

# ROCKETSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## **Fuerza Community Prep**

**Student/Parent Handbook**  
2018-2019 School Year  
California

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>ABOUT ROCKETSHIP</b>	<b>2</b>
OUR STORY	3
OUR MISSION	3
OUR MODEL	4
<b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b>	<b>4</b>
SCHOOL SITES	4
WEBSITES	5
SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION	17
BULLYING PREVENTION	17
STUDENT DRESS CODE	18
IMMUNIZATIONS	20
<b>HEALTH EXAMINATIONS AND SCREENINGS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>EMERGENCY CONTACT CARDS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>SAFETY PLANS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>WEAPONS AND FIREARMS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>INTERNET SAFETY</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>ROCKETSHIP'S COMMITMENT</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PARENTS'/GUARDIANS' COMMITMENT</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>HOME VISITS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PARENT OPPORTUNITIES ON CAMPUS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PUPIL RECORDS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>COMPLAINT PROCESS</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>SECTION 504</b>	<b>42</b>

*The policies provided in this handbook are subject to ongoing review and board approval. Rocketship will notify families if there are material changes to any of the policies contained here.*

## ABOUT ROCKETSHIP

Rocketship's Fuerza Community Prep part of Rocketship Public Schools, a network of public elementary charter schools serving students in under-resourced neighborhoods where access to excellent schools is limited. We believe that truly transformative schools do more than educate students; they empower teachers, engage parents, and inspire communities. Rocketship strives to meet the unique needs of each and every student through a blend of traditional instruction, adaptive technology, targeted tutoring, and enrichment opportunities. Together, we can eliminate the achievement gap in our lifetime.

## OUR STORY

In 1999, Father Mateo Sheedy, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, created the Juan Diego Scholarship for Santa Clara University. He was surprised to discover that, of the hundreds of children in his parish, none of them met the basic academic requirements that would qualify them to attend their hometown college, or any other top-tier university.

Father Mateo Sheedy reached out to his community and started creating a plan to improve high-quality educational options in Washington Guadalupe, a neighborhood within greater San Jose.

Unfortunately, Father Mateo Sheedy passed away too soon, but his movement lived on. In 2006, his parishioners approached John Danner and Preston Smith—two educational entrepreneurs who were developing a new model for schools in under-resourced neighborhoods. John Danner, a former software engineer, was interested in the ways technology could help personalize education. Preston Smith was a young principal at a promising elementary school in San Jose who recognized the impact that empowered teachers and engaged parents can have on student success.

Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary opened soon after and our students quickly showed strong results in academic achievement. As more families joined the waiting list, we realized the need for even more high quality schools in the San Jose community, and beyond. Parent demand and parent organizing has played a strong role in opening new Rocketship schools all across the country.

Today, Rocketship Public Schools is a non-profit organization that operates all Rocketship schools and is governed by a Board of Directors. There are thirteen Rocketship schools in California,

including San Jose, Redwood City, Antioch, and Concord; two in Nashville; two in Milwaukee; and two in Washington, DC.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission at Rocketship Public Schools is to eliminate the achievement gap by graduating all students at or above grade level in reading and math. All Rocketeers will learn to take initiative, be respectful, be responsible, show empathy, and be persistent in attaining excellence.

The purpose of schooling is for all students to learn to use their minds and hearts well. Students learn best in schools where they are known well, where expectations are high, support is strong, and where their voices and their parents' voices are valued. The mission of Rocketship Fuerza Community Prep is to recognize all of these values and ensure that the students are empowered to learn, lead, and be positive and productive members of their community.

At Rocketship, our goals include the following:

- 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 to become leaders in their community.

## OUR MODEL

Our model is based on the following three core pillars:

1. **Excellent teachers and leaders create transformational schools.** Rocketship invests deeply in training and development to ensure teachers and leaders have a profound impact on students and communities.
2. **Every child has a unique set of needs.** Rocketship meets these needs by customizing each child's schedule with a combination of traditional instruction, technology and tutoring.
3. **Engaged parents are essential in eliminating the achievement gap.** Rocketship develops parent leaders in our schools and communities to become powerful advocates for their children.

Instructionally, Rocketship uses what is called an enhanced rotational school model where students rotate between literacy and integrated mathematics classrooms and a Learning Lab, which is a larger room with computers where students learn by using online programs in math and literacy and also focus on key technology literacy skills like typing. Tutors are present in the Learning Lab to track students' online learning progress and work with small groups of students who are behind grade level. Students also have opportunities to engage with technology in their classrooms.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

## SCHOOL SITES

70 S. Jackson Ave.  
San Jose Ca. 95116  
Phone: 408-708-5744  
School Email: [rsed.org/fuerza](mailto:rsed.org/fuerza)

### **Juan Mateos - Principal**

[jmateos@rsed.org](mailto:jmateos@rsed.org) - 805-415-1571

### **Jordan Blanton - Assistant Principal**

[jblanton@rsed.org](mailto:jblanton@rsed.org) - 831-588-7424

### **Lauren Hilliard- Assistant Principal**

[lhilliard@rsed.org](mailto:lhilliard@rsed.org) - 240-416-2187

### **Yajaira Jaimes - Office Manager**

[yjaimes@rsed.org](mailto:yjaimes@rsed.org) - 408-891-1799

### **Michael Yeung - Assistant Principal**

[myeung@rsed.org](mailto:myeung@rsed.org) - 408-624-7908

### **Cristina Vasquez- Business Operations Manager**

[cvasquez@rsed.org](mailto:cvasquez@rsed.org) - 408-750-4971

*If your call is sent to voicemail, please leave a message and we will return your call within 24 hours.*

## WEBSITES

Rocketship Public Schools' website is [rsed.org](http://rsed.org). Here, you can find general information about Rocketship, including our educational model, our management team, and other schools in our network.

Fuerza Community Prep website is <http://www.rsed.org/fuerza/> Here you can find school staff contact information; parent resources, including an electronic version of this Handbook; school calendars; and other informational materials about the school.

## ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

Fuerza Community Prep is a charter school. Charter schools run independently of local school districts, but they must be approved by a local school board to open.

Charter schools are public schools that are tuition-free and open to any student who wishes to attend. They allow parents, organizations, and communities to restore, reinvent, and re-energize our public school system.

Rocketship will not administer any test or assessment to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into Rocketship. Rocketship will not limit enrollment on the basis of a student's race,

color, religion, national origin, language spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a student with special needs.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship’s full Admissions and Enrollment Policy.

## CALENDAR AND ATTENDANCE

### SCHOOL SCHEDULE

#### **TK Schedule**

Regular Day Schedule: 7:45 a.m. to 2:10 p.m.

All Thursdays are on minimum day schedule with dismissal at 1:50 p.m.

#### **Kindergarten Schedule**

Regular Day Schedule: 7:45 a.m. to 3:10 p.m.

All Thursdays are on minimum day schedule with dismissal at 1:50 p.m.

#### **Grades 1-2 Schedule**

Regular Day Schedule: 7:45 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.

All Thursdays are on minimum day schedule with dismissal at 2:00 p.m.

#### **Grades 3-5 Schedule**

Regular Day Schedule: 7:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

All Thursdays are on minimum day schedule with dismissal at 2:10 p.m.

After-school programming may be available for some students. Information on afterschool opportunities will be shared with families over the summer and at the beginning of the school year.

### LAUNCH

Each Rocketship campus begins the school day with Launch, which is a period of time for the whole school to come together and talk about a school-wide focus. During Launch, the school may also promote a particular successful student habit, teach a new school management system, discuss progress toward achievement goals, and foster school culture and pride. The whole school, including the staff, may also learn a song or a dance together or celebrate a particular student or classroom’s recent accomplishment.

## OFFICE HOURS

**Regular Day:** 8:00 am – 4:45 pm

**Minimum Day:** 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

The front office is closed on the days when students do not have school. These include holidays, staff professional development days, parent conference days, winter vacation, and spring break.

## ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

Tardiness and absences can be detrimental to a student's academic and social progress. Rocketship makes every effort to ensure that students are on time and present every school day. Students will be marked late if they arrive within the first 30 minutes of the school day. Students will be marked tardy if they arrive more than 30 minutes late. Tardy students are missing significant portions of the school day. Repeat tardies can lead to serious truancy consequences.

Rocketship must receive proper documentation within three days of the student's return or the absence/tardy will be considered unexcused. **Students who are chronically absent or truant may become subject to consequences, including (but not limited to) interventions and loss of field trip or other privileges.**

Note that under certain circumstances, independent studies may be available for students who are not able to physically be present in the classroom for a period of time during the academic year. An independent study is an alternative education program designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum. Families wishing to enter into an independent study arrangement must first complete all required documentation and be approved by the school Principal. If you are interested in pursuing an Independent Study at any time during the school year, please contact the school Principal to obtain more information about the requirements.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's **Attendance and Truancy Policy**

## SCHOOL CANCELLATION, LATE START, AND EARLY DISMISSAL

On rare occasions, Rocketship may decide to alter the regular schedule of the school day by closing school for a day, starting the school day late, or releasing students early at one or several campuses due to snow, rain, severe weather, natural disasters, or other emergency conditions. Rocketship recognizes that closing school or shortening the instructional day is disruptive for students, staff, and families and will only make this decision when it is necessary for the safety of our school community. Whenever possible, Rocketship will provide families and staff with advance notice of the decision or possible decision to shorten the instructional day or close school.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's full **School Closure Policy**.

## COMMUNICATION

This year, all Rocketship schools will be using a system called Alert Solutions to send messages to families. These messages may include information about upcoming school events, emergency notifications, attendance issues, or other things that the school feels are important for families to be aware of. The messages will be sent via text message, email, or phone calls using the contact information that you provide upon registration. Please contact your child's school if you wish to opt out of receiving such communications.

## CAMPUS OPERATIONS AND SECURITY

### ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

#### Transportation

All parents/guardians are responsible for securing the transportation for of their child to and from school. In addition, parents must provide contact information for any person authorized to pick up their student. Parents/guardians must inform the front office if a child has permission to walk home.

#### Drop-Off

Students may be dropped off as early as **7:00AM**.

All cars will be directed to enter our driveway to drop off their student(s) between 7:00 AM and 7:30 AM. After 7:30AM, cars will be directed to stopping points to drop off their students then exit behind Building B onto Jackson Avenue.







If your child is dropped off late after **8:00 AM** they **MUST** go to the front office first and get a pass from the Office Manager before heading to Launch or class. Students will be marked late if he/she arrives after **7:45 AM**.

If your child arrives 30 minutes after the start of school, your child will be marked tardy. If your child is marked tardy, you may be subject to disciplinary procedures for tardy students. Please see the Attendance and Truancy Policy in this document for more details.

### Pick-Up

To safely pick up your child during dismissal, please enter the back parking lot near Jackson Square. No left turns are allowed into this parking lot. Each family has the choice to park or to enter our driveway to pick up their child. Families must pick up all of their students at their oldest student's dismissal time. For example, if a family has a kindergartener and a second grader, the family would arrive to pick up their children at 3:30 PM. If you need to pick up your child before **2:30 PM** for an appointment or any other reason, you will need to park your vehicle, come in the office to get an office pass in order to pick up your child. Please provide a doctor's note to excuse the early release.



All cars will be able to enter our back parking lot on Jackson Avenue as early as 2:50 PM to pick up their student(s) for dismissal at 3:10 PM. Gates to enter the driveway will open at 3:05 PM. Cars will be directed to stopping points and will hand dismissal cards to staff members. Staff will pick up only Rocketeers whose names are on the dismissal cards and walk them to their cars. Cars will proceed to drive through the car line when directed to do so and turn right onto Jackson Ave.

### Walker/Rider Cards

At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians are given a **Walker/Rider Card** with the student's name, grade, and homeroom. During dismissal, the child's parent/guardian (or other authorized individual) must present this card to school staff to pick up the child. If you lose your Walker/Rider Card, authorized individuals will be required to show ID in the front office to obtain a temporary pick pass.

### Reminders to Parents/Guardians for Arrival and Dismissal

- Do not conference with teachers or school leaders during arrival and dismissal time; make an appointment instead.
- Do not let your child out on the sidewalk outside or near our campus. **YOU MUST** enter our campus and let your child out in the designated drop-off zone.
- Display your Walker/Rider card when picking up your child.
- Please remember to leave adequate space between cars to avoid collision
- Please **DO NOT** talk or text on your phone during this time. We need to be able to communicate with you for the safety of the children.

## STUDENT RELEASE

Rocketship will make every effort to ensure that all students get home safely when they leave school each day.

At the beginning of the year, parents/guardians must complete a Walker/Rider Card that they must display when picking up their child (described above). Parents/guardians must also complete an Emergency Contact Card that includes the names of individuals to be contacted in case of an emergency if attempts to contact the parent/guardian fail.

Parents/guardians may authorize Rocketship to release their child to a relative who is a minor (between the ages of 14-18 years old) by completing the Authorization to Pick Up form *and* a Release to Minor waiver form. A duplicate Dismissal Card with printed authorization for the release to the minor relative must be printed for the minor relative, and the minor relative must bring this authorization each day they will pick up the Rocketeer. Proper identification will also be

Please see the Appendix for a full copy of Rocketship's Student Release Policy. LATE PICK-UP

Rocketship's goal is to dismiss our students safely, efficiently, and responsibly. We understand that occasional family emergencies may cause a child to be picked up late from school, but consistently failing to pick up students on time is costly to the school, burdensome to the school staff, and disruptive to students' daily routines.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Late Pick-Up Policy.

## CAMPUS ACCESS AND VISITORS

At Rocketship, we strive to create campuses that are welcoming to families, volunteers, and community members while maintaining a safe and secure environment for students and staff. At all times during the school day, the front office to each Rocketship campus will be manned by a Rocketship staff member. All visitors must sign in at the front office immediately upon arriving on campus and sign out before leaving.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Campus Access and Visitor Policy.

## ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE

Video surveillance may be used at Rocketship campuses where deemed necessary. The use of video surveillance at our schools is solely for the purposes of controlling theft, ensuring the safety of Rocketship students and staff, and facilitating the identification of individuals who behave in a disruptive manner or commit a crime. Rocketship will abide by all state laws regarding electronic recording.

Rocketship requests that other than during school events (such as school plays, graduation, and other events open to the Rocketship community) parents and other visitors to campus refrain from taking photographs and or making audio/video recording of students and staff without first obtaining written consent from the parent of the student. Such photography and audio recording is intrusive and may be in violation of state privacy laws.

## FAMILY CUSTODY

Rocketship will make every effort to ensure compliance, on the part of school staff as well as parents/guardians, with legal custody arrangements. Updated Court Orders should be provided to the Office Manager as soon as possible. All documentation provided to the school will be kept confidential and will only be accessed by members of the staff when necessary. **Rocketship does not have the right to limit the rights of a parent of a Rocketship student without a Court Order.** If one parent does not wish to allow the other parent/guardian the right to remove the child from school or visit the child in school, Rocketship must be provided with a Court Order limiting the other parent's rights.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's full Family Custody Policy.

## VOLUNTEER CLEARANCE

Because Rocketship is deeply committed to ensuring the safety of all students, any parent, guardian, or family member who chooses to volunteer on- or off-campus at Rocketship-sponsored events must apply to become a volunteer and undergo any necessary background check procedures required for the volunteer position.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Volunteer Clearance Policy.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are off-campus excursions designed by Rocketship staff to supplement the curriculum and to provide enrichment experiences for students. We value these enrichment opportunities and strive to ensure that these experiences are safe, organized, and efficient from beginning to end. When applicable, parents who wish to chaperone a field trip must comply with all of Rocketship's volunteer clearance and transportation requirements.

It is important to note that chaperones may not bring along other children (i.e. siblings of students attending the field trip) without advance permission from the supervising principal or assistant principal. Additionally, , parents who serve as chaperones on field trips are expected to use the same transportation to and from the field trip as the class that they are chaperoning.

Please see the Appendix for a full copy of Rocketship's Field Trip Policy, which includes additional guidelines for chaperones.

## SCHOOL MEALS

### **Free and Reduced Lunch Forms**

Rocketship participates in the National School Lunch Program. All families must either fill out and submit a federal free/reduced lunch (FRL) application or indicate that they do not wish to submit an FRL application during Mandatory Registration Day, the summer before school starts. Families that qualify will get free/reduced pricing for lunch provided by the school after their application has been processed. All families are encouraged to complete the application form in order to include as many eligible students as possible.

If a family submits an FRL form late (after Mandatory Registration Day), benefits will take place once the application is processed. Forms are typically processed within 5-10 days after they are submitted. Families will have to pay full price for any meals eaten before the reduced price or free meal benefit takes effect.

### **Paying for School Lunch**

Our school lunch program is supported by Rocketship funds, government reimbursement, and payment from parents. We need parents to pay what they owe for student meals in advance in order to keep this program running.

If a student is going to eat a lunch provided by the school, parents will need to pre-order and pre-pay for these meals. Parents will receive information on how to pre-pay and pre-order over the summer. Credit/debit card is our preferred form of payment.

Families will be charged according to their FRL status. ("Paid" families will pay full price for their lunches; "reduced" families will pay a reduced rate for lunches; "free" families will not need to pay for lunch).

Even if you think your child will not eat school lunch, please pre-pay some amount to cover the cost of incidental meals. At the end of the year, you can be refunded whatever is left in your child's account.

*Please see the Appendix for a full copy of Rocketship's Meal Policy. If you have questions or concerns about lunch billing at your child's school, reach out to the Business Operations Manager.*

### **Breakfast**

Our school participates in universal breakfast, meaning that every student present at school will receive a meal. Studies have shown that students who eat breakfast have more energy, do better in school, and eat healthier throughout the day. Students are *not* required to eat the breakfast provided by the school.

