REAMS ROCKET NEWSLETTER

April 2024

Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School encourages student imagination, inquiry, and discovery by using an arts-infused academic curriculum that fosters critical thinking and creativity.

April

April 2-4
Grade K Artist in Residence

April 4
Grade 2 Stages Theatre

April 8-12
Grade 1 Artist in Residence

April 11
Grade 2 Concert

April 12
Grade 3 Author Visit

April 15-19
K-4 PhyEd Gymnastics

April 22-26
K-4 Kindness Lessons
K-4 PhyEd Obstacle Course

April 25
Preschool Parent-Child Night

April 25-30
Grade 2 Artist in Residence

April 29-30
K-4 PhyEd Track



From the Principal

Dear REAMS Families,

As we move into the spring months, third and fourth grade students are gearing up for the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in April. Students have been working hard all year to improve their Math and Reading skills. These assessments are taken by all students across Minnesota and are based on the Minnesota State Standards.

The testing dates are: **Third grade:** April 9,10 (Reading),16,17(Math); **Fourth grade**: April 9,10 (Reading),17,18 (Math). We know our students always try their best to rock the test!

Several of our grade levels will be spending time with an artist in residence in the coming weeks. Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School partners with many local artists who provide experiences for students at REAMS in the areas of dance, drama, music, visual arts, and diversity. Children have the opportunity to work with many of the artists for two or more sessions and often couple their learning with a connected field trip. The teachers have also related the work with the artists to the core curriculum in their classrooms to enhance the students learning.

Students will have an opportunity to work with a specific artist in residence at every grade level during their K-4 experience at REAMS. The goal is to ensure that each child has the opportunity to expand their learning in a fun and creative way at REAMS. The REAMS students and staff are honored that so many of the local artists in residence return to partner with them each year. The partnerships and special relationships that the REAMS students and staff have cultivated with these local artists in the past few years have become so valuable to student learning and growing.

We have many exciting events still to come this spring at Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School, and we look forward to sharing our talents with you all!

Warmly,

Brenda Nyhus
Principal

REAMS | NEWS

NYSTROM & ASSOCIATES

School-Based Therapy

School-Based Therapy is a program in which Nystrom & Associates places clinical mental health providers at a community school to provide therapeutic services to students who have a mental health diagnosis. Therapists will collaborate with teachers, school social workers, and staff to aid the student in working towards their individual goals. The school-based therapist works with all students who qualify for mental health services. They do not need to be receiving special education services or have an individualized education plan (IEP). Guardian involvement is encouraged and recommended. For more information, please contact the your child's teacher or email our school counselors at leisticoa@rockford.K12.mn.us or reynoldsk@rockford.k12.mn.us.



WHY DOESN'T MY CHILD HAVE A READING LEVEL?



What is Structured Literacy? Science of Reading?
You may have heard the phrase 'Structured Literacy' or 'the Science of Reading' within conversations regarding literacy instruction. Decades of research has determined that reading occurs in a specific way in the brain in all people. It does not occur naturally the way that speech does. The process must be explicitly taught. It is a process of building neuro-pathways in the brain that link sounds of speech to written symbols or letters.

Over the last year, our teachers at REAMS have been in the process of making critical shifts in our instructional practices to support the Science of Reading.

Why isn't my student assigned a reading level?
Students are no longer assigned a reading level, previously indicated by a letter; A, B, C. Leveled text is highly dependent on a students's vocabulary and background knowledge. For that reason, they are not an effective tool for measuring a student's reading progress. At the beginning, reading levels promote ineffective 'strategies' such as looking at the picture and guessing words rather than our ultimate goal of using patterns they've learned to decode words.

How does reading/literacy instruction work then?
Students will progressively move through literacy concepts from the most simple to increasingly difficult. These sequences are based on grade level appropriateness, practiced throughout the week and assessed for mastery. Students are no longer placed in reading groups based on their level but supported by targeted needs gathered from diagnostic assessments. Through research, we know that these practices **do** support reading development.

What are they reading if they aren't reading leveled books?
Decodable reading records are used to measure automaticity, accuracy and fluency with your child's reading. Decodable books aren't forever. As students progress with their reading skills and become more profiecient readers, they are able to read longer and more complicated text.

How am I going to know how my student is doing in reading if they don't have a level?
We use our FASTBridge benchmarking assessments given 3 times a year along with progress monitoring and weekly concept assessments to gauge your child's understanding and application of taught literacy conventions. Your classroom teacher will communicate their benchmarking scores to you and explain what they mean.

