

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Renewal of Rocketship Futuro Academy Charter School

July 27, 2020

INTRODUCTION

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

Our Vision

Eliminate the achievement gap in our lifetime.

Our Mission

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

Our Values

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

Our Three Pillars

Our transformational public schools are built on three pillars.



PERSONALIZED LEARNING

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



TALENT DEVELOPMENT

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



PARENT POWER

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

ROCKETSHIP FUTURO ACADEMY; FOUNDED IN 2016

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

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

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

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

When educational leader Jason Colón made the decision to move his family to Concord to open Futuro Academy, he was humbled to serve a school community that reflected many of his own experiences growing up in Puerto Rico. Coming to the US in high school, Jason understood first-hand the importance of a strong elementary school foundation, especially for English Learners and children of color. In 2005, Jason started his career in education as a Special Education teacher as part of the Miami Teaching Fellows. He continued mastering his craft within Miami public schools by teaching math to low-income, middle and high school students and getting a master degree in special education and urban studies. Coming to teach at Rocketship in 2013, Jason quickly rose to Assistant Principal by leading in English Language Arts and Mathematics achievement at Rocketship Fuerza in San Jose. Jason discovered the alarming SBAC data for socioeconomically disadvantaged students in the Concord community and was immediately moved into action as the founding Principal for Futuro Academy in Concord.

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

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

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

Our School's Core Values



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

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

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

RFA AS PART OF THE ROCKETSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS NETWORK

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

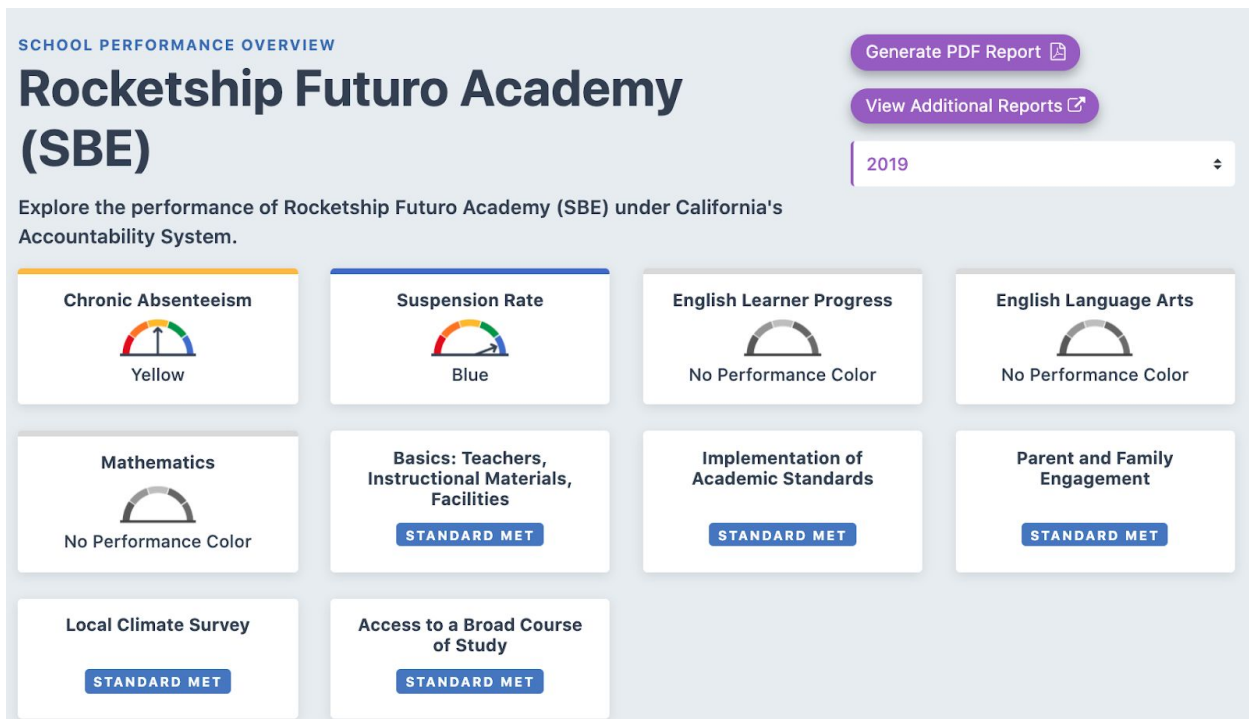
Rocketship Education believes it is critical that strong local partnerships inform our growth and maximize our impact in each of the communities we serve. To achieve this goal, each Rocketship region governed by the Rocketship Education Board of Directors shall establish an advisory board consisting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