### **Food Allergies**

If your child has a known food allergy or dietary restriction, parents/guardians should let school staff know. In some cases, it may be possible to accommodate a child's dietary needs in Rocketship

lunch orders, **but a doctor's note will be required.** Parents/guardians should work with the school's Business Operations Manager to make arrangements.

Under California law, schools are required to stock emergency epinephrine to be used by trained personnel on anyone suffering or reasonably believed to be suffering from an anaphylactic reaction. For more information, please see the Appendix for Rocketship's Medication Administration Policy.

### **Food Brought From Home**

Rocketship partners with our local food vendor to provide our Rocketeers a healthy lunch every day. Students are allowed to bring their own food from home for lunch or snack, but junk food is not allowed on campus.

Foods that are NOT ALLOWED (and may be confiscated):

- Chips (unless included in a complete lunch, i.e. along with a sandwich, fruits, vegetables, etc.)
- Cookies
- Gum
- Candy
- Fast Food
- Soda

Foods that are encouraged:

- Salads
- Carrots
- Celery Sticks
- Apple slices and peanut butter
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Whole Grains
- Healthy snack packs

### **Birthday Celebrations:**

We understand how important **birthdays** are for most of our students. We all want to celebrate and make our Rocketeers **birthday** feel special. We must not forget their academics have to come first.

Rules regarding birthday celebrations:

1. Birthday celebrations must be pre-approved by your student's last teacher and the office manager. You must give **AT LEAST 3 days notice to teacher and office manager in order for our team to plan accordingly.**
2. Celebrations occur during the last 15 minutes of the school day.

3. Any food or treats brought to the school for a birthday celebration must be store bought, **not homemade**.
4. All foods must be individually wrapped so that students are able to pick up the treat and exit class with it.
5. We encourage goodys bag with educational, fun items or healthy snacks.

## ACADEMICS

### CURRICULUM

Students will be exposed to a well-rounded curriculum that includes reading, writing, English language development, mathematics, science and technology, and social studies. Students will also take Physical Education and enrichment courses in areas such as art, music, theater, or gardening.

The Rocketship curriculum follows all required state performance standards for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. This includes the Common Core State Standards for English/Language Arts, English Language Development, and Mathematics.

Teachers will use regular assessments to measure how well students are progressing toward mastery. Rocketship shall annually administer required state testing to the applicable grades (e.g., the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress.) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a parent's or guardian's written request to school officials to excuse his or her child from any or all parts of the state assessments shall be granted.

We use knowledge about student skills to shape whole class instruction, small group work, and small group tutoring. Using individual student data, instruction can be targeted to better meet individual student needs.

Teachers will give students and parents ongoing feedback about student performance. Teachers will often send work home for parents/guardians to sign, and teachers will contact parents/guardians if they see a significant slip in academic performance or a special skill that needs extra practice at school and home. Parents/guardians will also regularly receive progress reports and report cards. You should feel free to contact any of your child's teachers regarding his/her progress at any time.

### HOMEWORK

At Rocketship Fuerza, homework is a core component we leverage to ensure our students are continuing essential practice and developing the habits of responsibility that will serve them throughout their educational career.

Parents and students should expect homework each weekday evening.

Give that homework is an essential part of making significant gains with our students, if homework is incomplete or not high quality, students are assigned after school homework detention where they will have time to complete high quality homework with support. Homework detention takes place immediately after school on a daily basis.

## RETENTION, ACCELERATION, AND PROMOTION

Rocketship’s instructional model is organized so that each student’s learning plan is individualized in order to account for individual differences and promote academic and social growth. Upon a student’s enrollment at Rocketship, schools will typically not make decisions to allow a new Rocketship student to repeat or skip a grade. Schools are expected to enroll all students in the next consecutive grade level and then assess students objectively as needed. Furthermore, believe that retention should only be used in rare and exceptional circumstances, when the student’s family is given notice well in advance and is fully in support of the retention decision.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship’s Retention, Acceleration, and Promotion Policy.

## CHILD FIND ACTIVITIES

Rocketship Public Schools is required to locate, identify, and evaluate all children, with disabilities, including children with disabilities attending private schools in the school district, and homeless children. The process of locating, identifying, and evaluating children with disabilities is known as child find. Rocketship has systems in place that assist the school in determining whether a student may have a disability. Please see the Appendix for a full explanation of Rocketship’s Child Find process.

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## BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND DISCIPLINE

### ROCKETEER CODE OF CONDUCT

Safety, order, and student discipline are fundamental to learning at Rocketship. Rocketship expects all students to behave in a way that fosters a safe and welcoming environment for other students, Rocketship staff, and community members.

The Rocketship Code of Conduct includes the following non-negotiable expectations for our Rocketeers:

- Adherence to the Rocketship Commitment to Excellence



- Adherence to the Rocketship Five Core Values: Respect, Responsibility, Persistence, Empathy, and Ganas.
- Adherence to the **Rocketship Creed:**

*I am a Rocketship Rocketeer  
 At home, at school, and in my community  
 I am respectful of myself, others, and the environment  
 I am responsible for my learning, actions, and achievement  
 With ganas and confidence, I achieve excellence every minute of my day  
 I am empathetic to our world  
 And I am persistent in attaining excellence  
 Together we are all rocketship rocketeers!*

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Rocketship promotes positive behavior at school and aims to create learning environments that are more consistent, predictable, positive and safe. We clearly define behavioral expectations and consequences, create systems for recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors, and provide our students with social-emotional learning.

Students will be subject to disciplinary action if they engage in prohibited conduct while on school property, when attending any school-sponsored activity or while in transit going to or coming from a Rocketship campus. 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.

Rocketship classrooms also use a variety of management systems to address behavioral issues. These may include color-coded card chart systems and other tiered consequences.

If students do not respond to our positive behavior supports or classroom management systems, Rocketship may take alternative in-school disciplinary action. Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Student Discipline Policy.

## SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

We believe that our students are best served when they are present at school every day. However, we recognize that situations may occur when a student commits a behavioral offense that is so severe that the student may become subject to suspension or 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..

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION**

Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological and academic impact on bullies, victims and bystanders. Bullying at Rocketship is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. "Bullying" includes discrimination; harassment; intimidation; and bullying based on disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, or perceived characteristics. In addition, Rocketship prohibits retaliation against people who report incidents of bullying. Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Bullying Prevention Policy.

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

Student uniforms help minimize disruption during the school day, promote respect for oneself and others, and foster school/community spirit.

All students are expected to wear the Rocketship uniform to school every day. The Rocketship uniform consists of a khaki bottom (pants, shorts, dress, skirt, or skorts) and purple collared shirt. Students may also wear a Rocketship polo shirt which can be purchased from MerryMart Store. Sweaters & Jackets must be purple if they must wear it in school building. Rocketship t-shirts can also be worn only on Fridays. Shirts must be tucked in at all times, which Rocketship considers being "dressed for success."

Students should also wear closed toe shoes. Sandals are not considered to be safe or appropriate for school.

The following are considered to be dress code violations and are NOT permitted on any Rocketship campus:

- Dresses and shorts which are shorter than mid-thigh
- Spaghetti straps (smaller than two inches, or the width of a credit card)
- Tank tops (including white, ribbed undershirts)
- Clothing or accessories that are sexually provocative
- Clothing or accessories that identify a student with non-school clubs, profanity, obscenity, references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gangs (red or blue color) or prison culture name insignia
- Attire with writing that degrades individuals or groups Body piercings that create a safety hazard are not acceptable; moderate sized earrings are acceptable
- Platform shoes or high heels over 2.5 inches high
- Underwear or undergarments that are visible

- Tops that show the midriff area
- Pants that sag around the waist
- Intentionally torn pants or jeans
- Untied shoelaces
- Bandanas, hairnets, headbands, doo rags, and non-Marshall hats (also includes beanies, baseball caps, etc.)
- Sunglasses or Marshall hats may not be worn in the building, but may be worn outside to protect from the sun

In addition, Rocketship may contact the student's parent/guardian to discuss the dress code violation.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Students are not allowed to have the following items at school:

- Gum
- Backpacks
- Soda
- Cell Phones
- Weapons and toy weapons
- Gameboys or any other electronic toys
- Matches or any flammable item
- Chips, Candy or other junk food
- Hats
- Any illegal substance
- Toys, stuffed animals, dolls, or marbles
- Personal electronic devices (i.e. iPad, iPod, mp3 player)
- No Pokemon cards or items

## TELEPHONE USE

Students may not use cell phones or other personal electronic devices during school. Cell phones must be kept in the front office. Students may not use any school phone without permission from a teacher. Students will only be allowed to use the school phone in case of emergency or to inform a parent/ guardian regarding a specific need. A teacher must dial the number for students. Students who use a phone without permission from a teacher will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Rocketship is committed to supporting the health of its students and meeting the needs of students with medical conditions, in compliance with state laws and regulations.

Before medication can be kept or administered at Rocketship, a student's parent/guardian must complete and submit a medication authorization form. Parents/guardians should contact the

Office Manager for a copy of this form. Rocketship staff will administer all medication in accordance with state law.

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Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's **Medication Administration Policy**.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

To ensure a safe learning environment for all students, Rocketship follows and abides by the health standards set forth by the State of California. Students will not attend school until all required records have been received. The immunization status of all students will be reviewed periodically. Those students who do not meet California's guidelines may be excluded from school until the requirements are met. Students who have been exposed to a communicable disease for which they have not been immunized may be excluded from school at the discretion of the School.

The California Department of Health requires that all students receive the following immunizations:

- Polio
- Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (DTaP, DTP, or DT)
- Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (chicken pox)

Vaccinations must be administered according to the schedules and doses required by Department of Health guidelines.

A student who lacks documentation of having received all required vaccine doses may be admitted conditionally if he/she has commenced receiving doses, is not currently due for any doses at the time of admission, and the parent/guardian is notified of the date by which the student must complete all the required immunizations. A student may also be granted conditional admission if he/she has obtained a valid temporary medical exemption and the parent/guardian is notified of the date by which the student must complete all the required immunizations once the temporary medical exemption terminates.

Under California law, a student will be exempt from the immunization requirements if the parent/guardian files a written statement by a licensed physician stating that the child's physical condition renders immunization unsafe. The statement will indicate the specific nature and probable duration of the medical condition or circumstances for which the physician does not recommend immunization.

Under a new California law, Rocketship will *no longer* accept exemptions related to personal beliefs against immunization. Students who have a letter or affidavit on file as of January 1, 2016, stating beliefs against immunization, will be allowed to remain enrolled until the student enrolls in the

next grade span. For the purposes of this policy, “grade spans” are as follows: (1) birth to preschool; (2) kindergarten and grades 1-6, inclusive, including TK; (3) grades 7-12, inclusive.

## HEALTH EXAMINATIONS AND SCREENINGS

In accordance with California law, Rocketship requires students to undergo various health examinations and screenings prior to entering or during their time at school.

### Health Certificate

All students must provide a certificate approved by the California Department of Health Services documenting that within the prior 18 months, the child has received the appropriate health screening and evaluation services as provided by CA Health and Safety Code § 124040.

### Hearing, Dental, and Vision Screenings

In accordance with California law, Rocketship will provide for hearing and vision tests for all students enrolled in its California schools upon initial enrollment and at least every three years thereafter. Our district is partnered with Healthier Kids Foundation to:

- a. provide health screenings (hearing, dental, and vision);
- b. connect parents to appropriate preventative and intervention health services based on the outcome of their child’s screening result;
- c. assist parents with enrolling their children into health coverage as needed;
- d. and provide classes that offer the education and tools to live a healthier lifestyle.

A parent/guardian may file a statement, signed and in writing, with the school Principal stating that he/she will not consent to a screening. The student will then be exempt, but Rocketship will inform the parent/guardian if the school suspects a vision or hearing problem based on observation of appearance, behavior, or complaints of the student.

### **Vision Screenings**

Healthier Kids Foundation uses a digital photo optic scan camera to screen children for undetected vision issues. If the screening indicates a potential vision issue, a Healthier Kids Foundation staff member will be assigned to help you. This staff member will walk you through your child’s vision screening results in your preferred language and will assist you with using your child’s insurance to receive vision care.

### **Dental Screenings**

Healthier Kids Foundation uses licensed dentists to screen children for undetected dental issues and recommend follow-up care. If the screening indicates a dental concern, a Healthier Kids Foundation staff member will be assigned to help you. This staff member will walk you through your child’s dental screening result in your preferred language and will assist you with using your child’s insurance to receive appropriate treatment.

## Hearing Screenings

Healthier Kids Foundation uses the AuDX Pro OAE screening device to screen children for undetected hearing issues. It is a similar system to the one used to screen your child's hearing at birth. If the screening indicates a potential hearing issue, a Healthier Kids Foundation staff member will be assigned to help you. This staff member will walk you through your child's hearing screening result in your preferred language and will assist you with using your child's insurance to receive care.

For more information about Healthier Kids Foundation, please visit [www.hkidsf.org](http://www.hkidsf.org) or call 408-564-5114.

## HEAD LICE

If student is suspected of having head lice (i.e. constant itching or tickling feeling in the hair), the school nurse or other trained school employee may examine the hair of the suspected student for lice or nits (lice eggs). In certain circumstances, the employee may also examine other members of that student's household. If a student is positive for live head lice, the student is to be promptly sent home with information to the parents regarding treatment and control measures.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Head Lice Policy.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT CARDS

Over the summer, parent/guardians complete and submit an Emergency Contact/Authorization to Pick-Up Card. This card is kept on file at the school in the Front Office. This card contains the names and phone numbers of individuals who can be contacted if a child has an emergency and the child's parent/guardian cannot be reached.

## SAFETY PLANS

Safety is our first priority. To make sure our staff and students know what to do in case of an emergency, we follow a rigorous calendar of staff trainings, safety team meetings, campus walkthroughs, and safety drills. Every school is equipped with a detailed Health and Safety Plan that contains our emergency response plans, including plans for earthquakes, fire, severe weather, and lockdowns.

### Primary and Secondary Evacuation Sites

Our school has two evacuation sites. Our primary evacuation site is located on campus in the parking lot behind Building B and the basketball court. We will use this evacuation site when it is safe to remain on campus.

Our secondary evacuation site is located off campus at Our Lady of Guadalupe (2020 E. San Antonio St, San Jose, CA - see map below). If there is a disaster at the school site or the campus is unsafe for some

reason, we will evacuate to this site. *During an emergency dismissal, we may ask parents to meet us at this secondary evacuation site. Please be familiar with this location so you know where to go in case of an emergency dismissal.*



### **Emergencies**

In order for us to keep our campus safe during an emergency, we need our families to understand the following:

- In the event of an emergency, we will share information with families via our automated calling system. Please make sure your updated contact information is in our system.
- If there is an incident on or near our campus, please stay at home and wait for instructions from our school leaders. We need the public to stay away while we secure our campus and account for all students. When it is safe to come to the school, you will be contacted.
- After an emergency incident, we may need to change the way we dismiss students. You may be asked to present a photo ID in addition to your child's Walker/Rider card. Please wait for instructions from school leaders before coming to campus.
- If the school campus is not safe, we may need to dismiss students from our secondary (off-campus) evacuation sites. It is important that you know where this secondary evacuation site is located (see above).

### **WEAPONS AND FIREARMS**

Rocketship Public Schools prohibits any weapons, imitation firearms or dangerous objects of any kind in school buildings, on school grounds, or at off campus school-related or school sponsored activities.

### **DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO**

Rocketship Public Schools is committed to maintaining campuses free of alcohol, smoke, and illegal drugs. Do not smoke on campus and do not bring alcohol or illegal substances of any kind to our school. If a student is found in possession of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products, he/she will be subject to discipline and possible suspension or expulsion under Rocketship's discipline policies.

## INTERNET SAFETY

Rocketship uses advanced education technology to support personalized instruction for all students. Rocketship adheres to the federal requirements and guidelines set forth in the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Rocketship's Internet system is limited to educational purposes. Acceptable activities include classroom activities and high-quality research. Rocketship computers are not to be used for entertainment purposes unless specifically authorized by a staff member in accordance with this policy.

Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Internet Safety Policy.

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect. Under California law, mandated reporters must file a report when they have a "reasonable suspicion" of any of the following: physical abuse, sexual abuse (including both sexual assault and sexual exploitation), willful cruelty or unjustified punishment, unlawful corporal punishment or injury, and neglect (including both acts and omissions).

No one in the workplace, even a supervisor, is permitted to suppress, change, or edit a report of abuse. A mandated reporter who fails to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect is subject to punishment under California law.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

### ROCKETSHIP'S COMMITMENT

***Rocketship Commitment*** – At Rocketship, we fully commit to our families and students in the following ways:

- We will create a safe place to learn.
- We will respect the background, culture, and individuality of each child.
- We will communicate regularly with you about your child's progress and special needs.
- We will hold high expectations for all students.
- We will work hard to help your child feel successful and increase their sense of self-worth.



- We will provide your child with the academic base and moral compass they need to be successful through college and the rest of their lives.
- We will provide support to you and your child as you determine the best educational path upon graduating from Rocketship.

## PARENTS'/GUARDIANS' COMMITMENT

*Parents'/Guardians' Commitment-* We fully commit to Rocketship in the following ways:

- We will always help our child in the best way we know how, and we will do whatever it takes for him/her to learn and prepare for college and life by supporting him/her and encouraging him/her to adhere to his/her “commitment to excellence.”
- We will make sure our child arrives at school on time every school day.
- We will make arrangements so our child can remain at school until the end of the school day each day and be picked up when school ends.
- We will follow all arrival and dismissal regulations and parking procedures.
- We will make sure our child follows the Rocketship dress code.
- We will ensure that our child is reading or being read to every night.
- We will check our child’s homework every night, sign his/her agenda, and we will carefully read and sign (if requested) all the papers our school sends home to us.
- We will meet regularly with teachers to discuss our child’s progress and support their work to help our child excel.
- We will participate in as many school activities including parent/family meetings, exhibition nights, community meetings, open house nights, conferences, etc. as reasonably possible.
- We will strive to contribute as many partnership hours to the school community as reasonably possible.
- We, not the school, are responsible for the behavior of our child.