If you have questions regarding the shift from balanced literacy to a structured, systematic, and explicit literacy approach please reach out to your child's teacher.
#untileverychildcanread

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Kindergarten!

Kindergarten Roundup was held on Thursday, March 7th. With many families in attendance, our incoming kindergarten students are getting excited and cannot wait until next year when they get to come to Kindergarten! Incoming kindergarten students spent time in the classrooms with the teachers learning about a typical day in Kindergarten. The children were able to see what our morning circle times look like, some songs, movement and reading a book about Kindergarten. We ended with a fun project the children enjoyed working on. Parents were given a fun and informative talk all about Kindergarten while the children were in the classrooms. The children then left with a sense of excitement for next fall. Fun was had by all of us. Welcome to the Class of 2037!

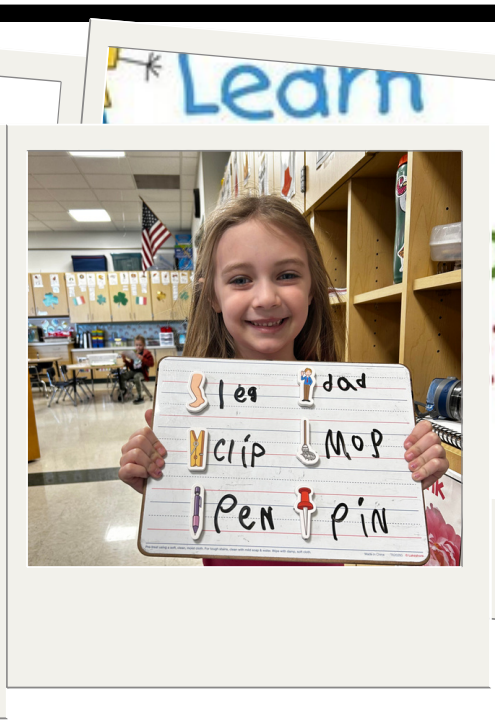
Conferences went well and it was wonderful to see you all on Thursday the 14th and Monday the 18th. It was a great way to talk about your children's amazing accomplishments so far this year. Thank you all for making the time to meet with all of us. We really do appreciate the parent support.

Our fun topics of study in March were finishing up our Oceans unit. The children had a blast literally diving head first into the amazing ocean habitat that we learn more about everyday. The Kindergartners loved learning all about the ocean zones, the animals and plants that live there and how we can do our best to keep the ocean clean for future generations. We also enjoyed learning about the weather around us and globally, St. Patrick's Day we studied about Ireland and what the holiday is all about. We ended with the topic of Spring. Finishing out the Month of March we had spring break. It was great to have quality time spent with family traveling or staying close to home.

The Kindergarteners continue to amaze and excite us with their knowledge in phonics, reading, writing, math and SSH skills. They are hard workers and we are so proud of them. They are such superstars!

Sneak Peek for April: In April we will work on plants and animals, Earth Day and Farm Day/week. We will also have our Artist in Residence come on April 2nd-4th. It will be a fun and exciting month for the Kindergarteners.







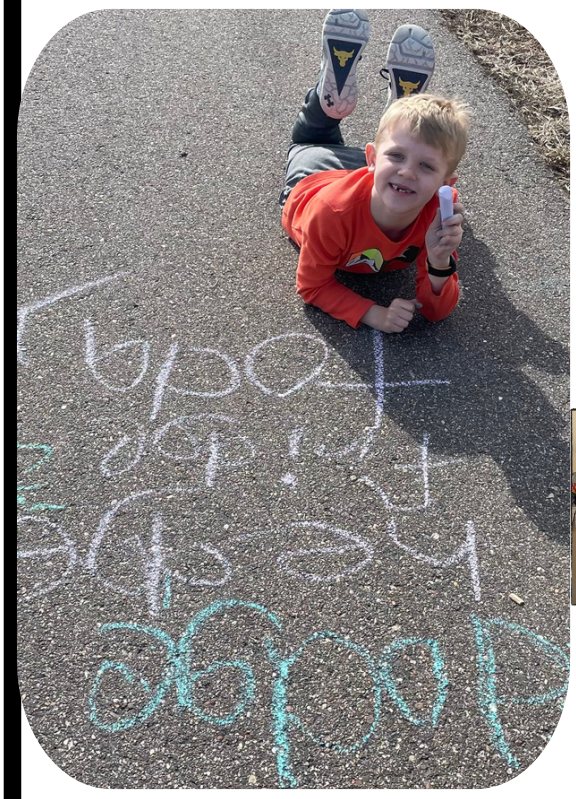
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1st Grade