STUDENT PERFORMANCE DATA

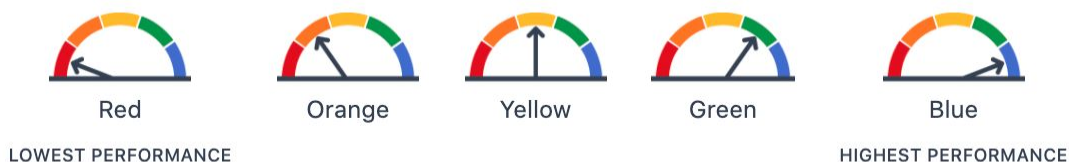
The Rocketship Futuro Academy (RFA) charter should be renewed for another 5-year period based on an analysis of each criterion applied to all charter schools set forth in Education Code §47607.2(b).

- RFA has demonstrated strong performance on state and local indicators, both on a school-wide basis and among subgroup populations, and demonstrable academic growth based on the average Distance From Standard (DFS) improvement and CAASPP proficiency, as well as NWEA MAP performance.
- RFA has “clear and convincing evidence” of academic progress of at least one year’s growth for each year that the school has been in operation, as measured by verified data.
- RFA’s students - as a whole, as broken down by Student Groups, and as cohorts of students who have been at the Charter School throughout its entire tenure - have made at least one year’s growth for each year that the school has been in operation.

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



Performance on California School Dashboard measures, using comparable statewide data, is represented by one of five colors. The performance level (color) is not included when there are fewer than 30 students in any year.²



² <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/about/accountability>.

- California School Dashboard Reports for RFA show exceedingly strong performance in Mathematics and strong performance in ELA, in both cases outperforming the Mt. Diablo Unified School District and also performing equally to or better than the State.
- RFA has received 'No Performance Color' on the academic indicators for English Learner Progress, English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (math). This is due to the class size (<30) at RFA in its first eligible year for state assessments. Nonetheless, RFA's academic achievement can be evaluated based on the school's "current status" levels.

RFA English Language Arts Indicator: Current Status

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

RFA Math Indicator: Current Status

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

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

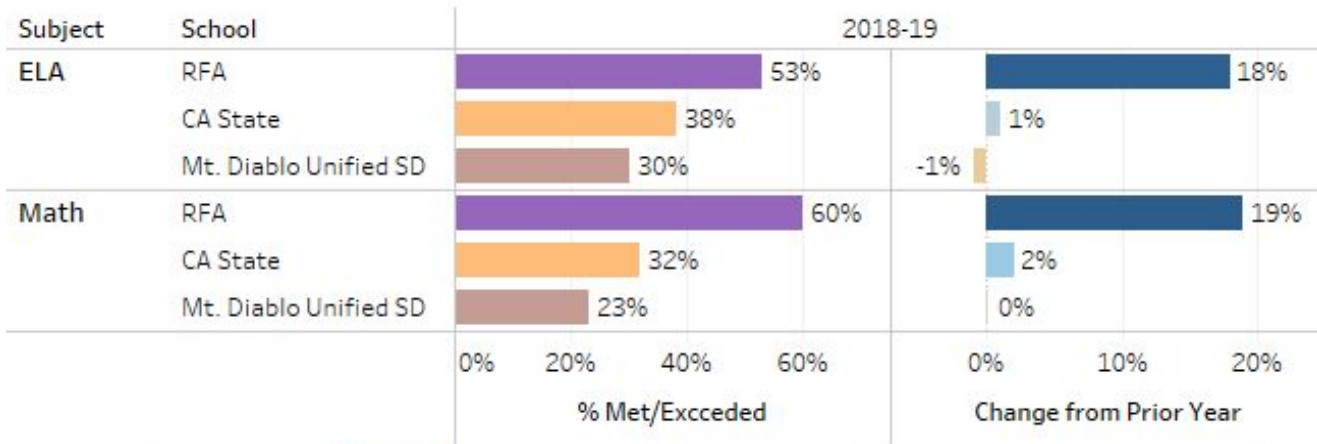
Rocketship Futuro Academy Demographic Data 2016-2020*