## PARENT PARTNERSHIP

Engaged parents are a core pillar of Rocketship’s model and critical to our Rocketeers and their long-term success. By actively being included and involved in our schools and their Rocketeers’ learning, parents become integrated into the fabric of the school community. An active partnership between families and Rocketship faculty and staff benefits our Rocketeers as they see their parents on campus, and families as they gain a deeper understanding of Rocketship’s model and are positioned to reinforce Rocketship’s core values at home.

Rocketship asks that families participate in 30 Parent Partnership Hours each year per family by supporting or participating in various school activities. Participating in Parent Partnership Hours is encouraged, but NOT required. If families do not realize 30 Parent Partnership Hours annually, there is no consequence or penalty.

## Please see the Appendix for a copy of Rocketship's Parent Partnership Policy. HOME VISITS

Studies have shown that meaningful parental involvement in the education of their children can have dramatic effects on student achievement. Home visits help parents and teachers come together as equal partners to form a trusting relationship centered on student learning, establish goals for the individual child and the parent-teacher relationship, and invest families in the Rocketship community.

Each Rocketship student will receive a home visit from their core classroom teachers during the beginning of each school year. Teachers will reach out to families to schedule the home visit in advance. Home visits typically last for about one hour.

What happens during home visits may vary according to both parent and teacher preference, but typically home visits include:

- Collaborative academic and personal goal-setting for the student
- Discussion of the student's (and the family's) hopes and dreams
- Discussion of the student's interests both inside and outside of the classroom
- Discussion about communication preferences during the school year
- Explanation about Rocketship's policies and procedures that parents have questions about
- Talking about the history of Rocketship and the mission of the network and school
- Conversations about why the family chose Rocketship, how long they have lived in their community, etc.
- Invitation to an upcoming event at the school (i.e. Back to School Night, community meeting)
- Conversation about the teacher's background

Home visits may also include a tour of the house, including the space where the child will do homework; a performance by the student; a shared meal; and show-and-tell of an artifact that is important to the student (i.e. a photo, trophy, favorite shirt).

## PARENT OPPORTUNITIES ON CAMPUS

We provide many different opportunities for you to stay involved with your child's education. These include (but are not limited to):

- **Mandatory Registration Day.** Before school begins each year, parents will receive an invitation to a Mandatory Registration Day. All parents must attend this event.
- **Conferences.** A parent/guardian must attend conferences to meet with teachers to go over student's progress report and/or report card.
- **Exhibition Nights.** All parents/guardians should attend the scheduled Exhibition Nights. If you cannot attend, a family representative can attend in your place. During these meetings, parents have the opportunity to see student presentations and discover what their child has learned for the past 9-12 weeks.

- **Community Meetings.** All parents/guardians are invited and strongly encouraged to attend the scheduled Community Meetings. These meetings will help you stay informed regarding your school procedures and policies and become actively involved in further developing the school’s mission.
- **Parent/Family Meetings.** All parents/guardians are invited and strongly encouraged to attend the scheduled Parent/Family Meetings to maintain an active role in their child’s learning. These meetings are open to the entire family and typically take place on the weekends or on a weeknight.
- **Leadership groups at the school.** This may include a Parent Leadership group, a School Site Council, or other parent groups organized at the school.

## NOTIFICATIONS OF RIGHTS AND ASSURANCES

### PUPIL RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. Please see the Appendix for a full copy of the FERPA policy.

### EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (“the McKinney-Vento Act”) is a federal law that ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) Please see the Appendix for Rocketship’s full policy, written in compliance with the requirements under the McKinney-Vento Act.

### COMPLAINT PROCESS

Rocketship Public Schools is the local agency primarily responsible for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing educational programs. Pursuant to this policy, persons responsible for conducting investigations shall be knowledgeable about the laws and programs which they are assigned to investigate. Please see the Appendix for a full copy of Rocketship’s Complaint Policy.

### NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Rocketship does not discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of 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 in the California Penal Code.

Rocketship adheres to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

Rocketship is committed to providing a work and educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment under Title IX (sex), Title VI (race, color, or national origin), and Section 504 and Title II of the ADA. Rocketship prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religion, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. Rocketship does not condone or tolerate harassment of any type, including bullying, discrimination, or intimidation, by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which the Rocketship does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This applies to all employees, students, or volunteers and relationships, regardless of position or gender. Rocketship will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of harassment and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted.

## SECTION 504

Rocketship recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program of Rocketship Public Schools. Any student who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity, including, but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodations by Rocketship. The parent/guardian of any student suspected of needing or qualifying for accommodations under Section 504 may make a referral for an evaluation to the school Principal. A copy of Rocketship’s Section 504 policies and procedures are available upon request.

## APPENDIX: SCHOOL POLICIES

### **ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT POLICY**

Rocketship schools are free, open-enrollment public schools for District of Columbia children who meet our age and residence requirements, as further described below. This policy covers our admissions assurances; procedures for applications, lottery, and wait list; and registration process, including age and residency requirements.

#### **I. Admissions Assurances**

Rocketship shall not administer any test or assessment to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into Rocketship. Rocketship will not limit enrollment on the basis of a student’s race, color, religion, national origin, language spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a student with special needs.

## **II. Application and Public Random Drawing**

Rocketship will accept applications during a publicly-advertised open application period each year for enrollment in the following school year. Following the open application period each year, applications will be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability.

In this event that this occurs, each Rocketship school in California will hold a public random drawing to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students, who are guaranteed enrollment in the following school year.

Enrollment preferences in the case of a public random drawing will be allowed in the following order of preference and will be determined in accordance with the school's charter.

Students qualifying for more than one preference group will be considered part of the highest preference in which they qualify.

The Rocketship application will include all Rocketship schools in California. Families are asked to select the particular Rocketship schools in which they are interested, and then rank those selections in order of preference.

## **III. Wait List**

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity will be given the option to put their name on a wait list in the order according to their draw in the public random drawing.

Students will be placed on the wait lists for all schools that they ranked in their Rocketship application. Once on the waitlist, the student will remain until he/she is offered a spot in the school or the parent/guardian confirms in writing that the student no longer wishes to remain on the waitlist. The wait list will not carry over from year to year.

If families from the waitlist are offered a position, they must accept that position within two weeks. If a family declines or fails to respond within two weeks from the date of the offer, the child may be removed from the waitlist or placed at the bottom of the waitlist. Once a student accepts an offer, he/she will be removed from any wait lists of Rocketship schools that he/she ranked lower during the application process.

If a former Rocketship student who is withdrawn from a school seeks to re-enroll in the same school, and that school is at capacity for the student's grade level, that student shall be added to the wait list in the same manner as any other student seeking enrollment.

## **IV. Registration Process**

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

- Proof of Immunization, in accordance with Rocketship's Immunization Policy;
- Home Language Survey;
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form
- Proof of minimum age requirements (i.e. birth certificate), further described below;

Rocketship feels strongly that success for students requires a commitment, from both students and parents, to the school's mission and vision. During the registration process, all parents/guardians will be asked to sign a Commitment Letter indicating that they understand Rocketship philosophy, program, and volunteer policies. Students will not be denied admission or dis-enrolled for a parent/guardian's failure to sign the Commitment Letter.

## **V. Age Requirements**

Pursuant to EC § 48000(a), all students entering kindergarten at Rocketship must be five years of age on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.

## **VI. Student Withdrawals**

In accordance with EC § 47605(d)(3), if a student is expelled or leaves Rocketship without completing the school year for any reason, Rocketship will notify the superintendent of the school district of the student's last known address within 30 days. Upon request, Rocketship will also provide that school district with a copy of the student's cumulative record, including a transcript of grades and health information.

Note that some Rocketship schools in California may also be required to notify the charter authorizer under the existing MOU.

## **ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY POLICY**

Tardiness and absences can be detrimental to a student's academic and social progress. Rocketship makes every effort to ensure that students are on time and present every school day. This policy addresses excused and unexcused absences, late arrivals and early departures, and the definitions and consequences of truancy.

### **I. Excused and Unexcused Absences and Tardies**

All students are expected to be on time and present in school every day. A student arriving during the first 30 minutes of school is considered late. That student will be marked late on that day's attendance.

A student arriving to class 30+ minutes after the start of school is considered tardy. That student will be marked tardy on that day's attendance. Tardy students are missing significant portions of the school day.

Proper notification and/or documentation is required for a student's absence from school to be marked as excused on the student's attendance record. Such notification must be submitted within 24 HOURS of the student's absence. If Rocketship does not receive verification within this window, the student's absence will be considered unexcused and cannot be changed.

### Excused Absences

The charts below explain the type of notification and/or documentation required to excuse absences, in accordance with Education Code § 48205.

<b>Reason for Absence</b>	<b>Documentation Needed</b>	<b>Other Notes</b>
Illness.	Written notice from parent/guardian.	If a student is out sick for more than two consecutive days, a doctor's note is required beginning on the third day and beyond.
Health-related appointments/treatments (i.e. medical, dental, optometrical, chiropractic).	Signed note from physician's office.	
Attending funeral services for a family member.	Written notice from parent/guardian.	Absence may not be more than one day if the service is held in California and not more than three days if the service is held outside of California.
Head lice.	Written documentation of head lice.	Return to school subject to note and inspection under Rocketship's Head Lice Policy.
Exclusion due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.	As directed by local health department.	

Immediate family member serving in the armed forces.	Written notice from parent/guardian. For longer absences, additional documentation may be required.	The family member must be an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment. The length of absence shall be determined at the discretion of the Principal.
Lawful suspension.	Documentation of suspension pursuant to Rocketship Suspension & Expulsion Policy.	
Court appearances.	Documentation from Court.	
Justifiable personal reasons.	Written notice from parent/guardian; additional documentation as determined by Principal.	This includes, but is not limited to, observance of a holiday or religious ceremony and extra-curricular activities approved at the discretion of the Principal. The Principal may require advance approval for justifiable personal reasons that are known about in advance

### Unexcused Absences

Some kinds of absences may not be considered excused, even with proper documentation. These include, but are not limited to, the following: non-documented appointments, sick days with no parent notification of the school, oversleeping, car problems, cutting classes, errands, babysitting, and vacationing outside of scheduled school breaks. The Principal, in consultation with his/her supervisor when necessary, has the discretion to determine whether an absence should be excused or unexcused.

If a parent/guardian shows up to take a child home early and it is **within 10 minutes** of the school's regularly-scheduled dismissal time, the student will not be released early and the parent/guardian will be asked to participate in the regular dismissal process.

### Notifying Parents of Unexcused Absences



Rocketship will make reasonable and diligent attempts to contact with a student's parent/guardian on the same day and each time a student has an unexcused absence, with daily follow-ups as necessary.

## II. Missed Assignments

Students are responsible for completing all classroom assignments that they missed while absent. Students are expected to get their make-up work from their teachers.

## III. Leaving School During the Day

Under no circumstances may a student go home without the permission of a parent or guardian. We expect that parents/guardians will make every effort to schedule appointments after school. However, if an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, the student must bring a signed note from his/her parent/guardian at the beginning of the day that includes the reason for the partial absence, the time of departure from school, and the estimated time of the student's return to school. If the student has a doctor's appointment, the student must bring a note from the doctor upon return.

Early departures for reasons that do not directly involve the student (i.e. appointment for another family member) are generally not allowed but may be approved at the discretion of the Principal.

Students who become ill at school must check in at the office and remain at school until the child's parent/guardian arrives or gives permission for the student to leave campus in accordance with Rocketship's Student Release Policy.

If a parent/guardian shows up to take a child home early and it is **within 10 minutes** of the school's regularly-scheduled dismissal time, the student will not be released early and the parent/guardian will be asked to participate in the regular dismissal process.

## IV. Vacations

Rocketship builds vacations into its school calendar. Family vacations should be planned around these dates. Students who take additional vacation time are not assured make-up work or credit.

## V. Truancy

### Recurrent Late Arrivals

Recurrent late arrivals may subject families to interventions. After a student accumulates five late arrivals (excused or unexcused), the family will be asked to participate in an Attendance Expectations Meeting at the school. After a student accumulates ten late arrivals (excused or unexcused), the family will be asked to attend a meeting with a School Leader and to sign an attendance contract. The Principal has the discretion to waive the intervention requirement in

rare cases, depending on the circumstances. If a parent/legal guardian does not show up or refuses to attend an attendance meeting when ample time has been provided, an intervention plan may still be enacted. A copy of the contract will be sent or delivered to the student's home on file.

Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism may also subject families to interventions, at the discretion of the Principal in consultation with other members of the School Leadership team. Students who are chronically absent may also be subject to other consequences, such as missing out on field trip privileges.

“No Shows”

If a student misses 15+ consecutive school days without notifying the school of the reason for the absence, and Rocketship is unable to get in touch with the student’s parent/guardian after reasonable and good faith efforts, Rocketship will drop the student from the school’s roster [R6] and his/her space will be given to a student on the waitlist. For extended absences, Independent Studies] may be available and arranged by the principal.

If a student fails to show up to school during the entire first week of the instructional school year, and the family does not notify Rocketship in advance, the student may forfeit his/her seat at the school and be placed on the waitlist.

Truancy Procedures for Unexcused Absences and Tardies

<p><b>Truant Student</b> (three unexcused absences and/or unexcused tardies, under EC § 48260(a))</p>	<p>After a student has accumulated three or more unexcused absences and/or tardies, Rocketship will notify the student’s parent/guardian that the student is truant and that a failure to compel the student’s attendance at school could result in the parent/guardian being found guilty of an infraction under California law. The notification must include all requirements outlined in EC § 48260.5.</p>
<p><b>Habitual Truant</b> (student reported as a truant three or more times in one school year, under EC § 48262)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The student’s parent/guardian must attend a meeting at the school.</li> <li>● The student may become subject to a School Attendance Review Board (SARB) under EC § 48263 or a district attorney mediation program under EC § 48263.5 for the purposes of providing intensive guidance to meet the needs of students with school attendance problems</li> </ul> <p>Habitual truancy may also result in the risk of retention in accordance with Rocketship’s Attendance and Truancy Policy.</p>

<p><b>Chronic Truant</b> (unexcused absences constituting 10% or more of the school days in a school year, under EC §48263.6)</p>	<p>Under CA Penal Code § 270.1(a), a parent of a chronic truant who has failed to reasonably supervise and encourage the student’s attendance and who has been offered support services to address the truancy problem, is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$2000 or by imprisonment of up to one year in a county jail.</p> <p>Chronic truancy may also result in the risk of retention in accordance with Rocketship’s Retention and Promotion Policy.</p>
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**SCHOOL CANCELLATION, LATE START, AND EARLY DISMISSAL POLICY**

On rare occasions, Rocketship may decide to alter the regular schedule of the school day by closing school for a day, starting the school day late, or releasing students early at one or several campuses due to snow, rain, severe weather, natural disasters, or other emergency conditions. Rocketship recognizes that closing school or shortening the instructional day is disruptive for students, staff, and families and will only make this decision when it is necessary for the safety of our school community. Whenever possible, Rocketship will provide families and staff with advance notice of the decision or possible decision to shorten the instructional day or close school.

This policy covers procedures for closing school due to weather conditions and other hazardous conditions; the procedure for notifying families of school closure; policies for salaried and hourly staff members; and implications of school closure on the instructional calendar in each region.

**I. Weather Conditions**

All Rocketship schools in a particular region will coordinate the decision to close school, release students early, or start school later than usual on a given day because of weather conditions. If it is known in advance that severe weather is impending, the principals of all Rocketship schools in that region should remain on alert. Rocketship’s Schools and Operations teams are responsible for monitoring the weather and discussing together whether or not school should be closed. The decision on whether to close school will be made by representatives from the Schools and/or Operations teams.

In general, Rocketship schools will observe the same decisions as local districts in case of closure or early closure due to weather conditions. All Rocketship schools in a region will observe the same schedule in case of a weather-related situation.

Rocketship will notify families as early as possible of decisions to close school or start school late due to weather conditions will be made public. Decisions to release students early due to weather conditions will be made public, whenever possible, at least one hour before the start of the early dismissal. Schools may need to alter their dismissal process or staging location in case of an emergency on campus.

**II. Other Hazardous Conditions**

In case of an unforeseen unsafe condition at the school campus (such as a leaking pipe or fire), the Principal of that school is responsible for informing his/her supervisor and helping the supervisor decide whether or not to close school, release students early, or start school later than usual. To the extent practicable under the circumstances, the Principal must consult and get approval from his/her supervisor as well as Rocketship's Operations team when making a decision to alter the school schedule.

With support from other school staff, and, when necessary, Rocketship's Schools and Operations teams, the Principal is responsible for notifying families, staff, vendors, and others (e.g. afterschool program coordinators) that school has been closed. This decision may be announced through email or telephone calls, by notifying a public radio or television station, and/or sending an announcement to families over the automated calling system. Families are responsible for providing the school with updated contact information so that they can be reached in case of change to the school schedule.

### **III. Considerations for Staff**

If school is closed for an entire day due to severe weather in the area, neither students nor staff will be expected to come to school unless otherwise notified by the Principal due to a critical need at the site. This includes all teachers, School Leaders, and support staff. Salaried staff members will be expected to work remotely during severe weather closures and will be compensated as usual. Hourly staff members who were already scheduled to work during a severe weather closure will be compensated as usual for their scheduled hours. When practical, an hourly staff member's manager may assign him/her work to complete remotely. All staff members should check with their managers for details on where and how to complete their work during severe weather closures.