In March, first grade students started to learn about the human body, major body parts, and organs, and how they help our bodies function. They also learned about our various body systems and their jobs. Many first-grade students had an opportunity to use stethoscopes to listen to their partner's heartbeat. They were able to hear what a resting and working heart sounded like. In another activity, many first graders worked on making a human body flip book to display their knowledge of important organs, body systems, and where they belong in our bodies.

Math during March was very exciting. Students learned and applied new skills. First-grade students learned about how to find 10 more and 10 less. They also learned about graphing. Students were able to graph many different categories and learned how to tell which has more, less, and how many more or less.

Writing in March brought out the first grader's creativity. Some students wrote about how to catch a leprechaun. The students came up with many ideas on how they could trap these tricky creatures. Other students wrote about what they would find at the end of the rainbow. They were able to come up with many fun and creative ways to use their writing skills. Throughout the year first graders have been working on sentence structure. We focus on the acronym C.U.P.S. It stands for Capitalization, Understanding, Punctuation, and Spelling.











SNEAK PEEK FOR MARCH

- Artist in Residence
- Life Cycle of a Frog, Chick and Plant

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2ND GRADE

The month of March has been busy for the second graders at REAMS. We kicked off the month with a new unit in math, which focused on telling time and graphs. We learned how to read and create different kinds of graphs, such as picture graphs, bar graphs, and tally charts. Students also used graph data to answer and create a variety of questions. Then, students used colored shapes to create their own Shape Monster and graphed the amount of shapes used on a bar graph and a picture graph. Students had a blast using their imagination and are currently writing a story to go along with their monsters.

In addition, we have been reading a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts. We have focused on reading skills such as main idea and details, character traits, compare and contrast, and sequence of events. The second graders have loved thinking critically about a text and diving deeper into how characters act, think, and feel. We have also focused on adjectives this month. Students brainstormed different adjectives to describe themselves and created a wall display with spring flowers.

In Social Studies, the second graders have started their unit on Economics. We have been learning about needs and wants, saving and spending money, and goods and services. Over Spring Break, students will complete an "at home" project about goods and services in our community. Students will select a job that provides our community with a good or service and create a paper model/representation of themselves in that career. They will be sharing their community helper with classmates after Spring Break. We can't wait to see what careers all of the students choose!











SNEAK PEEK FOR MARCH

- Stages Theater Field Trip
- Second Grade Concert
- Artist in Residence
- Adding Three-Digit Numbers

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3RD GRADE

March brought lots of measurements for third graders. Our math units focused on measuring length, weight, perimeter and area. We explored both metric and US customary measuring systems. Math units in third grade typically begin with building schema about what we already know, listing what we'd like to learn, and reading math related story books with titles like Measuring Penny and Sam's Sneaker Squares. Students measured items around our classrooms using inches, feet, yard, centimeters, and meters. They tried out balance beam scales and sliding scales. They compared the weight classroom items like scissors, gluesticks, and Jolly Ranchers to gram cubes. We used many ha-Onds-on measurement activities to solidify our skills!







SNEAK PEEK FOR MARCH

- Animal Report
- Conferences
- Native American Study with Art

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4th Grade

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Fourth graders have been busy with music this month! We have had some exciting opportunities like a visit from the Copper Street Band which included information sessions about the instruments and a performance. They also had a wonderful spring concert with special performances from Arts Troupes where students played recorders, drums, and boomwhackers and demonstrated basketball rhythms. Later this month students will get a chance to go to the High School for an "informance" where the band director and students will introduce them to instruments they could choose to play in Middle School. Students will get a chance to ask questions about what it is like to be in the band. In Early April, students will get to try instruments and decide whether they would like to sign up for band class in Middle School.

In their classes students have been learning so much! This is the time of year we can really dig into content without many interruptions, and students have been learning and growing quickly before our eyes.

·In Social Studies students have been studying the Midwest region, which is especially fun because of the connections that students have to this area!

·In Science students have been learning how the four spheres of Earth work together to make this planet habitable, and how each of the spheres impacts each other. Soon they will be starting an Arts Integration project where they create a 3-D representation of Earth's four spheres and their interactions!