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

*Source: Rocketship official demographic data

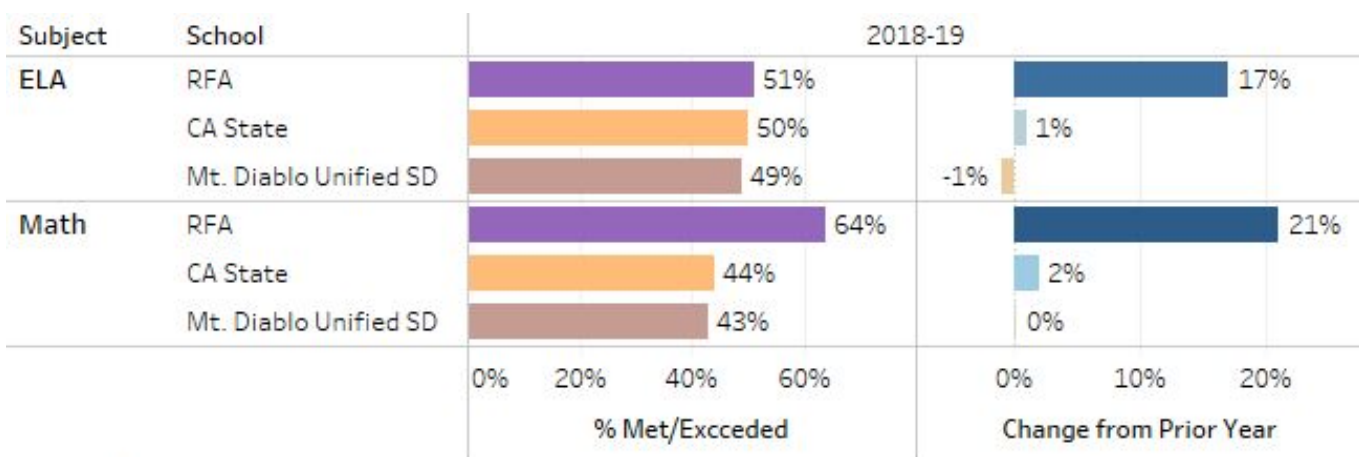
Definitions: EL = English learner, SED = socioeconomically disadvantaged, SPED = special education students

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



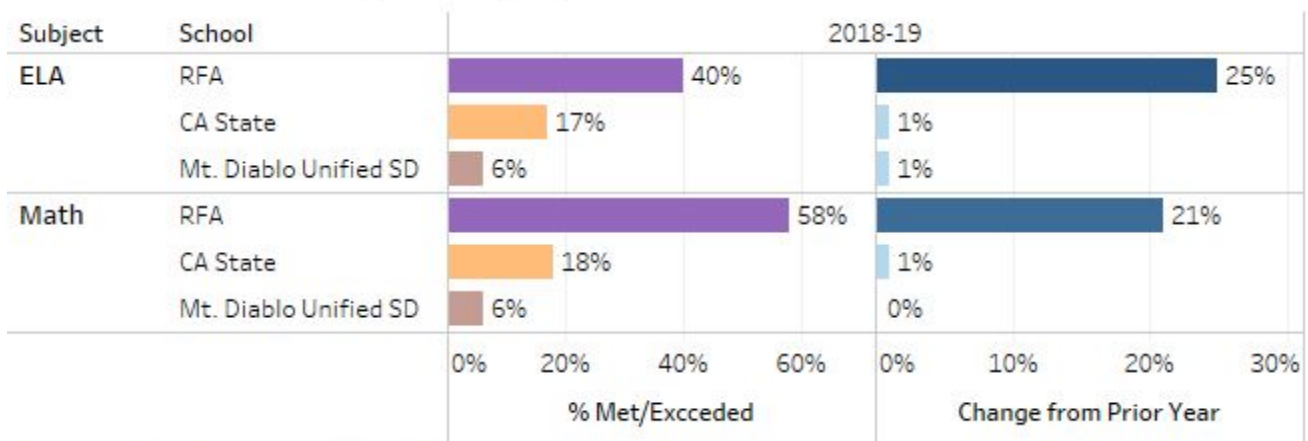
Source: California Department of Education. Grades 3-5 percentages calculated by Rocketship Public Schools from grade-level data in research files downloaded from the CAASPP website (<https://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/>).