If school is closed for a reason other than severe weather (i.e. water damage at the school site), students will not be expected to come to school but staff may be asked to report to work, or to work remotely or at an alternative site. All school staff members should check with their manager for details on where and how to complete their work during non-severe weather closures. Salaried staff members will be compensated as usual, and hourly staff members will be compensated for their scheduled hours.

If school remains open but an employee is unable to safely report to school due to extreme circumstances, the employee's manager has the discretion to approve that the employee work remotely or from another location and get compensated as planned.

### **IV. Considerations for the Instructional Calendar**

Local laws in each region govern the number of instructional days per school year that students must receive. In California, Rocketship's charter mandates a minimum of 175 instructional days in addition to the instructional minutes set forth in CA Ed Code §47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D). In DC, Rocketship's charter mandates a minimum of 185 school days. In Tennessee, the law requires 180

school days. (T.C.A. § 49-6-3004(a)(1)). In Wisconsin, charter schools are exempt from instructional hours/days requirements pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 121.02(1)(f) but Rocketship's charter mandates at least 180 instructional days.

In the case of a cancellation, late start, or early dismissal, Rocketship may fall short of this minimum, in which case additional days will be added or used.

The Vice President of Achievement, in collaboration with the Schools and Operations teams, is responsible for making decisions to adjust the school instructional calendar in case of cancellation or closure, guided by the following rules:

- Rocketship schools must include at least the number of minimum instructional days.
- Rocketship schools must meet all local requirements for instructional minutes.
- Rocketship schools must aim to create as many coherent, uninterrupted weeks of instruction as possible.

To the extent possible, schools should communicate all make-up dates to families and staff by April 1<sup>st</sup> each year so families and staff can plan around any updates to the instructional calendar.

## **STUDENT RELEASE POLICY**

Rocketship will make every effort to ensure that all students get home safely when they leave school each day. This policy addresses dismissal; emergency cards; authorizing individuals to pick up a child; emergency dismissal; student transport, and Protection of Students.

### **I. Walker/Rider Cards**

At or before the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians shall be issued a Walker/Rider Card with the student's name, grade, and homeroom. Parent/guardians or other individuals authorized to pick up a child (see below) will display this card to school staff during dismissal. If a parent/guardian or other authorized individual forgets to bring the Walker/Rider Card to dismissal, they will need to check in with the front office and get a new Walker/Rider Card or a temporary pass.

### **II. Emergency Cards**

At the beginning of the school year, parent/guardians shall complete and submit an Emergency Contact Card to be kept on file at the school. Parents/guardians will be asked to include the names of individuals to be contacted in case of an emergency if attempts to contact the parent/guardian fail. Any person listed as an Emergency Contact will also be considered to be authorized by the child's parent/guardian to regularly pick them up from school unless the parent/guardian indicates otherwise. At any time during the year, parents/guardians may request to update the Emergency Card. Upon updating the Emergency Card, all previous versions become void.

### **III. Authorizing Individuals to Pick Up a Child**

Parents/guardians may authorize Rocketship to release their child to other people by completing the “Authorization to Pick Up” section of the Emergency Contact Card. Parents/guardians are asked to include the name, phone number and relationship to the child for each person they wish to allow their child to be released to. The “Authorization to Pick Up” section may be updated by the parent/guardian at any time by visiting the school front office. Rocketship staff will ask the authorized individuals for identification when they pick the child up from school.

Rocketship recognizes that there will be situations in which a person not listed on the Emergency Contact Card will need to pick the student up from school. In these rare instances, the parent/guardian should call the school to inform school staff that they authorize school staff to release the student to another person that day. If a person that is not listed on the Emergency Contact Card form comes to pick the student up and the school has not already been contacted by the parent/guardian, the school will need to speak to the parent/guardian by phone prior to releasing the student. The person picking up the student will then need to provide photo identification prior to leaving the school with the student. In addition, whenever feasible, parents/guardians should provide the authorized person with a signed note indicating their desire to have the person pick the child up on the day in question.

### **IV. Emergency Dismissal**

In case of an emergency dismissal, parents/guardians must wait for instructions from school leaders before coming to campus to pick up their child. School leaders will provide parents/guardians with updated information on the dismissal process using the automated calling system. Parents/guardians should expect that the dismissal location and procedures could be different than on a regular day. Parents/guardians should be prepared to present photo identification when picking up a child after an emergency on campus.

### **LATE PICK-UP POLICY**

Rocketship’s goal is to dismiss our students safely, efficiently, and responsibly. We understand that occasional family emergencies may cause a child to be picked up late from school, but consistently failing to pick up students on time is costly to the school, burdensome to the school staff, and disruptive to our students’ daily routines. This policy addresses procedures and consequences when a child is picked up late.

#### **I. Notifying the School**

Parents/guardians are expected to make arrangements for their children to be picked up during their designated dismissal time every day, before the end of dismissal. That said, we do

understand that there may be unpredictable situations that could cause a parent/guardian to pick up a student late on a given day (i.e. car problems, traffic, issue at work). In these cases, we ask that a child’s parent/guardian contact the school by phone to let the staff know that their child will be picked up late that day. The parent/guardian will still be required to complete a Late Pick-Up Incident Report when they come to pick up their child, per the section below.

**II. Late Pick-Ups**

School staff will attempt to contact a child’s parent/guardian if a child is left on campus after dismissal ends and the parent has not notified the school pursuant to the above section. Staff may also contact individuals listed on the child’s emergency contact card.

A parent/guardian (or otherwise authorized individual, in accordance with Rocketship’s Student Release Policy) who comes to pick up a child after the end of dismissal will need to complete a Late Pick-Up Incident Report and submit it to the staff member supervising their child before leaving campus. These reports will be kept on file at the school as a record of why the child was picked up late on that day.

**III. Extremely Late Pick-Up**

If a student is still on campus more than an hour after the end of dismissal and staff members have not been in contact with the student’s parent/guardian in accordance with Section II above, Rocketship staff must assume that the family has suffered an emergency and is unable to pick up the student. Staff may contact the local authorities (i.e. police or CPS)and, if they have not already done so, call the individuals listed on the child’s emergency contact card. Staff may release the child to an authorized individual or the police department.

**IV. Recurring Late Pick-Ups**

Rocketship will follow a tiered series of interventions/consequences for families who persistently pick up their child/ren late, as described below.

<b>Late Pick-Up</b> (each occurrence)	Must complete a Late Pick-Up Incident Report before leaving campus, as described above.
<b>Recurring Late Pick-Up</b> (three occurrences)	Parent/guardian must attend a meeting with a School Leader to review Late Pick-Up Incident Reports and create a verbal agreement and plan to prevent late pick-ups in the future. The School Leader may refer the family to local counseling or truancy resources.
<b>Habitual Late Pick-Up</b> (six occurrences)	A letter will be sent home to the student’s parent/guardian specifying the date, time, and location of a meeting with a school leader. The parent/guardian must attend meeting with a School Leader and sign an agreement to pick up their child on time.

<p><b>Chronic Late Pick-Up</b> (more than six occurrences)</p>	<p>Parent/guardian may become subject to an intervention workshop with the Student Support Team, comprised of including at least the Principal, Business Operations Manager, and Office Manager. In certain extreme circumstances, Rocketship may also contact Child Protective Services, at the discretion of the Principal.</p>
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**CAMPUS ACCESS AND VISITOR POLICY**

Rocketship strives to create campuses that are welcoming to families, volunteers, and community members while maintaining a safe and secure environment for students and staff. This policy addresses management of the campus access points; procedures for visitor registration; procedures to follow when arranging for a campus visit; and ousting an individual from campus. “Campus” in this policy is defined as the entire indoor and outdoor premises, including the school building(s), sidewalks, parking lots, driveways, playgrounds, and courtyards.

**I. Campus Access Points**

At all times during the school day, the front office and all controlled access points to each Rocketship campus will be manned by a Rocketship staff member.

Ensuring that the front office is manned at all times is a primary responsibility of the school’s Office Manager. If the Office Manager is unable to be at the front desk for some reason, he/she is responsible for finding another Rocketship staff member to be present. Individuals who are not Rocketship staff members should NOT be asked to cover the front desk.

All doors leading into school buildings should remain closed and locked at all times and only opened by authorized staff members.

**II. Loitering**

Parents/guardians and other visitors, including children who are not students at the school, shall not loiter on the school premises, including in the parking lot and outside school buildings. This includes children of staff members who are students at another school. The parking lot shall be used for picking up and dropping off students, and while conducting business.

Parents/guardians and other visitors are expected to leave the campus premises upon the conclusion of any business matters or after dropping their student off at school. If a parent or guardian wishes to visit the school to view the educational program, the visitor must adhere to the following procedures, which have been developed to ensure the safety of students and staff as well as to minimize interruption of the instructional program.

**II. Visitor Registration and Passes/Badges**



- All visitors (including Rocketship Public Schools regional and national staff members) are required to register with the front office immediately upon entering any school building or grounds during school hours.
- The Principal, or designee, may refuse to register an outsider if he or she has a reasonable basis for concluding that the visitor's presence or acts would disrupt the school, its students, its teachers, or its other employees; would result in damage to property; or would result in the distribution or use of unlawful or controlled substance.
- Visitors in disguise or costume will not be allowed entrance onto campus without prior agreement with the school administration. After registering in the front office, visitors who are not Rocketship employees will be issued a Visitor's Pass that they must display at all times while on campus.
- Rocketship regional/national staff ("Network Support") will receive personal identification badges from the Rocketship Human Resources department. Network Support staff must display their badge on their persons at all time while at a school site. If a Network Support staff member forgets his/her badge, he/ she will need to obtain a Visitor's Pass from the front office.
- All visitors must also sign out when leaving the campus.
- Any visitor may be asked to provide personal identification at any time. Additionally, Rocketship may request that a visitor leave campus at any time if a visitor becomes disruptive or otherwise interferes with or threatens the health, safety, or order of students, staff, or campus operations.
- The Principal or designee may request that a visitor who has failed to register, or whose registration privileges have been denied or revoked, promptly leave school grounds. When a visitor is directed to leave, the Principal or designee shall inform the visitor that if he/she reenters the school without following the posted requirements, law enforcement may be notified and he/she may will be guilty of a misdemeanor.

### **III. Arranging for a Campus Visit**

Visits during school hours by non-Network Support or other Rocketship staff members should be arranged with the teacher and Principal (or designee) at least three days in advance. Teacher conferences should be arranged by appointment at least three days in advance and must be scheduled to take place during non-instructional time.

Parent/guardians who want to visit a classroom during school hours should first obtain approval from the classroom teacher and the Principal or designee.

**No electronic listening or recording device may be used by students or visitors in a classroom without the teacher's and Principal's written permission.** Failure to abide by this is a violation of this Policy and may subject a visitor to losing his/her privilege to be on campus in accordance with Section III above.

### **IV. Barring Individuals From Campus**

Rocketship recognizes that situations could arise where it may become necessary for the Principal and/or the Principal's supervisor to prohibit an individual from entering a Rocketship campus. Such situations may include an individual engaging in violence, threats of violence, harassment, or any other behavior that the Principal deems to be disruptive of the learning environment. Such actions will comply with any relevant state law requirements.

Barring is specific to each individual Rocketship campus and its related activities. Principals generally have the authority to bar a disruptive individual, but they must follow Rocketship's internal protocol and comply with all applicable state laws. Principals may not bar an individual beyond his/her particular campus, unless specific authorization is granted by the Director of Schools or the legal department.

It is the responsibility of the Business Operations Manager, Office Manager, and school security to:

- Enforce photo identification verification 100% of the time to ensure no barred individuals enter the building.
- Document and maintain procedures for pick-up, drop-off and any documentation related to the barring notice at the front desk.
- Determine, at the time of the incident and in collaboration with the Principals, whether the local police must be contacted.
- Maintain an accurate and current list of individuals who have been issued a barring notice.
- Enforce the barring notice by escorting individuals out of the building and off school grounds in a peaceful, quiet, and orderly fashion.
- Not engage any barred individual off school grounds using combative language, tone, or action.
- Contact the local police department in the event that an individual becomes physically confrontational or refuses to comply with the barring notice.

## **V. Refusal to Leave Campus**

Anyone who refuses to leave after being asked by the Principal, or who enters the premises (including parking lots, playground, sidewalks, and school building) without proper authorization in accordance with this policy, may become subject to the local criminal laws regarding trespass and unlawful entry.

## **FAMILY CUSTODY POLICY**

Rocketship will make every effort to ensure compliance, on the part of school staff as well as parents/guardians, with legal custody arrangements. This policy addresses custody records; student release to custodial parents; the rights of non-custodial parents; and Rocketship's role in custody disputes.

### **I. Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, Rocketship will adhere to the following definitions:

“Court Order”: An order issued by a court following a judicial proceeding to determine the custody rights of the parties. A court order will typically state the legal and/or physical custodial rights that the court has granted to each parent.

“Joint Custody”: Both parents have legal and physical custodial rights.

“Legal Custody”: The parent with Legal Custody has the right to make decisions about a child’s upbringing. These types of decisions typically involve the child’s education, religion, and medical care.

“Noncustodial Parent”: The Noncustodial Parent does not have legal or physical custody of a child.

“Physical Custody”: The right to have physical control of where the child lives and who may care for the child.

## **II. Custody Records**

Rocketship seeks to maintain accurate and updated custody records for all students. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of a student to provide the Rocketship Office Manager with accurate and updated court orders involving the custody rights of their children. Updated Court Orders should be provided to the Office Manager as soon as possible. All documentation provided to the school will be kept confidential and will only be accessed by members of the staff when necessary.

In the absence of a Court Order, Rocketship will assume that separated or divorced parents of a child have Joint Custody.

Without a Court Order or proof of adoption that affirmatively grants custodial rights, *step-parents will not* be considered to have Physical or Legal Custody of a child. Absent similar evidence, Rocketship will also assume that siblings, aunts/uncles, grandparents, cousins and others *do not* have Legal or Physical Custody of a child.

## **III. Student Release**

Any parent or guardian who has Physical Custody of a child, or retains specific custody rights granted via a Court Order that extends to afterschool hours, may pick the student up from school as well as authorize Rocketship to release the student to any other person; provided that, such arrangements are consistent with the terms of the Court Order. At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians will be asked to complete an Authorization to Release form. Please see Rocketship’s Student Release Policy for more information. At any time, either parent/guardian that has Physical Custody has the ability to add individuals to the Authorization to Release form.

Rocketship does not have the right to limit the rights of a parent of a Rocketship student without a Court Order. If one parent does not wish to allow the other parent/guardian the right to remove

the child from school or visit the child in school, Rocketship must be provided with a Court Order limiting the other parent's rights.

#### **IV. Rights of Non-Custodial Parents**

##### Inspection of Records

All parents, regardless of custodial rights, have the right to inspect, though not make changes to, copies of their child's educational records, unless a Court Order specifically limits the parent's rights in this regard. (Any inspection of records must be in accordance with Rocketship's FERPA regional Student Records policies.)

##### School Visitation

Parents without Physical Custody *may not* remove their children from class or visit them in school without the consent of the parent with the custodial rights or a Court Order.

#### **V. Rocketship's Role in Custody Disputes**

It is the policy of Rocketship schools to remain impartial during custody disputes between family members of a Rocketship student. For this reason, Rocketship teachers, administrators, and school staff will refrain from taking any action which may be considered adverse to one parent or family member. These actions include, but are not limited to, writing letters of support for any adversarial proceeding and serving any person with court documents.

The previous paragraph notwithstanding, Rocketship will comply with requirements imposed by the State and local jurisdictions thereof. Rocketship will enforce any certified Court Orders presented to the school. When presented with a court subpoena or request for information by a public agency, Rocketship teachers, administrators and staff will comply and respond with information of which they have personal knowledge.

Rocketship will not deny a parent of any of their parental rights without being provided a Court Order indicating the State's desire to limit that parent's rights.

### **VOLUNTEER CLEARANCE POLICY**

Engaged parents are a core pillar of Rocketship's model and critical to the long-term success of Rocketship students. By actively being included and involved in our schools and their Rocketeers' learning, parents become integrated into the fabric of the school community. Rocketship asks that families participate in at least 20 Parent Partnership Hours each year by supporting or participating in various school activities. (For more details, see Rocketship's Parent Partnership Policy.)

Parent Partnership Hours can be realized in many ways, including through volunteering on and off campus. Because Rocketship is deeply committed to ensuring the safety of all students, any parent, guardian, or family member who chooses to volunteer on- or off-campus at Rocketship-sponsored events must apply to become a volunteer and undergo any necessary background check procedures in accordance with this policy.

This policy outlines volunteer positions that require criminal background checks; standards for serving as a volunteer; procedures for obtaining a valid background check; duration of background checks; and penalties for providing false information.

### **I. Mandatory Background Checks**

#### Meghan's Law Clearance

In California, pursuant to EC § 35021, individuals who have been required to register as a sex offender are prohibited from serving as a school volunteer. Thus, Rocketship will run the names of all prospective volunteers through a database for information about any past sex offenses. If the search returns no objectionable information, the volunteer will be considered to have received Meghan's Law clearance.

#### Criminal Background Checks

All prospective volunteers who may interact with students in an unsupervised capacity and/or who will serve on a regular and ongoing basis for more than five hours per week must undergo a criminal background check through the Department of Justice and the use of LiveScan fingerprinting technology. Rocketship will notify prospective volunteers when they have received clearance to volunteer.

The Department of Justice will provide automated updates to Rocketship on any volunteer applicant who is convicted of a crime after the initial scan.

### **II. Disqualification**

As described above, individuals will not be allowed to serve as volunteers if they have been required to register as a sex offender.