·Students have been learning to write about their opinions in Creative Writing. They have been using the editing process and have also been working on writing conclusion paragraphs.

·In Language Arts, students have been working hard on spelling and grammar rules as well as Greek and Latin Roots.

·In Digital Literacy students have been adding technology skills to their toolbelt by creating a Water Cycle poster on Canva and continue to practice their typing skills.

·In Reading students have been learning to make inferences and identify the main idea of texts, these are both really important skills they will need as they move on to Middle School next year!

·In Math students have been working hard on fractions and decimals, both skills that they will continue to build on in upcoming years.

We are looking forward to many fun learning opportunities this spring. Students are well on their way to becoming Middle Schoolers and we are so excited to see them grow through the rest of the year here at REAMS!











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Fourth Graders Showcase Talents Through the Arts

Fourth grade students recently demonstrated their learning at the annual Fourth Grade Spotlight on the Arts concert! Students performed musically through singing, bucket drumming, piano playing, recorder, cup passing, basketball rhythms, world drumming, stick pounding, and boomwhackers. Dozens of students learned specific dances to songs and played xylophones as well. A special treat for audience members were theater scenes presented prior to the concert. Students have been learning many theater skills throughout the school year and were able to share their learning by performing in short scenes. Visual art students also finished up their "America the Beautiful" paintings, and several were printed in the program for audience members to enjoy. It truly was a night of celebrating learning in and through the arts!










America the Beautiful

Fourth grade Visual Art students were asked to think about how America is beautiful to them. The inspiration behind this project came from the song "America the Beautiful." Students examined key ideas and details from the original poem and song. Students also looked at works of art created by famous American landscape artists. In the end, students created their own multi-media work expressing how America is beautiful to them.



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Fourth Grade Theater Scenes

Fourth grade students have been practicing and learning with Ms. Olson in theater class once a week to better their speaking and acting skills. Students worked on projection of their voice, facial and body expressions, as well as working in ensembles for a common goal. Several small groups of students performed their scenes with props in the HS Media Center prior to the fourth grade concert recently.







Brass Quintet Comes to REAMS

Copper Street Brass, a professional brass quintet based in the Midwest, was recently at REAMS to share their musical prowess with all students, pre-school through fourth grade. Through inventive concerts, engaging educational programs, and original musical arrangements, Copper Street Brass brings a fresh perspective to instrumental music.Fourth grade students received extra time with the quintet to ask questions and learn about brass instruments.This is a great experience for them as many can choose an instrument next month to join band at the middle school. Copper Street Brass is at Rockford Area Schools through a grant funded by the Minnesota Arts Board. CSB spent several days at the middle school and high school as well in March.









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Physical Education



This month in Physical Education students had lots of fun learning about and playing hockey. Fourth graders also enjoyed an after school hockey tournament. Our students also enjoyed, yelled, screamed, smiled, and laughed using the parachute. Many of you parents remember the fun you had with the parachute. Your kiddos had just as much fun and made many memories.











REAMS | POINTS OF PRIDE

TERRIFIC THURSDAY

REAMS staff and students celebrated Terrific Thursday before sending everyone home for Spring Break. This gives students the opportunity to showcase what they are learning in their classrooms and their unique talents. Some of the highlights were piano solos, a duet, dances, bucket drumming and singing "Rockford Elementary." We have a lot of very talented students at REAMS! The finale of the event was watching Mrs. Nyhus get slimed after 62 REAMS students completed Finn's Mission, surpassing their goal, for the Kids Heart Challenge!













RTR (RESPECT, TRUST, RESPONSIBILITY) SUPER STARS



RTR Superstar tickets are handed out to students as a positive way to recognize RTR behavior with all students in the building. We do a drawing and share the winners in the announcements. These students come to Mrs. Nyhus' office to receive a prize. Pictured are the students who have been recognized as RTR Super Star prize winners this month!