A majority of RFA students were proficient on grade-level standards in each subject in 2018-19, and demonstrated significant improvement from 2018 to 2019 in both ELA and Math. RFA had a 17 percentage point increase in ELA and a 21 percentage point increase in Mathematics.



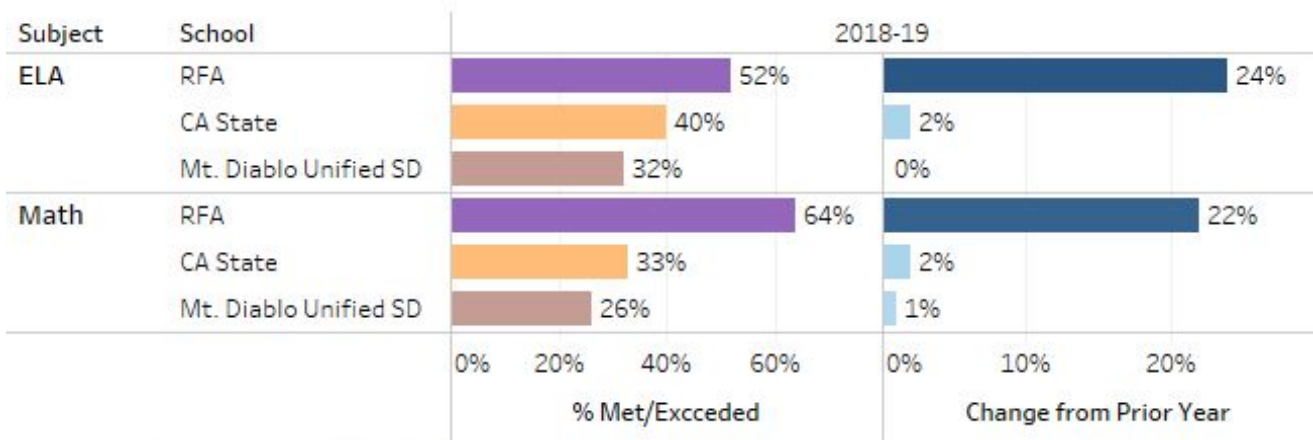
Source: California Department of Education. Grades 3-5 percentages calculated by Rocketship Public Schools from grade-level data in research files downloaded from the CAASPP website (<https://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/>).

RFA achieved significant improvements among EL, Hispanic, and socioeconomically disadvantaged Student Groups in both ELA and math from 2018 to 2019.



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

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



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

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

RFA achieved substantial academic progress by significantly improving its DFS for all students and Student Groups more than 30 points in both subjects between 2018 and 2019.

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

	Student Group	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Change
English Language Arts	All	No 3rd grade cohort	-42.6	-7.7	+ 34.8
	English Learners		-81.2	-23.4	+57.8
	Hispanic		-53.9	-7.9	+46.0
	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		-48.7	-8.7	+40.0
Mathematics	All	No 3rd grade cohort	-11.5	+24.2	+35.7
	English Learners		-31.9	+15.2	+47.1
	Hispanic		-10.3	+21.4	+31.7
	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		-13.3	+22.0	+35.4

RFA's students have achieved at least one year of growth as demonstrated by the school's NWEA MAP data.