Additionally, individuals who have undergone a criminal background check will not be allowed to serve as volunteers if the results reveal that they have been convicted of a violent or serious felony as defined in the California Penal Code.

Rocketship reserves the right to disqualify any other current or prospective volunteer in its reasonable discretion.

### **III. Minor Volunteer Requirements**

Minor Volunteers CAN ONLY serve in roles that do not allow them to be alone with or otherwise supervise Rocketship students. Minor Volunteers cannot go on field trips. The Principal at the school where the Minor Volunteer wishes to volunteer has total discretion to accept or reject a prospective Minor Volunteer. Minor Volunteers will need to complete the following requirements:

- A Volunteer Application signed by the Minor Volunteer and the Minor Volunteer's parent/guardian.
- A behavior contract (available from the Office Manager) signed by the Minor Volunteer, the Minor Volunteer's parent/guardian, and the school leader at the school where the Minor Volunteer will be volunteering.

#### **IV. Tuberculosis Testing**

All Volunteers who volunteer in a Rocketship classroom for at least 10 hours each month will be required to complete a Symptom Screening Questionnaire. The results of the questionnaire will be examined by a healthcare professional and individuals with a positive symptom screen will be referred for further evaluation prior to returning to volunteer in such a role. Only volunteers with a negative symptom screen will be cleared to continue to volunteer in Rocketship classroom for over ten hours a month. Volunteers who are not required to complete the Symptom Screening Questionnaire or who fail to complete the Symptom Screening Questionnaire are restricted to 9 or fewer classroom hours per month, or an unlimited number of hours outside the classroom. All Rocketship procedures will comply with the Tuberculosis Testing requirements promulgated by the local Public Health Department.

#### **FIELD TRIP POLICY**

Field trips are off-campus excursions designed by Rocketship staff to supplement the curriculum and to provide enrichment experiences for students. We value these enrichment opportunities and strive to ensure that these experiences are safe, organized, and efficient from beginning to end. This policy covers advance approval required to take students on field trips; permission slip requirements; chaperones; transportation; dismissal from field trips; and student behavioral expectations and consequences.

##### **I. Advance Approval**

Daytime field trips must be approved at least three weeks in advance by the school Principal. Overnight or out of state field trips must be approved by the principal's manager at least two months in advance. Whenever a proposal for a field trip is approved, the school Principal or Assistant Principal will be designated to oversee arrangements for that field trip.

##### **II. Permission Slips**

Teachers who wish to arrange a field trip must submit a written request to the Principal. This request must include the date/time of the proposed field trip, the plans for transportation to and from the field trip site, the plans for supervision (i.e. number of additional staff members and/or chaperones), and the rationale. Daytime field trips must be approved in writing at least three weeks in advance by the school Principal or Assistant Principal. Overnight or out of state field trips must be approved by the principal's manager in writing at least two months in advance. Whenever a proposal for a field trip is approved, it is the responsibility of the Principal or Assistant Principal to oversee arrangements for that field trip. The Principal or Assistant Principal overseeing the field trip must also keep the written request and approval on file.

#### **II. Permission Slips**

A student must submit a verified field trip slip signed by his/her parent or guardian to participate in a field trip. Field trip slips must be created using the official Rocketship Field Trip templates.

The designated Principal or Assistant Principal overseeing the field trip will review field trip slips in advance to confirm that they follow the appropriate official template and are signed by the child's parent/guardian. Verbal permission for field trip participation is not acceptable.

The designated Assistant Principal or Principal will also review the roster for the field trip with appropriate school personnel to identify any students attending the trip who regularly take medication or require access to medication while on the field trip. The School Leader will ensure that a staff member attending the field trip brings along the student medication and is properly trained on how to assist in administering the medication and record the administration of that medication in accordance with Rocketship's Medication Administration policy.

Only Rocketship students who have submitted a valid permission slip will be allowed to attend the field trip. Teachers must bring along all permission slips during the trip, and keep the permission slips on file after the conclusion of the field trip.

### **III. Chaperones**

Chaperones must be cleared per the requirements of Rocketship's regional Volunteer Clearance Policy. The Principal or Assistant Principal overseeing the field trip must ensure that the school follows internal protocol to check the clearance status of all chaperones. Chaperones may not bring along other children (i.e. siblings of students attending the field trip) without advance permission from the supervising principal or assistant principal.

### **IV. Transportation**

One or more Rocketship staff members (teachers and/or School Leaders) will be present with students on all transportation provided for a field trip. If transportation is required for a field trip, Rocketship will provide this transportation. Should staff members and/or parents drive a vehicle in conjunction with a field trip, they will do so in accordance with Rocketship's Staff and Parent Driver Policy.

If the staff member organizing the field trip wishes to have the students walk or take public transportation to the field trip site, details of this arrangement must be included in the advance request submitted to the Principal or Assistant Principal. Principals and Assistant Principals have the discretion to approve the use of public transportation or travel on foot. Factors to consider for approval include the distance/time that students will be traveling, the age of the students, the season/weather during the travel, and the rationale for using this method of travel.

### **V. Dismissal from Field Trips**

After a field trip, students will be returned to the school site and will be dismissed according to regular dismissal procedures. All chaperones and students are expected to return to school and participate in dismissal. In exceptional cases, students may be dismissed from a field trip location with a parent/guardian chaperone, but this is subject to the discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal supervising the field trip. If a student needs to be picked up early from a field trip due to illness or another exceptional circumstance, he or she may be dismissed from the field trip site provided that the staff supervisors get in contact with the students' parent/guardian and the parent/guardian picks the student up or designates an authorized individual over the age of 18 to do so. Any authorized individual must provide proper identification prior to leaving with the student. The staff members supervising the field trip should contact the school's Office Manager to ensure that the child is appropriately signed out for the day.

## **VI. Student Behavior**

Students may be excluded from a field trip as a disciplinary measure. Students are expected to maintain high standards of behavior in accordance with Rocketship's Student Discipline Policy during a field trip. Students may be excluded from field trip activities or future field trips due to poor behavior.

## **VII. Overnights on Campus**

If students wish to spend the night on campus, they must get advance approval and complete the Overnight Waiver.

## **MEAL POLICY**

### **Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals**

Rocketship participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers meals to families who qualify for free or reduced rates. All families are encouraged to submit an application for free and reduced meals by the first week of school. Families can at any time submit a new application if there is a change in the household income or family household number. Applications can be received in the front office of your school or online at [www.mymealtime.com](http://www.mymealtime.com) with a student's identification number.

### **Meal Charge Policy**

Families are expected to provide money for student meals on a regular and consistent basis, unless they qualify for free meals.

During the first week of school, students who have not yet completed their applications for free and reduced price meals will be allowed to receive breakfast and lunch so as to not disrupt meal service and allow time to submit a meal application.

Students with no funds to purchase lunch will be allowed to charge up to \$25. Parent will be notified via a phone call and letter home of the negative balance, and will be expected to immediately submit a payment so that their child may continue to eat at school. At any time,



parents may also submit an application for free and reduced meals if the household is experiencing hardship.

### **Student Pricing**

- Students who do not qualify for free or reduced price meals must pay \$3.00 for lunch.
- Students who qualify for reduced meals must pay \$.40 for lunch.
- Breakfast is free for all students.

### **Payment Options**

- Parents may pay cash or use credit cards for meals daily at the front office.
- Parents may pay using credit cards on Mealtime Online at [www.mymealtime.com](http://www.mymealtime.com)
- Parents will be notified of a low balance at the register on a daily basis.

### **Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

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(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442 (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

### **RETENTION, ACCELERATION AND PROMOTION POLICY**

Rocketship's instructional model is organized so that each student's learning plan is individualized in order to account for individual differences and promote academic and social growth. As such, we believe that retention should only be used in rare and exceptional circumstances, when the student's family is given notice well in advance and is fully in support of the retention decision. Rocketship's retention, acceleration, and promotion policy is deliberately flexible so that teams can consider each student as an individual and make recommendations based on data and identified student need.

The purpose of this policy is to provide school teams with a framework for considering retention, acceleration, or promotion that is consistent with our philosophy of education. Additionally, the procedures are designed to ensure that retained students receive the supplemental, targeted instruction and support that they require in order to make adequate academic gains in subsequent years. This policy addresses guiding principles that will inform retention, and promotion, and

acceleration decisions; considerations that Rocketship will use when promoting and accelerating students; and considerations for retention, including timelines for identification, factors that could lead to retention, retention procedures and appeals (including for students with IEPs), retention plans, and documentation requirements.

## **I. Guiding Principles related to Retention, Acceleration, and Promotion**

All Rocketship schools are expected to adhere to the guidelines below when making decisions on retention and acceleration. .

- Students vary considerably in their rate of development. Factors that affect development include chronological age, communication skills, academic ability, social, physical, and emotional maturity, attendance, cognitive ability, etc.
- Some children may benefit from more time in a given grade level, if the curriculum is suited to their needs and they continue to be socially well-adjusted to their peer group.
- Children who perform at exceptionally high levels in relation to their grade-level peers may benefit from acceleration to the next grade level.
- School teams must use great care when making recommendations regarding retention and acceleration in order to ensure the greatest likelihood that it is an effective intervention. Emotional maturity and social adjustment concerns should be evaluated when considering whether or not to retain or accelerate a student.
- Educators must consider the academic needs of a child when determining promotion. School leaders will consider myriad factors including both absolute performance and growth/progress made on assessments when ascertaining whether or not students are academically prepared to move on to the next grade level.
- As described in Rocketship's Admissions Policy, schools typically should not make decisions regarding retention or acceleration during the enrollment process to allow a new Rocketship student to repeat or skip a grade. Schools are expected to enroll all students in the next consecutive grade level and then assess students objectively as needed.
- Students will be considered for retention or acceleration at the following grade levels:
  - Between grades 1 and 2
  - Between grades 2 and 3
  - Between grades 3 and 4
  - Between grades 4 and 5
  - Between grades 5 and 6

## **II. Considerations for Promotion**

Students who successfully complete grade level requirements will be considered for promotion to the next grade level. Successful completion of grade level requirements include scores of Average, High-Average or High on NWEA MAP assessments for reading and math, similar scores demonstrating proficiency on grade level benchmark assessments and/or the state assessments OR demonstration of at least one year's growth on any of the relevant assessments.

Students will be considered for promotion when they consistently attend school and maintain at least a 90% attendance rate and are not truant, as defined in Rocketship's Attendance and Truancy Policy. Students who participate in special education will be considered for promotion when they demonstrate adequate progress toward their annual IEP goals.

Rocketship will not promote or "advance" students to a higher grade before the end of the school year. Additionally, Rocketship will abide by all state minimum age requirements.

### **III. Considerations for Retention**

#### Early Identification

Students will be identified as at-risk for retention as early in the school year as is practicably feasible.

Parents will be notified no later than mid-school year when a student is identified as being at risk of retention. Parents will participate in the decision-making process when considering retention, as further described below.

#### Indicators to Review When Considering Retention

The following indicators of academic achievement should be considered when making retention decisions:

- Consistent scores in the bottom quartile of assessments (i.e. state assessments, NWEA, math or ELA benchmarks).
- Failure to make adequate academic progress when compared to peers (i.e. data shows that rate of improvement is considerably less accelerated than class average).
- Failure to make adequate progress towards individual goals after receiving evidence-based interventions, implemented with treatment integrity.
- Excessive absences (i.e. more than 20).
- Recommendation of student's teachers that retention is or is not an appropriate option, with supporting rationale.

These indicators must be evident despite having received interventions before retention should be considered.

#### Procedures for Retention

Student progress will be monitored using a variety of assessments (NWEA, statewide assessments, benchmark assessments, progress monitoring data, etc.) School staff will notify parents when a student is at risk for retention, Parents should be notified of the at-risk status as early as possible, and, to the extent feasible, no later than 60 calendar days prior to the end of the school year.

If retention is being considered, a Student Study Team (SST) shall be convened consisting of at least a School Leader, the student's classroom teacher, an Individualized Learning Specialist, and the student's parent/guardian.

The SST will consult in accordance with the guiding principles described above and will arrive at a mutually agreed-upon decision. The Principal will have authority over confirmation of final retention decisions.

The parent of the student who is being considered for retention will be provided with objective evidence supporting the retention recommendation using the Retention Recommendation form. Parents must confirm their agreement with the recommendation for retention before the end of the school year in writing, via the Retention Recommendation form. Parents of students being retained in Kindergarten should fill out the Kindergarten Continuance Agreement Form in addition to the Retention Recommendation form.

Kindergarten students who have completed one year of kindergarten shall be admitted to first grade unless the parent/guardian and Rocketship agree that the student shall continue in kindergarten for not more than one additional school year. Whenever a student continues in kindergarten for an additional year, the Chief Executive Officer shall secure an agreement, signed by the parent/ guardian, stating that the student shall continue in kindergarten for not more than one additional school year.

### English Language Learners

For the English language learner, retention decisions shall be based on the student's rate of English acquisition rather than on lack of grade-level English language proficiency or mastery of core academic content standards.

### Retention Intervention Plans

For students who will be retained, the SST will develop an intervention plan which details the supplemental interventions and supports that will be made available to the student using Rocketship's "Retention Intervention Plan" template.

During the subsequent school year, school leaders are responsible for continuing to monitor the academic progress of all retained students and reconvening the SST to make changes to the intervention plan when necessary.

### Documentation

At the end of the school year, the Principal is responsible for maintaining documentation of the following information.

- The student's name;

- The underlying reason for the retention decision;
- Whether the principal identified the student as at risk of retention;
- Whether the principal provided written notice to the student's parents within 60 calendar days of the last day of school.

## I. Considerations for Acceleration

Acceleration is the process of advancing students at a more rapid rate than experienced by most, and may be considered when students are performing significantly above grade level.

### Procedures for Acceleration

A student may be recommended for acceleration by a teacher, counselor, or the parent/guardian if the student is exceeding grade level standards in reading and/or math.

A student recommended for acceleration will take the NWEA MAP or other state assessments at the grade level for which he/she is recommended.

If acceleration is being considered, a Student Study Team (SST) shall be convened consisting of at least a The Principal, School Leader, the student's classroom teacher, an Individualized Learning Specialist, and the student's parent/guardian. The SST will consult to review the student's performance in accordance with the guiding principles described above and will arrive at a mutually agreed-upon decision. The SST Team should consider the following indicators when determining whether a student should be accelerated to another grade level.

- Exceeding grade-level standards on school work, such as classwork, quizzes, tests, and projects.
- Scoring in the 99th percentile on state testing.
- Scores in the 75th percentile on standardized assessments in the grade level to which the student is being recommended for acceleration (i.e. NWEA MAP, math or ELA benchmarks).
- Academic, behavioral, and/or social-emotional development.

The Principal will make the final acceleration decision based on the SST's recommendation. The parent of the student who is being considered for acceleration will be provided with objective evidence supporting the acceleration recommendation. Parents must confirm their agreement with the recommendation for acceleration before the end of the school year in writing.

## II. Students with IEPs

Decisions regarding promotion, and retention, or acceleration for a student with an IEP will be made by the IEP team according to the provisions of the student's IEP, using all available data and in consultation with the student's parent. Students with IEPs are not to be recommended for retention or acceleration outside of the IEP process.

### **III. Appealing Retention or Acceleration Decisions**

The Principal must notify parents/guardians in writing of their right to appeal a retention or acceleration decision. Parents must submit an appeal in writing to the Principal within ten (10) days of the decision. Appeals shall be heard by a designee of the Board of Directors' Academic Affairs Committee, and if appealed again, by the Academic Affairs Committee itself, who will consider information provided by Parent, the SST recommendation, and any other information shared by the Principal. The designee's decision shall be final. .

Rocketship Education provides a free, appropriate public education to students with disabilities according to state and federal mandates. To be eligible for special education services, the child must be of school age, need specially designed instruction, and meet eligibility criteria for one or more of the following disabilities as set forth in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (the federal law which outlines legal responsibilities related to special education):

- Autistic-like Behaviors
- Blindness/Visual Impairment
- Deaf Blindness
- Deafness/Hearing Impairment
- Emotional Disturbance
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Physical Disability
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech and Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury

Rocketship has systems in place that assist the school in determining whether a student may have a disability. These include a specific "Child Find" form that is completed by parents upon enrollment in a Rocketship school. This also includes a Student Study Team (SST), or pre-referral, process in which school teams analyze data to identify students who are struggling academically, socially, or behaviorally and develop interventions to support the student. Rocketship has additional evidence-based interventions that are made available to students who require it; these include both differentiated instruction in the classroom and supplemental interventions in the learning lab and classroom. School teams monitor the progress of every child who receives intervention services in order to be able to identify any student who is not responding to interventions. Students who don't respond adequately to pre-referral interventions are referred for a more intensive level of support, which may include a formal evaluation to determine if the student is eligible to receive special education services as a child with a disability.

If you have a concern regarding your child's academic or social functioning, contact his or her classroom teacher, or a school leader at your school site.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Safety, order, and student discipline are fundamental to learning at Rocketship. Rocketship expects all students to behave in a way that fosters a safe and welcoming environment for other students, Rocketship staff, and community members.

Students will be subject to disciplinary action if they engage in prohibited conduct while on school property, when attending any school-sponsored activity, or while in transit going to or coming from a Rocketship campus. 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.

Some disciplinary infractions are so serious that they may subject a student to suspension and/or expulsion. A list of these infractions can be found in Rocketship's Suspension and Expulsion Policy, along with the procedures that Rocketship will take when considering suspension or expulsion of a student. This Policy outlines the Rocketeer Creed that we expect students to follow; expectations for students; examples of prohibited conduct that will subject a student to in-school disciplinary action; and disciplinary actions that Rocketship may take in response to behavioral infractions. It applies to Rocketship schools in all regions.