Mark Your Calendars: REAMS Upcoming Events

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ROCKFORD ELEMENTARY ARTS MAGNET SCHOOL

APRIL

2-4 Kindergarten Artist in Residence
4 Grade 2 Stages Theater Field Trip
8-12 Grade 1 Artist in Residence
9-10 Grades 3-4 MCA Reading Testing
11 Preschool Screening
11 @ 6:30pm Grade 2 Concert
12 Grade 3 Author Visit
15-19 PhyEd Gymnastics
16-17 Grade 3 MCA Math Testing
17-18 Grade 4 MCA Math Testing
22-26 Kindness Lessons
PhyEd Obstacle Course
25 Launching Pad Parent-Child Night
25-30 Grade 2 Artist in Residence
29-30 PhyEd Track



May

2 Preschool Screenings
Grade 2 Artist in Residence
3 @ 12:15pm Grade 2 Grandparents Day
6-10 All Grades at Track for PhyEd
14-16 Grade 4 Artist in Residence
15 Education Foundation Fundraiser Pick Up
20-21 Grade 4 Artist in Residence
21 @ 4-6pm Arts & Academics
24 @ 2:15pm Fabulous Friday
27 Memorial Day - No School
29 Grade 4 Field Trip to Capitol and Flint Hills



field trip

June

4 Last day of School
June 5- September 2 Summer Break

Summer

September

Sept 3-4 Assessment Days
Sept 5 First Day of School

BACK TO SCHOOL

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND LAUNCHING PAD PRESCHOOL| POINTS OF PRIDE

2024-25 LAUNCHING PAD PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

Launching Pad Preschool provides an outstanding and unique public preschool experience!





- Children 3 to 5 years old
- Full and half day options, 2, 3 and 5 days a week
- Reggio Emilia-Inspired Approach to education
- Rich in opportunities to discover and explore
- Encouraged to problem solve and try new ways to do "old" things
- Nurturing and accepting surroundings
- Caring and highly trained staff, including licensed early childhood teachers
- Located at Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School

The entire program is designed to be engaging and fun so children don't just learn, they love to learn! On-line registration and information are available at www.rockford.ce.eleyo.com. Or visit our website at: www.rockford.k12.mn.us. Under the Community tab, click Early Childhood Programs. For more information, please call us at 763-477-7500.

HAPPY 50TH BIRTHDAY, EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY EDUCATION (ECFE)

The mission of ECFE is to strengthen families through the education and support of all parents to provide the best possible environment for the healthy growth and development of their children. Established in 1974, it is the largest and oldest program of its kind in the country and has been cited as a national model for parent education and family support. ECFE provides a place for parents to learn about and practice important parenting and family life skills, and build trusting relationships with other parents from their community. Research confirms that children whose parents are involved in their education and learning are more successful in school. ~MNAFEE

Explore Rockford's ECFE spring class offerings at rockford.ce.eleyo.com, or by CLICKING HERE.

ECFE Pop-In & Play on Tuesdays
11 am to 12 pm
Spring: Apr 9 to May 14, $2/child /session
REAMS ECFE room 213





ECFE AND BEYOND ECFE OPPORTUNITIES

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
Birth-Preschool

Beyond ECFE! Grades K-4 Parents

It turns out parenting doesn't get less complicated once kids enter school. The little ones that once relied on you for everything are now becoming more independent, have more responsibility, and carry ever changing feelings and emotions about all of it. Join facilitator and fellow parent, Jess, and other parents as we discuss the joys, concerns, and unknowns of this season of parenting. Join in person or virtually!

Dates: Thursdays, April 18 to May 23
Time: 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm
Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School, Room 200
6 Sessions, $23/family

Register online at rockford.ce.eleyo.com. Please call 763-477-7500 with questions.

K-4

Calling all Grandmas and Grandpas!

ECFE is offering a spring Play 'N Learn class just for you and your grandchild, ages birth to 5 years old!



Come join other grandparents and their grandkids as we play, learn, and grow together! We'll spend the first part of class in the Early Childhood classroom exploring and playing together. The second part of class will include the children staying in the classroom with their teacher while grandparents go to a separate room to discuss all things grandparenting and caregiving. We'll cover the latest information about child development, relationships and communication, transitioning to grandparenting or caregiving, fun and age appropriate activities, and more.

I ♥ my GRAND ♥ PARENTS

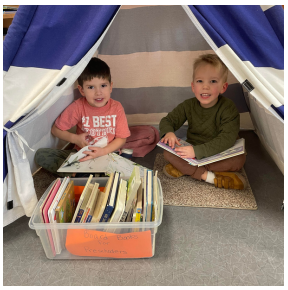
Dates: Thursdays, April 18 to May 23
Time: 9 am to 10:30 am
Place: Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School, Room 213
6 Sessions, $35/family

Register online at rockford.ce.eleyo.com or by calling 763-477-7500.

