, with the exception of the Budget included as Appendix 1, are not intended to be incorporated by reference into the petition, but are provided to ensure that the Authorizer has a full and accurate understanding of the scope of the charter proposal and the means by which the Petitioners intend to achieve the academic results outlined in the charter. Appendix 1 is fully incorporated into this Petition.

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

Should this petition not be renewed, the Petitioners will file an appeal with the County Board of Education.

Should this petition be granted, the Petitioners will submit a notice of approval and any other required documents to the California Department of Education.

# APPENDICES

## **CONTENTS**

**Appendix 1 - Budget Narrative & Cash Flow Statement**

**Appendix 2 - Humanities Scope & Sequence Map**

**Appendix 3 - STEM Scope & Sequence Map**

**Appendix 4 - PBIS Handbook**

**Appendix 5 - RFA Bell Schedule (19-20)**

**Appendix 6 - RFA Extended Learning Day Schedule (19-20)**

**Appendix 7 - ERMHS and Child Find Policy**

**Appendix 8 - Pre-Referral Playbook**

**Appendix 9 - Teacher Performance Rubric**

**Appendix 10 - Rocketship Governance Documents**

**Appendix 11 - School Safety Plan and Policies**

**Appendix 12 - RFA LCAP (19-20)**

**Appendix 13 - RFA California School Dashboard Reports (2016-2019)**