## I. Rocketeer Code of Conduct

The Rocketship Code of Conduct includes the following non-negotiable expectations for our Rocketeers:

- Adherence to the Rocketship Commitment to Excellence.
- Adherence to the Rocketship Core Values: Respect, Responsibility, Persistence, Empathy, and the fifth campus-specific Value chosen by each school.
- Adherence to the **Rocketship Creed:**

*I am a Rocketship Rocketeer*

*At home, at school, and in my community*

*I am respectful of myself, my neighbors, and the environment*

*I am responsible for my learning and actions*

*I have empathy for our world*

*I celebrate our similarities and differences*

*And I am persistent in attaining excellence*

*Together we are all rocketship rocketeers!*

## II. Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct is prohibited by Rocketship and may subject a student to in-class disciplinary action.

- Engaging in acts of bullying as defined by Rocketship's regional Bullying Prevention policy.
- Insubordination (including, but not limited to, refusing to follow directions, refusing to identify oneself to a staff member, running away from a staff member, talking back to a staff member).

- Engaging in behaviors that threaten the safety of oneself or others.
- Disrupting school activities.
- Playing in the hallways or bathroom.
- Dishonesty/lying to staff members.
- Theft of property.
- Damage to property, including electronics (i.e. Chromebooks).
- Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism or cheating.
- Inciting or attempting to incite others to violence or disruption.
- Aiding or abetting the infliction or attempted infliction of violence on another.
- Committing an obscene act or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Recording or photographing students or staff members without their prior knowledge and consent.
- Using computers for non-school related activities, including viewing or accessing prohibited sites.
- Using cell phones or other personal electronic communication devices on school property, during school hours or during school functions, except when under express permission and supervision of a staff member
- Trespassing (including being on school grounds while school is not in session, being in unauthorized areas of the building, and use of the bathroom without permission)
- Leaving the classroom, school building, school property, or school activity without permission
- Intentionally altering, falsifying, destroying, or fabricating any official document (including 9-1-1 phone calls and setting off fire alarms).
- Repeatedly violating Rocketship's dress code, as described in Rocketship's Student Uniform Policy.
- Violating Rocketship Public Schools's Code of Conduct, as described above.

### **III. In-school Disciplinary Actions**

Rocketship relies on proactive, preventive supports to promote positive behavior at school. Rocketship has implemented a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework in all schools. The fundamental purpose of PBIS is to create learning environments that are more consistent, predictable, positive and safe. Key PBIS practices include clearly defined behavioral expectations and consequences, systems for recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors, data-based decision making, multi-tiered systems of support, and the implementation of core social-emotional learning curricula.

Rocketship classrooms also use a variety of management systems to address behavioral issues. These may include color-coded card chart systems and other tiered consequences.

In the event that Rocketship's PBIS infrastructure and classroom management systems are insufficient to prevent disciplinary infraction, or a disciplinary infraction is serious enough to immediately warrant additional discipline, Rocketship may take alternative in-school disciplinary



action. These actions depend on the circumstances of the offense and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sending the student to the Principal's office.
- Excluding the student from classroom activities or privileges through a "time out" or temporary placement in another classroom.
- Calling or writing/emailing the student's parent/guardian.
- Arranging a conference with the student, parent, teacher and/or administrator.
- Implementing an individualized behavior plan for the student.
- Implementing counseling sessions with a designated staff member.
- Sending the student to a peer mediation.
- Requiring that the student complete a reflective essay or assignment.
- Requiring that the student take actions to counteract/ameliorate a problem (i.e. fixing something the student broke).
- Referring the student to a Student Support Team.
- Restricting the student's participation in after-school/extra-curricular activities or field trips.
- Holding the student for detention or additional instructional time during lunch or before/after school.
- Confiscating inappropriate items related to the disciplinary infraction.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. "Corporal punishment" includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, "corporal punishment" does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property. (See also Rocketship's regional Seclusion and Restraint Policy.)

As described above, severe infractions that threaten the safety or health of students, staff or others, may be cause for suspension or expulsion, as outlined in Rocketship's regional Suspension and Expulsion policy.

#### **IV. In-School Suspension**

In-school suspension ("ISS") provides an alternative to out-of-school suspension. ISS allows students to be counted present and provides an in-school opportunity for them to complete and receive credit for class assignments. During ISS, students will complete school work in a location separate from their class. ISS is not intended to be an alternative to or long-term replacement of the student's regularly scheduled class.

ISS may be used in the event that a student is engaging in prohibited conduct that is making the classroom environment physically or emotionally unsafe for other students or that severely disrupts a class or school-sponsored activity;

Only the Principal or Assistant Principal or his/her designee shall assign a student to ISS. Students assigned to ISS must have written notification of the date and duration of the ISS assignment. Assignment to ISS and the scheduling of the days assigned are at the Principal's discretion.

Principals should place the student in ISS as soon as possible after the infraction is reported. The principal will ensure that:

- Students assigned to ISS are provided a safe, positive environment
- Students assigned to ISS are properly supervised; and
- Students assigned to ISS are allowed to complete class work assigned during his/her placement in ISS.
- All class work for students is obtained, academic assistance is provided as necessary, and completed work is returned to the student's classroom teacher.
- Activities of academic value are provided for the student when the classroom teacher's work is not provided or is insufficient for ISS time assigned.

Additionally, classroom teachers will:

- Provide classwork commensurate to the work missed for a student in ISS.
- Record a student in ISS as present. There will be no attendance-related penalty for assignment to ISS.
- Evaluate the student's work completed in ISS and give credit for work completed in ISS.
- Ensure that students in ISS receive credit for attendance and full credit for work completed.

The student's parent/guardian must be notified of a student's assignment to ISS at the time that the ISS placement is scheduled. The Principal should contact a parent/guardian by phone or in-person meeting. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached in this manner, the Principal or his/her designee may make contact through e-mail.

### **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY**

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

If a situation does arise where a Principal feels that the student should be suspended or recommended for expulsion, this policy was written to guide the process. The policy has been written in accordance with relevant federal and state laws and regulations. It addresses grounds

for suspension and expulsion; suspension and expulsion procedures; the maintenance of disciplinary records; student appeal rights; rehabilitation and readmission; and special procedures for the consideration of suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities.

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

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

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

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

- a) 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.
- b) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal/Administrator or designee's concurrence.
- c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code §§ 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- d) 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.
- e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.

- f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases..
- g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases..
- h) 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.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code § 11014.5.
- k) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties. Under Education Code § 48900(k), students in grades K-3 may not be suspended for disruption or willful defiance. No student in grades K-5 may be expelled for willful defiance.
- l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- m) 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.
- n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code §§ 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code §243.4.
- o) 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.
- p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- q) 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.
- r) 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.
- s) Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. 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, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.

- t) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in EC § 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in § 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Under EC § 48900.2, this does not apply to students in grades K-3.
- u) Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. Under EC § 48900.3, this does not apply to students in grades K-3.
- v) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. Under EC § 48900.4, this does not apply to students in grades K-3.
- w) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261 of the Education Code, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel.
  - i) (1) "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 pupil or group of pupils as defined in Section 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4, directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
    - 1) Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
    - 2) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
    - 3) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
    - 4) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
  - ii) (2) (A) "Electronic 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:
    - 1) A message, text, sound, video, or image.
    - 2) A post on a social network Internet Web site, including, but not limited to: Posting to or creating a burn page. "Burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in

paragraph (1); Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1).

“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; Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1). “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.

- 3) An act of cyber sexual bullying. 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 (A) to (D), 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. 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.
- iii) (2) (B) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) and subparagraph (A), 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.
- iv) (3) “Reasonable pupil” means a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, 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 his or her exceptional needs.

Pursuant to Ed Code 48900(v), for a pupil subject to discipline under this section, a principal may use his or her discretion to provide alternatives to suspension or expulsion that are age appropriate and designed to address and correct the pupil’s specific misbehavior

In accordance with Ed Code 48900(w), alternatives to suspension or expulsion will first be attempted with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from assigned school activities.

## **II. Suspension Procedures**

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

Suspensions at Rocketship will adhere to the following procedures:

#### Conference

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

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

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

#### Notice to Parents/Guardians

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

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

#### Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five consecutive school days per suspension. 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. This determination will be made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following determinations: (1) the student's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or (2) the student poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

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

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

An expulsion is the permanent dismissal of a student from the Rocketship program. If an expulsion is approved, the parent/guardian has the responsibility to place the student in another school. The full authority of the Rocketship governing Board of Directors (“the Board”) to hear and conduct expulsions shall be granted to the Academic Affairs Committee, a committee of the Board. The Academic Affairs Committee shall consist of three board members. The Academic Affairs Committee may expel any student found to have committed an expellable offense as listed in Section II above.

Instead of conducting the hearing itself, the Academic Affairs Committee may appoint an impartial administrative panel of three or more persons, none of whom is a member of the Board or employed on the staff of the school in which the student is enrolled. The Academic Affairs Committee will pre-appoint a panel of at least five certificated Rocketship staff members, each from different Rocketship school sites. Should any of the persons appointed to the panel be employed by the staff of the school in which the student is enrolled, he/she will recuse him/herself from the proceedings.

### **IV. Expulsion Procedures**

#### Hearing

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

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

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the student. The notice shall include:

- The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
- A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based, along with a summary of the evidence against the student;
- A copy of Rocketship's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
- Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the school to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;



- The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
- The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
- The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
- The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

### 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.

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

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

- notice of the specific offense committed by the student and

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

## **VI. Right to Appeal**

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

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

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

## **VIII. Rehabilitation and Readmission**

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

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

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

### Services During Suspension

Students with disabilities pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Act ("IDEA") suspended for more than ten school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and receive, as

appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment or functional analysis, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

#### Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, a manifestation determination shall take place.

“Change of Placement” includes a recommendation for expulsion, consecutive removal of more than ten school days, or a cumulative removal of more than ten school days in a school year.

Rocketship, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine: (1) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or (2) the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP.

If Rocketship, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

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 shall:

- (1) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the school had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- (2) 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
- (3) Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the school agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

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

#### Due Process Appeals

If the parent of a child with a disability disagrees with any decision regarding a disciplinary change in 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, the parent or school may request an expedited administrative hearing through the regional administrative hearing office.

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

### Special Circumstances

Rocketship personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

The Principal or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:

- Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC § 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- 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
- Has inflicted serious bodily injury 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 IDEIA and who has violated the Rocketship's behavioral policies may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if Rocketship had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

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

- The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of Rocketship, or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education and related services;
- The parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child pursuant to §§ 300.300 through 300.311; or

- The teacher of the child, or other Rocketship personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the director of special education of the agency or to other supervisory personnel of the agency.

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

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

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

### **DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING POLICY**

Rocketship desires to provide a safe school environment that allows all students equal access and opportunities in our schools' academic and other educational programs, services, and activities. Rocketship prohibits, at any Rocketship school or activity, discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying of any student based on the student's actual race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression; the perception of one or more such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. School personnel must take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so when he or she witnesses an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying ("DHIB"). This policy shall apply to all acts related to school activity or to school attendance occurring within a Rocketship school. It covers definitions; prohibitions against discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying; free speech protection; duties of school personnel; reporting and investigating complaints; discipline; notification; and bullying prevention efforts.

#### **I. Definitions**

"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 pupil or group of pupils as defined in Section 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4, directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.

- Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
- Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
- Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

“Cyberbullying” includes the transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

“Electronic act” means the transmission of a communication, including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image, or a post on a social network Internet Web site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer or pager.

“Reasonable pupil” means a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, 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 his or her exceptional needs.

## **II. Prohibitions Against Bullying**

Rocketship prohibits discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying as defined in this policy. This includes discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying of any student based on the student’s actual race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression; the perception of one or more such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. Additionally, in accordance with state and federal law, Rocketship will not exclude or deny any student from any educational program or activity because of pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination or pregnancy, or recovery therefrom. Rocketship will, as necessary, make reasonable accommodations to a lactating pupil on a school campus.

Additionally, Rocketship will adopt curriculum and instructional methods and materials, and electronic communication policies that promote a safe environment free of discrimination and harassment.

## **III. Free Speech Protection**

This policy shall not be construed to limit pupil rights to free speech as protected by the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, EC §§ 48907 and 48950, and other applicable law.

#### **IV. Duties and Responsibilities of School Employees**

If school personnel witness an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, he or she shall take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. (EC § 234.1(b)(1))

#### **V. Reporting and Investigating Complaints**

Students, parents or other stakeholders have the option of filing a formal complaint of DHIB through Rocketship's Uniform Complaint Process or General Complaint Policy. If an individual wishes to file a formal complaint, the school will assist the individual in determining the appropriate type of complaint and accessing the appropriate materials. If a formal complaint is filed, Rocketship will investigate in accordance with the procedures set forth in the applicable complaint policy.

The Principal may also become aware of an alleged incident of DHIB through means other than a formal complaint. Any employee who has knowledge of DHIB must inform the Principal of the concern as soon as possible. If the Principal becomes aware of a complaint of DHIB through means other than a formal complaint, the Principal shall investigate in accordance with this section:

Prior to the investigation of a complaint of DHIB, the Principal will take steps to ensure the safety of the alleged victim referenced in reported DHIB incident. These steps will be designed to restore a sense of safety to the victim and to protect them from further incidents if necessary. Examples of such steps taken include designating a staff member to serve as that alleged victim's "safe" person, altering the alleged bully/bullies' seating or schedule to reduce access to the alleged victim or creating a safety plan in consultation with the alleged victim. Once an investigation is concluded, further steps will be taken as needed to assure the continued safety of the victim from additional incidents of DHIB or retaliation.

Once a report of DHIB has been received by the school, the following groups will be notified as needed by the Principal so long as, in the absence of legal imperative, the parent or guardian's written consent is obtained prior to notification.

- Parents and guardians: Rocketship will notify the parents or guardians of victims, bullies, and if appropriate, witnesses to an incident of DHIB behavior about the nature of the incident and the procedures and steps in place for responding to it. The school Principal will determine if parents or guardians should be informed prior to or after the investigation of an incident.
- Law enforcement agencies: If Rocketship determines that the reported incident may involve criminal activity or the basis for criminal charges, information about the incident must be conveyed to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. As part of making this determination, the Principal may wish to consult with either a law enforcement officer or legal counsel. Law enforcement shall only be contacted if all other available remedies have been exhausted.

Rocketship will notify these groups of incidents of DHIB only to the extent allowed by law. Notification will be undertaken solely to ensure that services are provided to victims and bullies and to protect victims from further or sustained victimization. Rocketship will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of those who report bullying incidents.

The school Principal is responsible for investigating reports of DHIB. An investigation of an incident will be initiated no more than one day after the Principal receives a report of DHIB and will conclude no later than 30 days after the receipt of such a report. As part of the investigation, the Principal will interview any involved or relevant parties including alleged victims, bullies, witnesses, staff, parents or guardians.

The school Principal will provide confidentiality as far as possible to relevant parties as part of the investigation, and inform all relevant parties that retaliation for reporting acts of DHIB are prohibited. Written records of the investigation process should be maintained. Where necessary, provisions will be made to include the advice of legal counsel.

In investigating an incident of DHIB, the Principal will seek to ensure that the reported incident is one of victimization, a sign of DHIB, rather than of conflict. Thus when investigating a reported incident the Principal will attempt to determine, through interviewing the victim, what mechanisms the victim had and has access to for halting the incident that occurred, and preventing future such instances. If the victim reports a few or no mechanisms for ending the incident or constructively dealing with future instances, that information will serve as compelling, though not conclusive evidence that the reported incident was an incident of DHIB.

The Principal is charged with making determinations as to whether a reported incident constitutes a case of DHIB. These determinations will be made in consideration of the totality of the facts and the circumstances surrounding the incident. If the Principal determines that an incident of DHIB has occurred, they should take response steps to prevent the recurrence of an incident and restore the safety of a victim.

The Principal should report any incident found to be discrimination or harassment based on membership in a protected class, along with the results of the investigation, to [compliance@rsed.org](mailto:compliance@rsed.org) within 24 hours of the conclusion of the investigation.

If the Principal determines that additional support is needed to conduct a thorough and equitable investigation, he/she may contact Rocketship's Legal team. If the student is using a social networking site or service that has terms of use that prohibit posting of harmful material, the Principal or designee also may file a complaint with the Internet site or service to have the material removed.

Rocketship prohibits retaliation against anyone who makes a complaint.



## **VI. Discipline**

Any student who engages in bullying on school premises, or off campus in a manner that causes or is likely to cause a substantial disruption of a school activity or school attendance, shall be subject to discipline, which may include suspension or expulsion, in accordance with school policies and regulations.

## **VII. Notifications**

The policy shall be publicized, including information about the manner in which to file a complaint, to pupils, parents, employees, agents of the governing board and the general public. The information shall be translated pursuant to Education Code § 48985. This policy shall be posted in all schools and offices, including staff lounges and pupil meeting rooms. (Education Code §§ 234.1(c) and (d))

## **VIII.**

## **IX. DHIB Prevention**

To the extent possible, school strategies shall focus on prevention of DHIB by establishing clear rules for student conduct and strategies to establish a positive, collaborative school climate. Students shall be informed, through student handbooks and other appropriate means, of school rules related to DHIB, mechanisms available for reporting incidents or threats, and the consequences for perpetrators of DHIB.

The school may provide students with instruction, in the classroom or other educational settings, that promotes effective communication and conflict resolution skills, social skills, character/values education, respect for cultural and individual differences, self-esteem development, assertiveness skills, and appropriate online behavior.

## **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY**

Rocketship is committed to supporting the health of its students and meeting the needs of students with medical conditions, in compliance with California laws and regulations. This policy addresses required documentation of student medication needs; staff administration of medication; student self-administration of medication; the use of epinephrine and asthma inhalers; emergency situations; and documentation and training requirements.