GALAXY KIDS SCHOOL-AGE CARE| POINTS OF PRIDE

WHAT WE ARE LEARNING:

Galaxy Kids holds opportunities on non-school days for families within the program that need care. Students are able to participate in many fun filled activities throughout each day that are tied to different Themes. They also are able to enjoy the weather and go outside and play on the playgrounds and outdoor spaces around the school.





Galaxy Kids is a certified before and after school child care program for preschool-6th grade students offered through Rockford Area Schools Community Education. We are conveniently located in Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School right across the hall from ECFE and the Preschool classrooms. We are open Monday-Friday from 6:00am-6:00pm, to assist with family child care needs. We have many different registration options that are sure to accommodate most families' busy schedules. If you are looking for child care, before, during, or after school, and over the summer, then this may be the program for you.





EARLY CHILDHOOD SCREENING

Identifying possible concerns early in young children is the best way to prevent serious problems later. Children need to complete Early Childhood Health & Development Screening before they may enter public kindergarten. The ideal time to screen children is between ages 3 to 4. Early Childhood Screening also provides an opportunity for parents to discuss questions and concerns, and find out about resources in the school and community.

The Screening Process

Screening includes a health history, height and weight, immunization review, follow-up with parents and screening in the following areas:

- Hearing & vision
- Fine & gross motor skills
- Speech & development
- Social-emotional development

Make your appointment by calling the Early Childhood Programs Office at 763-477-7500. Appointments are needed and letters are sent to families with age-eligible children. If you have a child in this age group and do not receive a letter, please call us.

PARENT- COMMUNITY NEWS

Attention: Governor Walz signed a bill into law to provide breakfast and lunch at no charge to students at participating schools, beginning in the fall for the 2023-24 school year.

APPLICATION FOR EDUCATION BENEFITS:

If you haven't already done so, please take a moment to fill out this FORM. Our school also receives state funding for technology based on qualifying families! For more information or a Spanish version, click HERE.

FOOD SERVICE REMINDER:

Please check your parent portal for notifications (letters) regarding current food service balances.

Please note, per our School Board approved School Meals Policy, Low Account Balance and Negative Account Balance email reminders will continue to be sent. Since Rockford Area Schools are not receiving additional meal funding at this time, it remains the parent(s)' or guardian's responsibility to ensure adequate funds are available in the meal account.

CAMPUS

It is very important to ensure the school district has current household and contact information for all students. Please be sure to log in to your Parent Portal account to complete the Annual Update. The online update will replace the emergency forms you have received in the past. Keeping household information updated will help families stay connected and be informed of upcoming events, and it will ensure you receive information regarding any important announcements.

To complete the annual update, please do the following:

1) Log in to your Parent Portal Account
2) Select "More."
3) Select "Online Registration"
4) Select "23-24 School Year Annual Update for Existing Students"

The information that is in our system will auto-populate for parents to review or update. Please be sure to submit your annual update as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please contact Christa Larson at larsonchrista@rockford.k12.mn.us or 763-477-9165.

Please call our attendance line to report your child absent.

SCHOOL Attendance

763-477-7525

Option 1: REAMS Option 2: RMS-CES Option 3: RHS

Option 4: Galaxy Option 5: Launching Pad Preschool

PARENT- COMMUNITY NEWS

Not ISD 883 Sponsored Events

CATALOG FUNDRAISER AND STAFF APPRECIATION LUNCH

Thank you to all who participated in the Club's Choice Catalog Fundraiser! Reminder: paper orders and money were due back to the school Friday, April 5th. If you forgot to turn in your orders, please bring them to the school on Monday, April 8th. Delivery Date: Wednesday, May 15th 2:45-6pm @ REAMS gym.

For information about this fundraiser, visit: www.rockfordfoundation.org/catalog.

Coming Up: Staff Appreciation Week May 6-10, 2024

The Rockford Education Foundation will be hosting a Mexican-themed Potluck on Tuesday, May 7th to show appreciation for all our wonderful staff! We are asking for your help by donating food or funds for our staff at the schools and bus garage. If you would like to contribute, you can sign up to Donate Food or Donate Funds.

ROCKET BOOSTERS SCHOOL STORE

Get your Rocket Gear at our very own school store!

School Store
April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Store Hours: 6:30p-8:30p HS Choir Concert	10	11 Store Hours: 6:00p-8:00p 2nd Gr. Concert	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Dates and times subject to change based on event changes. Any changes will be updated and posted on our social media platforms.