

Rocket Learning Community



McNicholas
HIGH SCHOOL

Finding your brilliance through...



COMMUNITY

connecting with partners outside of the building, contributing to the group as a whole, finding things out together, making connections outside of the classroom



CURIOSITY

approaching mastery learning with a sense of wonder, having a passion for learning, practicing self-evaluation and reflection, taking responsibility for learning



CREATIVITY

understanding that learning is a journey, connecting and synthesizing content across disciplines, applying skills and showcasing mastery in unique ways

WHEN IT COMES TO LEARNING, ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL.

As part of our commitment to customized learning, we are proud to introduce the Rocket Learning Community (RLC). The RLC is a community of learners who work cooperatively during four consecutive blocks toward mastery learning in English, social studies, theology, and science. With the support of a faculty team of four teachers, RLC students will design their own learning pathways and passion projects as they master essential learning outcomes and push themselves beyond the classroom. The RLC will provide students with interdisciplinary study, opportunities for community engagement, and personalized, individualized, and differentiated instruction. RLC students will enjoy the use of an active, modern learning setting, rich with technology, flexible seating, and collaborative and project spaces.

THE RLC STUDENT PROFILE

- Self-motivated students who are comfortable working in a group setting
- Students with a natural curiosity that isn't satisfied by the traditional classroom
- Naturally inclined thinkers and doers who want to take control of their learning

FAST FACTS ABOUT RLC

- The RLC will be made up of no more than 40 sophomore students and 4 teachers for a maximum ratio of 10:1.
- Students will take their English, social studies, science, and theology classes within the RLC.
- The RLC focuses on interdisciplinary learning, emphasizing the natural connections between subjects.

HOW TO JOIN THE RLC

- Access the application via Schoology beginning November 15 at 6 p.m.
- Meet with your counselor or a member of the RLC Team to determine if the RLC is right for you.
- Complete the RLC application no later than December 6.

Questions about the RLC? Please contact the RLC Team at RLC@mcnhs.org.

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RLC Q&A

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Q: What opportunities will the RLC provide to my student outside of the traditional classroom?

A: Students will have the opportunity to take part in off-campus excursions that allow them to build connections with alumni as well as apply their in-school learning to the larger community. Students will personalize their learning with passion projects that reach beyond the walls of McNicholas.

Q: What will a typical day in the RLC look like?

A: Because the RLC will account for four consecutive bells of a student's schedule, community members will collaborate throughout the day to reach mastery learning in the four subject areas. Students will be divided in different and ever-changing ways, working on skills and passion projects independently, in small groups, and in large groups. Thanks to this schedule, RLC students will be able to take advantage of full day field trips and excursions.

Q: How will my student's schedule be affected?

A: The RLC accounts for the already required sophomore credits for science, English, social studies, and theology. These courses will be blended within the RLC during the ABCD blocks. Students will take their math, world language, and elective credits outside of the RLC during the EFGH blocks.

Q: Can my student be in the RLC if he or she wants to take honors classes or is a part of the SAIL Program?

A: The main criteria for being in the RLC is willingness to explore concepts more deeply within a guided learning environment. We are committed to working with students across all academic tracks. Students who are in the honors track can earn honors weight by extending their learning.

Q: Will my student still reach the learning outcomes of the core classes?

A: Yes! Students are still being held to the same essential learning outcomes that are in place in the traditional classroom setting.

Q: How will my student be assessed as he or she works toward mastery learning?

A: As in the traditional classroom, essential learning outcomes are the guiding principles for assessing student progress. Teachers will coach students toward mastery and offer individualized instruction as needed. Students and teachers will be in constant communication about their progress. GPA will be calculated in the same way as in the traditional classroom.

Q: Will my student be in the RLC for the rest of his or her high school career?

A: A learning community for the junior year is planned. Students' placements in the RLC will be reassessed each year and students can choose to opt out.

Q: How does my student become a member of the RLC?

A: Students need to apply to the program so that the team can discern the best-fit candidates. The process may include interviews and follow-up conversations with students, parents, and current teachers.

Q: Who should I talk to if I'm unsure if the RLC is a good fit for my student?

A: Please reach out to your student's counselor, current English or science teacher, or a member of the RLC Team: Regina Goines, Angie Noble, David Sandmann, and Gretchen Thomas.