### **I. Medication Authorization Form**

Before medication can be kept or administered at Rocketship, a student's parent/guardian must complete and submit a Medication Authorization Form. In accordance with EC § 49423 and 5 C.C.R. § 601(a), the Medication Authorization Form must include:

- Student's name and date of birth;
- Name of the medication to be administered and the reason for administration;
- Amount or dose of the medication;
- Method of administration;
- The time the medication is to be administered at school;
- Possible side effects;
- For medication prescribed on an as-needed basis, the specific symptoms that necessitate administration of medications, the allowable frequency for administration, and indications for referral for medical evaluation;
- For medication that is to be self-administered by the student, a statement that, in the authorized health care provider's opinion, the student is competent to safely self-administer the medication according to the conditions in the provider's written statement;
- Name, address, telephone number, and signature of the California authorized health care provider.

The student's parent/guardian must also provide Rocketship with a written statement indicating their desire that the school assist the student with medication administration as set forth in the Medication Authorization Form.

Immediately following any changes regarding the health or treatment of the student, the parent/guardian must submit an amended Medication Authorization Form to Rocketship. All Medication Authorization Forms must be updated at least annually.

## **II. Staff Administration of Medication**

Pursuant to 5 C.C.R. § 604, medication may be administered to students by Rocketship personnel designated by the Principal and willing to perform.

Parents/guardians may come to Rocketship to administer medication to their child if the parent/guardian signs an agreement identifying who will administer the medication, stating the conditions under which the medication will be administered, and releasing Rocketship from the responsibility of administering the medication.

## **III. Self-Administration of Medication**

Under EC § 49423.6 and 5 C.C.R. § 605, Rocketship may allow a student to carry and self-administer medication in accordance with this policy. This includes prescription inhaled asthma medication. (EC § 49423.1(b)(2)). Any self-administration of medication must be done in accordance with the Medication Authorization Form as described above.

Prior to allowing self-administration, Rocketship personnel must observe the student self-administering the medication and determine that the student is capable to adhere to standard precautions and appropriate handling of the medication.

#### **IV. Storage of Medication**

In accordance with EC § 49423, Rocketship may receive medication from a student's parent/guardian to store for use in accordance with a valid Medication Authorization Form. The medication will be stored with Rocketship's school nurse or Office Manager in a location that is easily accessible during an emergency.

The medication must be labeled with the following information:

- Name of the student;
- Name of the medication;
- Dosage;
- Time of administration; and
- Duration of medication.

All medications must be in original manufacturer packaging. The labeling must be consistent with the written statement from the authorized health care provider in the Medication Authorization Form.

Rocketship will return any unused, discontinued, or outdated medication to a student's parent/guardian as soon as possible after the course of treatment is completed or the medication reaches its expiration. Any medication that cannot be returned to the student's parent/guardian will be disposed of at the end of the school year in accordance with all applicable laws.

#### **V. Documentation Maintenance of Records**

Rocketship will create and maintain a list of students with valid Medication Authorization Forms, including the emergency contact information for each student. Students who are allowed to carry and self-administer medication will be specified in this list. The Principal may distribute the list among appropriate employees or agents.

Rocketship will maintain accurate records of all its employees and agents who are certified to administer medication. Rocketship will also maintain accurate records of all incidents where medication was administered to a student at school. The log will include at least the name of the student; the name of the medication; the medication dose and route; and the time the medication was administered.

#### **VI. Emergency Situations**

Rocketship personnel who provide life-sustaining emergency medication must receive documented training and maintain current certification in CPR from a recognized source (i.e. American Red Cross or American Heart Association).

School employees with proper training and certification are expected to respond to emergency situations without discrimination. If any student or staff member needs resuscitation, staff shall make every effort to resuscitate him/her. Staff members are prohibited from accepting or following any parental or medical "do not resuscitate" orders. School staff should not be placed in the position of determining whether such orders should be followed, and such advance directives shall not be communicated to staff.

### **VII. Epinephrine Auto-Injectors**

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

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

### **VIII. Misuse**

A student who self-administers medication while at school, at a school-sponsored activity, or while on school-sponsored transportation for a purpose other than his or her own treatment will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Rocketship's Student Discipline Policy. Such disciplinary action shall not limit or restrict the access of a student to his or her prescribed medication. Rocketship will promptly notify the student's parent/guardian of any disciplinary action imposed.

## **HEAD LICE POLICY**

Head lice are parasitic insects that are found on the head, eyebrows, and eyelashes of affected people. Head lice are spread through direct contact with the hair of an infested person and are often spread in elementary schools. This policy was created to minimize the potential for head lice outbreaks at Rocketship schools. The policy addresses examination protocols; notices to families; and the process for a student who has been infested to return to school.

### **I. Examination**

If student is suspected of having head lice (i.e. constant itching or tickling feeling in the hair), the school nurse or other trained school employee may examine the hair of the suspected student for head lice. In certain circumstances, the employee may also examine other members of that student's household.

## **II. Sending a Student Home**

If a student is positive for live head lice, the student is to be promptly sent home with information to the parents regarding treatment and control measures. Any absences related to head lice will be documented and counted as an excused absence in accordance with Rocketship's Attendance and Truancy Policy.

## **III. Exposure Notice**

If there are two or more students affected in any class, Rocketship will send home an exposure notice with information about head lice to all parents/guardians in that class. Rocketship will maintain the privacy of students identified as having head lice and excluded from attendance.

## **IV. Returning to School**

Rocketship will provide parents/guardians of affected students with instructions on how to conduct post-treatment examinations on their children. Parents/guardians may send their child back to school when they believe that the child's hair is no longer infested with head lice. The school nurse or other trained staff members will reexamine the student's hair upon return. If the student shows no trace of live head lice, the student may return to school.

## **ROCKETSHIP INTERNET SAFETY POLICY**

Rocketship strives to leverage advanced education technology to support personalized instruction and facilitate comprehensive data analysis. Rocketship adheres to the federal requirements and guidelines set forth in the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) (47 U.S.C. § 254(h)). This policy is written in accordance with CIPA and outlines relevant definitions; the educational purpose of Rocketship's Internet system; technology protection measures; inappropriate network usage; supervising and monitoring; training; disciplinary actions; and liability for misuse.

### **I. Definitions**

"Minor" means any individual under 17 years of age.

"Technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are

- Obscene, as that term is defined in 18 U.S.C. § 1460;
- Child Pornography, as that term is defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256; or

- Harmful to minors, as that term is defined below.

“Harmful to minors” means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that

- Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for
- minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

“Sexual act” and “sexual contact” have the meanings defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2246.

## **II. Educational Purpose**

Rocketship’s Internet system is limited to educational purposes. Acceptable activities include classroom activities and high-quality research. Rocketship computers are not to be used for entertainment purposes unless specifically authorized by a staff member in accordance with this policy.

## **III. Technology Protection Measures**

To the extent practicable, technology protection measures shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information. Specifically, as required by CIPA, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

## **IV. Inappropriate Network Usage**

In accordance with CIPA, the following uses of Rocketship Internet system are considered unacceptable:

- Unauthorized access, including “hacking.” This includes logging in through another person’s account and accessing another person’s files; making deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system; destroying data by spreading computer viruses; and downloading software without the explicit consent of a staff member. Rocketship students shall immediately notify a teacher if they have identified a possible security problem.
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors. This includes posting a student’s personal contact information (i.e. name, email address, home address, telephone number, school address) through email or through websites that solicit personal information, social networking websites, and Internet chat rooms.

- Illegal activities. This includes using the Internet to engage in any illegal act, including, but not limited to, arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, or threatening the safety of another person.
- Inappropriate online behavior. This includes using obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language while online; engaging in personal attacks or cyberbullying, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks; and knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization on any websites.
- Plagiarism.
- Accessing inappropriate material. This includes material that is designated for adults only or is profane or obscene (i.e. pornography), material that advocates illegal or dangerous acts, or material that advocates violence or discrimination.

## **V. Supervising and Monitoring**

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Rocketship Schools team to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, CIPA, the Neighborhood Children’s Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of Rocketship’s Vice President of Schools or his/her designated representatives.

## **VI. Training**

The Rocketship Regional Business Director or designated representatives will provide age-appropriate training for students who use Rocketship Internet facilities. The training provided will be designed to promote Rocketship’s commitment to:

- The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in this policy.
- Student safety with regard to Safety on the Internet; appropriate behavior while online, on social networking Web sites, and in chat rooms; and cyberbullying awareness and response.
- Compliance with the E-Rate requirements of the Children’s Internet Protection Act (“CIPA”).

Following receipt of this training, the student will acknowledge that he/she received the training, understood it, and agrees to follow the provisions of Rocketship’s acceptable use policies.

## **VII. Disciplinary Actions**

Record maintenance and network monitoring may lead to the discovery that a student has violated this Policy and/or the laws. If there is reasonable suspicion, Rocketship will conduct a

search of the student's Internet activities. A student's parent/guardian may request to see such activities.

Students who are found to have violated this policy or any relevant laws will be disciplined in accordance with Rocketship's Discipline Policy.'

Rocketship will cooperate fully with local or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the school network.

### **VIII. Liability**

Rocketship Public Schools is not responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of its Internet system. A student's parent/guardian can be held financially responsible for any harm to Rocketship's Internet system arising from a student's intentional misuse.

## **PARENT PARTNERSHIP POLICY**

Engaged parents are a core pillar of Rocketship's model and critical to our Rocketeers and their long-term success. By actively being included and involved in our schools and their Rocketeers' learning, parents become integrated into the fabric of the school community. An active partnership between families and Rocketship faculty and staff benefits our Rocketeers as they see their parents on campus, and families as they gain a deeper understanding of Rocketship's model and are positioned to reinforce Rocketship's core values at home. This policy describes the 30-hour suggested commitment; ways to satisfy hours; monitoring and tracking of hours; and clearance requirements.

### **I. Thirty Hour Commitment**

Rocketship asks that families participate in 30 Parent Partnership Hours each year per family by supporting or participating in various school activities. Participating in Parent Partnership Hours is encouraged, but NOT required. If families do not realize 30 Parent Partnership Hours annually, there is no consequence or penalty.

### **II. Satisfying Parent Partnership Hours**

Parents can satisfy their Partnership Hours through any of the following participation categories:

- Academic achievement (i.e. home visits with teachers/School Leaders, teacher conferences, take-home work to assist a classroom teacher, assisting the Office Manager)
- School community (i.e. attending community meetings, helping at special events)
- Education advocacy (i.e. attending Parent Leadership meetings or school hearings)

Rocketship will ensure that opportunities for Parent Partnership Hours occur both during the school day and after hours or on weekends in order to accommodate the work and personal schedules of our families.



Families may have extended family members (i.e. grandparents, aunts/uncles, cousins, siblings, etc.) participate in the school activities and realize Parent Partnership Hours.

### **III. Monitoring and Tracking of Hours**

Rocketship carefully tracks and monitors Parent Partnership Hours during each school year.

If the parent/family member is satisfying hours through an interaction with a classroom teacher, the teacher is responsible for tracking the time.

If the parent/family member is working at the school office, he/she must sign in with the Office Manager using the school's electronic or paper system.

If the parent/family member is attending a meeting or event (on or off campus), Rocketship will provide a sign-in sheet. The parent/family member must sign in. The school Office Manager will be responsible for inputting the relevant partnership hours.

Rocketship will implement a system to house the partnership data. Each school will provide regular status updates to help families keep abreast of their hours. Parents/families can also request this data from the Office Manager at any time.

### **IV. Clearance Requirements for Volunteers**

The safety of our Rocketeers always comes first. Thus, every parent, guardian, or family member who chooses to volunteer on- or off-campus at Rocketship-sponsored events must apply to become a volunteer, and participation is encouraged only after he or she has cleared a background check. However, other Parent Partnership Hours activities, such as attending community meetings, do not require a background check. For more information, see Rocketship's regional Volunteer Clearance Policy.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) POLICY**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 5 days after the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal or designee a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

(3) Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal or designee, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(4) The right to provide written consent before the School discloses personally identifiable information ("PII") from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to School officials with legitimate educational interests. A School official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the School board. A School official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the School who performs an institutional service of function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another School official in performing his or her tasks. A School official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility

Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

(5) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from student's education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to School officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the School to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A School may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

(1) To other School officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the School has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§99.31(a)(1)).

(2) To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2)).

(3) To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35).

(4) In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4)).

(5) To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))

(6) To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))

(7) To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7)).

(8) To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8)).

(9) To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§99.31(a)(9)).

(10) To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10)).

(11) Information the School has designated as “directory information” under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11)).

(12) To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student’s case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))

(13) To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

## **NOTICE FOR DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that the School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, the School may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised the School to the contrary in accordance with the School’s procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include information from your child’s education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student’s role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;

- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

“Directory Information” is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. “Directory information,” which is defined as set forth below, may be released to requestors in limited circumstances by Rocketship Public Schools, without additional notice to parents/guardians, unless the parent/guardian timely “opts out” of such disclosures, in writing.

State and federal law allow directory information to be disclosed to any requestors, except those who intend to use the information for commercial purposes. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent. With the exception of a release of directory information pursuant to these two federal laws, t Rocketship’s policy is to not release directory information to any requestor, for any purpose, without specific prior parent/guardian consent in each situation, EXCEPT we may release such information to organizations that are advocating to increase access to high-performing public charter schools in California.. The School has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student’s name
- Student’s address
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Parents’/guardians’ names
- Parents’/guardians’ address
- Parents’/guardians’ electronic mail address[4] [5] [KR6]

*\*\*Note: FERPA is a federal law that applies to all states. Many states have also enacted their own statutes related to the confidentiality, maintenance, release, and transfer of student records, which are designed to supplement FERPA requirements and apply to students enrolled in charter schools.*

*If you do not want the School to disclose directory information without your prior written consent, you must submit the completed opt-out form below to the School.*

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FERPA DIRECTORY INFORMATION OPT-OUT FORM

Name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

NOTICE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION OPT OUT

*In accordance with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a student's education records are maintained as confidential and, except for a limited number of special circumstances listed in that law, will not be released to a third party without the parent/student's prior written consent. The law, however, does allow schools to release student "directory information" without obtaining the prior consent of the parent/student. If you do not want the release of certain types of directory information without your prior consent, you may choose to "opt-out" of this FERPA exception by signing this Form. Directory information of a student who has opted-out from the release of directory information, in accordance with this policy/procedure for opting out, will remain flagged until the parent/guardian requests that the flag be removed by completing and submitting a revocation of the opt out to the School.*

*TO: [School Name] \_\_\_\_\_ I request the withholding of personally-identifiable information identified as Directory Information under FERPA. I understand that upon submission of this Form, my information cannot be released to third parties without my written consent or unless the School is required by law or permitted under FERPA to release such information without my prior written consent; and that the directory information will not otherwise be released from the time the School receives my Form until my opt out request is rescinded. I further understand that if directory information is released prior to the School receiving my opt out request, the School may not be able to stop the disclosure of my directory information.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH (McKINNEY-VENTO) POLICY**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ("the McKinney-Vento Act") is a federal law that ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) This policy is written in compliance with the requirements under the McKinney-Vento Act. It addresses relevant definitions; Rocketship's Designated Homeless

Liaison; general assurances regarding the education of homeless children and youth; procedures for identification and reporting; school selection; enrollment and records; transportation rights; and the enrollment dispute resolution process.

## I. Definitions

“Homeless children and youth” means children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes children and youth who are:

- Living in a primary nighttime residence that is a private or public place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, such as cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings or substandard housing (for example, condemned buildings or garages), bus or train stations, or other similar settings. In determining whether a housing arrangement may be deemed “substandard, the school may consider whether the setting lacks one of the fundamental utilities such as water, electricity, or heat; is infested with vermin or mold; lacks a basic functional part such as a working kitchen or toilet; presents unreasonable dangers to adults, children, or persons with disabilities. or is otherwise defined as “substandard” under local housing codes.
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks (does not include trailers or mobile homes in a mobile home park), or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Abandoned in hospitals.
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.
- Unaccompanied youth includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
- A child or unaccompanied youth shall be considered homeless for as long as he/she is in a living situation described above.

## II. Designated Homeless Liaisons

Rocketship’s Homeless Liaison serves Rocketship students in the Wisconsin region. Her contact information is listed below:

*Leydi Cottrill*  
350 Twin Dolphin Drive, Suite 109  
Redwood City, CA 94065  
[lcontrill@rsed.org](mailto:lcontrill@rsed.org)  
1-877-806-0920 ext. 300

The Homeless Liaison is required to:

- Ensure that homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through outreach and coordination with other entities and agencies. Ensure that homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in, Rocketship schools.

- Ensure that homeless families, children, and youth have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible.
- Ensure that homeless families, children, and youth receive referrals to health, dental, mental health, and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.
- Ensure that parents and guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
- Ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated where children and youth receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act.
- Ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the dispute resolution provisions.
- Ensure that the parent/guardian of a homeless child or youth, or any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services and is assisted in accessing transportation services, if available and feasible.
- Ensure that school personnel receive professional development and other support.
- Assist unaccompanied youth in placement/enrollment decisions.
- Ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment or placement.
- Assist homeless children and youth who do not have immunizations, or immunization or medical records, to obtain necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records
- Collaborate and coordinate with state coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youth.

### **III. General Assurances**

Rocketship provides the following general assurances:

- Homeless children and youth shall not be segregated into a separate school or program based on their status as homeless and shall not be stigmatized in any way.
- Homeless children and youth shall be provided services comparable to those received by other students in the school, including transportation services, and education programs for which students meet eligibility criteria, such as services provided under Title 1 or similar state and local programs; programs for students with disabilities; programs for students with limited English proficiency; vocational or technical programs; gifted and talented programs; and school nutrition programs.
- Homeless children and youth will have access to district administrative level reservation of funds (set-asides) for serving homeless students.
- Rocketship shall provide homeless students with access to education and other services necessary for these students to meet the same challenging academic standards as other students.
- Rocketship shall provide and post notices of the educational rights of homeless children and youth.

### **IV. Identification and Reporting**



Rocketship will include the identification of homeless students and their unique educational needs in its targeted work to raise achievement for all students. Homeless children and youth will be identified through:

- The application process for enrollment (self-identification)
- School personnel recommendations
- Coordinated activities with other entities and agencies
- Rocketship will comply with all federal, state, county, and other data collections and reporting requirements regarding homeless children and youth. Materials will be provided for students and parents in a language easily understood by families and students. If students or families are unable to read, additional support should be provided to explain student rights.

## **V. School Selection**

Homeless students have a right to select from the following schools:

- The school he/she attended when permanently housed (School of Origin)
- The school in which he/she was last enrolled (School of Origin)
- The school in the attendance area in which the student currently resides (School of Residency)

A homeless child or youth's right to attend their school of origin extends for the duration of homelessness. If a child or youth becomes permanently housed during the academic year, he/she is entitled to stay in the school of origin for the remainder of the academic year.

## **VI. Enrollment and Records**

Homeless students may be identified at the time of enrollment (through self-reports). As all Rocketship schools are independent charter schools, and therefore schools of choice rather than assigned district schools, placement decisions are based solely on parent request through the application process. In order to provide equal access to its schools, the Rocketship annual student recruitment plan shall include efforts to reach homeless families, children, and youth via free public events, community centers, and local homeless service providers. Homeless youth will not be discriminated against in the application process. Homeless children and youth will be allowed to apply for enrollment in accordance with current Rocketship enrollment policies even if the parent/guardian is unable to provide the school with the records normally required for enrollment such as previous academic records, birth certificate, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation. The Rocketship designee shall immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain the relevant records. If the student needs to obtain immunizations or does not possess immunization or other medical records, the designee shall refer the parent/guardian to the homeless liaison. The liaison shall assist the parent/guardian in obtaining the necessary immunizations or records for the student.

In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the Designated Homeless Liaison shall assist in the enrollment process. Unaccompanied youth shall be immediately enrolled if space is available even if unable to provide the school with the records normally required for enrollment (as above), and

despite lack of parent or legal guardian's supervision or permissions, or "power of attorney" by supervising adult.

In accordance with current Rocketship enrollment policies and state regulations regarding charter schools, if the grade level for which a homeless child or youth has applied has more applicants than spaces available, a random public lottery will take place in order to determine enrollment for the following school year. An "in-district" or "in-county" (depending on the type of school the student has applied to) priority will apply during the lottery to homeless youth who self-identify as homeless during the application process so as to not discriminate against homeless children or youth due to lack of permanent housing. If a homeless child or youth applies for admission after the annual random public lottery, he or she will be placed on the waitlist in the order in which the application was received, even if the application is incomplete at the time of submission.

Any confidential record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or medical records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs, of each homeless child or youth will be maintained so that the records are available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school or school district.

Information about a student's living situation that is maintained by Rocketship is part of the student's record, subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In general, FERPA prohibits a school from disclosing personally identifiable information ("PII) from students' educational records without parental consent. One exception to this general consent rule is for information that the school has designated as "directory information," which is information that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. However, information regarding a student's living situation is not considered directory information and must be provided the same protections as other non-directory PII.

## **VII. Transportation**

Per the McKinney-Vento Act, Rocketship must provide services to homeless children and youth that are comparable to those received by other students in the school selected, including transportation. In addition, schools must provide transportation for homeless students to and from their school of origin, if feasible.

Rocketship, where feasible, at the request of the parent/guardian and/or in the best interest of the homeless child or youth, shall provide transportation to students experiencing homelessness to ensure the students are able to stay at the Rocketship school of their choice for the duration of their homelessness. Rocketship may work with the youth's district of residence or other agencies to provide transportation services.

## **VIII. Enrollment Dispute Resolution Process**

As required by 42 USC § 11432(g)(1)(C), schools must develop and implement written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law with regards to enrollment and school placement as covered by the McKinney-Vento Act.. The State Coordinator for the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program will provide technical assistance to interested parties as requested and as necessary.

If a dispute arises over enrollment or school placement:

1. The child or youth must be immediately enrolled in the school requested by the individual or organization submitting the complaint;
2. the parent/guardian of the affected student(s) must be provided a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision;
3. the child, youth, parent, or guardian must be referred to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaison for the corporation, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute; and
4. in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the Homeless Education Liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute.

### Rocketship Dispute Resolution Process

Disputes may arise between a Rocketship school and a homeless student or homeless parent/guardian regarding, among other things, enrollment or transportation. At such a time, the Homeless Education Liaison immediately becomes involved, and Rocketship must follow a procedure that includes these steps:

1. A student must be allowed to attend or enroll in the school that is challenging the student's right to attend until a final decision is made regarding the dispute. The challenging school must provide transportation and other school services as needed to the student until the dispute is resolved.
2. The dispute resolution process begins at the time a school challenges the right of either a parent or guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, to enroll a child or youth in school, to continue enrollment in school, or to receive services such as transportation assistance.
3. When Rocketship challenges the enrollment or services of the child or unaccompanied youth, Rocketship must:
  - Provide notice of the challenge to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, through the Homeless Education, on the day of the challenge.
  - Provide notice of the right to appeal the challenge to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth. This notice must include a form to be completed by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth should he or she decide to appeal Rocketship's decision.
4. The Homeless Education Liaison will provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with written notice in clear, easy-to-understand language detailing the dispute resolution process.
5. Rocketship will have three working days to review its initial decision and make a final decision as to the position taken ( i.e. whether it will continue to challenge the right of the student to be enrolled). The decision must state all factual information upon which it is based and the legal basis in support thereof.

## **GENERAL COMPLAINT POLICY**

Rocketship values the concerns of our parents, staff, students, and community and takes all concerns and complaints seriously. The following complaint procedure should be employed to ensure that complaints receive full consideration.

### **I. Use of General Complaint Process**

Rocketship's complaint process should be used as follows:

- (1) to deal with complaints and concerns pertaining to the educational environment, employment arrangements, or interpersonal conflicts;
- (2) to allege violations of federal or state law, or of the school's charter;
- (3) for personnel to resolve complaints against other personnel pertaining to discrimination and harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, or membership in another protected class arising under federal or state law.

### **II. Who May File a Complaint**

The procedures set forth below may be used by complainants who are employees, students, parents, or visitors.

### **III. Confidentiality**

All documentation and information related to an investigation conducted as a result of a complaint is considered confidential and is not to be revealed or discussed by any participant with persons not involved with the complaint or decision-making process.

### **IV. Informal Complaints**

Because most difficulties can be resolved by communicating a concern to someone, complainants are encouraged to discuss their concern or complaint promptly and candidly with their immediate supervisor, student's teacher, or the school principal. The complainant is not required to discuss his/her complaint with the alleged harasser or perpetrator in any manner or for any reason prior to initiating a formal complaint.

### **V. Complaint Process Regarding School Site Procedures, Practices, and Policies**

Complaints should follow the process outlined below when they wish to file a formal complaint pertaining to items (1) or (2) described in Section I above. This process is available to complaints against employees, students, parents, or visitors.

- (1) Fill out a Complaint Form, available at the school's front office. In the Complaint Form, complainants should describe the nature of the complaint and any steps taken so far to resolve the issue. The Complaint Form should be submitted to the school Principal. Complaint Forms must be submitted within 90 days of encountering the issue that is the subject of the complaint.
- (2) The Principal will immediately initiate an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of the complaint. This will include interviewing witnesses, obtaining any relevant documents, and allowing parties to present evidence. The investigation is considered highly

confidential and is not to be revealed or discussed by any participant with persons not directly involved with the decision-making process.

The investigation will be concluded within 10 school days of receiving the complaint unless “exceptional circumstances” justify a more expedited response. The amount of time granted for an exceptional circumstance will be determined on an individual case basis.

Upon receiving a complaint, the Principal shall also promptly notify the designated Rocketship Regional Director.

- (3) The Principal will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint, the nature of the complaint, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for recommendation. The Principal should keep the final report on file and provide a copy of this report to the complainant. The Principal should report any incident found to be discrimination or harassment based on membership in a protected class, along with the results of the investigation, to [compliance@rsed.org](mailto:compliance@rsed.org) within 24 hours of the conclusion of the investigation.
- (4) If the complainant is not satisfied with the Principal’s response, he/she may appeal to the Principal’s direct supervisor. All appeals must be in writing and include the reason for appeal. Appeals must be submitted to the appropriate party within 10 school days of receiving the response.
- (5) The Principal’s supervisor will conduct an investigation upon receiving the appeal. This process may include an interview with the decision-maker to discuss the rationale. The supervisor will issue a written resolution within 10 days of receiving the appeal.
- (6) If the complainant is not satisfied with the supervisor’s resolution, he/she may file a final appeal with the Chief Schools Officer, or his/her designee, Vice President of Schools. The Chief Schools Officer or designee Vice President of Schools will conduct an investigation upon receiving the appeal. This process may include an interview with the decision-maker to discuss the rationale. The Chief Schools Officer Vice President of Schools will issue a written resolution within 10 days of receiving the appeal.
- (7) Rocketship Education’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has the discretion to hear complaints beyond the Chief Schools Officer’s Vice President of Schools’ resolution. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Chief Schools Officer’s Vice President of Schools’ response, he/she may appeal to have the CEO hear the complaint. Note that the CEO is not required to entertain the complaint. Any resolution by the CEO shall be final.

If the original complaint pertains to the school Principal, complainants should begin by filing their complaint with the Principal’s direct supervisor as described in Steps 4-5 above. Appeals will go to

the Vice President of Schools as described in Step 6.

## **VI. Complaint Process Regarding Discrimination and Harassment**

In the event that informal resolution is not successful, complainants should follow the process outlined below when they wish to file a formal complaint pertaining to item (3) described in Section I above (i.e. discrimination or harassment). This process is available to complaints against employees, students, parents, or visitors.

- (1) Fill out a Complaint Form, available at the school's front office. In the Complaint Form, complainants should describe the nature of the complaint and any steps taken so far to resolve the issue. The Complaint Form should be submitted to Rocketship's Human Resources department. Complaint Forms must be submitted within 90 days of encountering the issue that is the subject of the complaint.
- (2) A representative from Human Resources will immediately initiate an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of the complaint. This will include interviewing witnesses, obtaining any relevant documents, and allowing parties to present evidence. All documentation related to the investigation is considered highly confidential and is not to be revealed or discussed by any participant with persons not directly involved with the complaint or decision-making process.

The investigation will be concluded within 10 school days of receiving the complaint unless "exceptional circumstances" justify a more expedited response. The amount of time granted for an exceptional circumstance will be determined on an individual case basis.

- (3) Human Resources will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint, the nature of the complaint, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for recommendation.
- (4) If the complainant is not satisfied with the Principal's response, he/she may appeal to a review committee to be comprised of at least three impartial members of Rocketship Education's Senior Leadership Team.
- (5) The Review Committee will conduct an investigation upon receiving the appeal. This process may include an interview with the decision-maker to discuss the rationale. The supervisor will issue a written resolution within 10 days of receiving the appeal. Any decision of the Review Committee shall be final.

## **VII. Prohibition Against Retaliation**

Rocketship will not retaliate against any person who files a complaint in accordance with this policy, or any person who participates in proceedings related to this policy.

In addition, Rocketship will not tolerate any form of retaliation against any person who makes a

good faith report or complaint about perceived acts of harassment, discrimination, or concern, or who cooperates in an investigation of harassment, discrimination, or a concern. Any person who is found to be engaging in any kind of retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

#### **VIII. Modification**

Rocketship may approve modification of the foregoing procedures in a particular case if the modification is for good cause and does not violate the due process rights or the complainant or any policies of Rocketship.

#### **IX. Contact Information**

The contact information for the school principal can be found on the school's website. The school principal shall assist any complainant in obtaining the proper contact information for the principal's supervisor and/or the Chief Schools Officer/designee, should the complainant wish to pursue an appeal as described in Section V above.

#### **X. Other Remedies**

This complaint process does not bar complainants from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state and federal law.

### **TITLE IX POLICY**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states, "No person . . . shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Rocketship Education (Rocketship) is committed to providing a learning and working environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each student and employee has a right to learn and work in an environment that is free from unlawful discrimination. No Rocketship student or employee shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender in any Rocketship educational program or activity.

#### **I. Equal Treatment of Students in Educational Programs and Activities**

Under Title IX, Rocketship assures the equal treatment of students in educational programs and activities and specify that sex and gender equity shall be practiced in the following ways:

- Programs and Activities:
  - Students have the right to equal learning opportunities in their school.
  - Students may not be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to harassment or other forms of discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender in any program or activity.
- Course Accessibility and Instruction
  - Students may not be required to take and/or may not be denied enrollment in a

- course because of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender.
- Instruction in all courses and classes must be co-educational.
- Elementary and secondary units of instruction which deal exclusively with human sexuality may be conducted in separate sessions for boys and girls.
- Students have the right to be evaluated and graded without regard to their sex, sexual orientation, or gender.
- Instructional materials and textbooks shall not contain any matter reflecting adversely upon persons because of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender.
- Instructional materials and textbooks shall accurately portray the cultural, racial, gender, and sexual diversity of our society.
- Students shall be provided with counseling and guidance that is not discriminatory.
- Physical Education
  - All physical education classes must be co-educational.
  - Participation in a particular physical education activity or sport, if required of students of one sex, shall be available to students of each sex.
  - Instruction and testing in all physical education classes are to be co-educational.
  - Student grouping by ability is allowed. However, any grouping of students during physical education activities should be ongoing, flexible, and modified per unit activity and may not have a discriminatory impact.
  - Students are to be assessed by objective standards of individual performance without regard to sex.
- Athletics
  - Schools shall offer all students equal opportunities to play sports.
  - Equipment and supplies, game and practice schedules, budgets, coaching, travel allowances, facilities, publicity, support services, and tutoring offered to teams shall provide comparable and equitable athletic opportunities for members of both sexes, without disparity or imbalance.
- Sexual Harassment
  - Sexual harassment of or by school employees or students is a form of sex and gender discrimination and is prohibited.
  - School personnel must respond to allegations of sexual harassment.
- Extra-Curricular Activities, Programs, and Club
  - Participation in all extra-curricular activities, programs, and student clubs shall be available to all students without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability.
  - All student clubs are to have equal access to facilities and a fair opportunity to meet.
  - No extra-curricular activity, program, or club is to be labeled or scheduled with the result of the separation of students on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, and mental or physical disability.

Title IX does not apply to the following:

- YMCA, YWCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, and voluntary youth service



- organizations.
- Father-Son and Mother-Daughter activities—provided that comparable activities are offered for students of the other sex.

## **II. Title IX Coordinator**

The role of the Title IX Coordinator is to respond to any complaints of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment, as well as to provide support to schools to ensure compliance. Provisions should be made to facilitate the ability of non- and limited-English speaking students to access the Title IX Coordinator and file a complaint.

The Title IX Coordinator will communicate with and ensure that staff, students, and parents are informed of Rocketship’s policy requiring the promotion of mutual respect and acceptance, as well as Rocketship policy regarding nondiscrimination and sexual harassment.

The Title IX Coordinator shall respond quickly to any complaints of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment and take action to address the behavior, as well as provide support, information, and options to students regarding sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment. This may include providing assistance with the filing of a formal complaint in accordance with Section V below. The Title IX Coordinator will refer any complaints about discrimination or sexual harassment involving an employee to the Vice President of Human Resources immediately.

For the 2018-19 school year, Rocketship’s Title IX coordinator is Kenzie Kilb, Compliance and Legal Project Manager. The contact information for the Title IX coordinator is:

Attn: Title IX Coordinator  
350 Twin Dolphin Drive, Suite 109  
Redwood City, CA 94065  
877-806-0920  
compliance@rsed.org

## **III. Notification**

Rocketship’s Nondiscrimination Statement and Sexual Harassment Policy shall be provided to all Rocketship employees on an annual basis at the beginning of each school year.

All required nondiscrimination notices to students and parents are provided in the Parent/Student Handbook. All schools are required to distribute the Parent/Student Handbook to all students annually and to every student at the time of initial enrollment.

## **IV. Confidentiality and Nonretaliation**

Complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment shall be handled in a confidential manner to respect the privacy of all parties to the fullest extent possible. Every effort shall be made to limit the distribution of information to those persons who need to know within the confines of Rocketship’s reporting procedures and investigative process.

Rocketship will not tolerate retaliation against anyone for filing a complaint or participating in the complaint investigation process. These confidentiality and nonretaliation requirements extend to all parties involved.

## **V. Complaint Procedures**

### Informal Complaints

Informal resolutions of student discrimination and sexual harassment complaints should be addressed at the school site. Complainants are encouraged to discuss their concern or complaint promptly and candidly with their immediate supervisor, student's teacher, or the school principal. The complainant is not required to discuss his/her complaint with the alleged harasser or perpetrator in any manner or for any reason prior to initiating a formal complaint. The informal process should generally be bypassed if the complainant names a principal as a respondent or the complaint alleges school-wide discriminatory

Practices. In those circumstances, the complainant may initiate a formal complaint.

### Formal Complaints

Formal complaints of student discrimination and sexual harassment shall be handled in accordance with Rocketship's complaint policies.

### **HARD COPY SARC AVAILABILITY**

Rocketship will make the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) available in hard copy and translated to parents' home languages each year. The SARC is released each year in January-February. English and translated versions will also be available on the school website.





