

RMS-CES ROCKET NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2024



December

December 10th

8th Grade

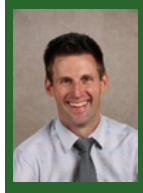
Curriculum Fair @ RHS

December 23rd-January 1st

Winter Break

At RMS-CES, students are empowered to become innovators through engaging, authentic and developmentally appropriate opportunities, access to a strong academic foundation, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

We are a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) School with a focus on Environmental Studies.



From the Principal

RMS-CES Families,

As we navigate the last month of 2024 it is an important reminder of the value of staying connected and informed about all that is happening in our schools. From helpful tools like accessing your child's assessments through the parent portal to exciting opportunities for math homework support, we continue to focus on fostering growth and collaboration. This newsletter highlights ways to support your child academically, a powerful message about the value of planning, and a special "save the date" announcement for an upcoming student event.

See your Child's Assessments: Did you know that you could see your child's assessment on your parent portal App? Click on Menu- Click on More- Click on Assessments

Math Homework Help: Your child's math teacher will be reaching out in the near future regarding math homework help that will be offered once a week after school from 2:45pm to 4 pm. If you have any interest in potentially volunteering to help students with their math homework after school, once a week, please email me at Paul.Warzecha@rockford883.org. If there is enough interest we might potentially consider the option of opening an opt-in math homework support during lunch for students who might feel like they need additional time or support with their math homework.



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From the Principal

The Power Of a Plan: On any given week each of you has to be intentional to make a plan and address it whether it is the simple tasks of meal planning, grocery shopping, laundry, planning your week or completing a home project. We often forget that the act of making a plan and following through on that plan is a complex set of skills. As we try to build and foster this skill at school as students create plans for completing work, preparing for tests or making progress on a larger project we ask for your partnership by taking the time to share how you develop a plan and see it through so your child can see the connection between the daily and the academic!

Save the Date: Our Student Council Leaders have been doing a great job at leading our building in a variety of ways, and we wanted to let you know that they have identified that there will be a dance on the evening of Friday February 28th. More information will follow, however, I wanted to make sure that all families had the date in the event their child wanted to attend.

I appreciate this time of year as it causes us to pause and be grateful for one another and also to be proud of the strides that these children have made so far this school year as it relates to academics, personal growth, planning or following through. Thank you for your continued support and involvement. I wish you a wonderful week ahead.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Paul Warzecha
Principal
Rockford Middle School

RMS-CES | COUNSELORS CORNER



CHARACTER STRONG!

These CharacterDare challenges also provide students with more opportunities to practice habits discussed in class such as:

- Conversation Starters: Ways to practice positive communication for the whole family.
- Acts of Kindness: Simple ideas to support each other at home and in the community.
- Recreation and Rest: Fun and relaxing ways to unwind and enjoy each other's company.
- Expressions of Love: A variety of invitations family members can use to give & receive love.

Cell PHONE

Away for the Day Website <https://www.awayfortheday.org>

AASA Article: A Mind Shift Over Cellphones in Schools
<https://www.aasa.org/resources/resource/mindshift-over-cellphones-schools>

Book Study: The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness by Jonathan Haidt

United States Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy released a new Surgeon General's Advisory on Social Media and Youth Mental Health - [PDF](#)



Guided Imagery

Guided imagery can have many health-related physical and emotional benefits. The steps that follow can help you teach teens to use their imaginations to actually change how they are feeling and what they are focused on.

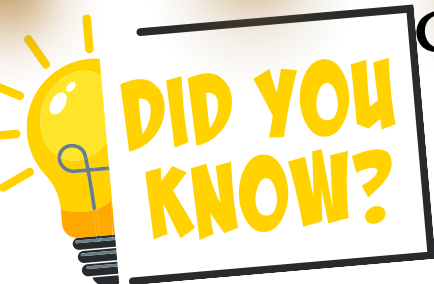
www.changetochill.org



Please click [HERE](#) to read more about Chronic Absentism

Since COVID, chronic absenteeism has increased substantially. Up to 30% of Minnesota students are considered chronically absent. The criteria for being considered chronically absent is missing 10% or more of school days. When students are absent from school they miss critical instruction time and are at the greatest risk of falling behind. Please review the link below to learn more.





School-Based Therapy

NYSTROM
& ASSOCIATES



Mrs. McKayla Kent

As the school-based therapist at RMS, I am available to work with students before, during, and after school hours on Tuesdays and Wednesdays with the understanding that I do not request sessions with students during their core classes. Sessions last from 45-60 minutes and, unless needs require otherwise, are held weekly.

On occasion, sessions involving parents and students are required as part of the therapeutic process to ensure that the family dynamics that may contribute to student behaviors are addressed as well. I also am available as a resource for staff to provide any training or input for interventions or needs as they come throughout the year.

My HOURS

Monday-
Thursday 7:30-
5:30pm



RMS-CES | PARENT-COMMUNITY

News



YEARBOOK

ORDER YOUR
STUDENTS 2024-2025
HERE

Walsworth yearbooks



The Minnesota Department of Revenue offers families valuable tax benefits on the 2024 income tax returns. Minnesota offers several credits that ease the financial burden for families, renters, homeowners, and working individuals

Please click [HERE](#) to view the Child Tax Credit Benefits

Please click [HERE](#) to view the K-12 Education Subtraction and Credit

<https://www.revenue.state.mn.us/>

RMS-CES | PARENT-COMMUNITY News



Support Prom 2025!



The junior parents have many activities underway to fund Prom 2025

- Supporting 50/50 drawings at sporting events
- Purchasing cookies sold at sporting events

*Please consider supporting us this year.
Thank you!*

**Need any Rockford Spirit Wear?!
Anyone need any gifts?**

*check
this
out*

**Scan the
QR code to
see store
hours!**

Rocket Store Hours



RMS-CES | PARENT-COMMUNITY

Rockford Education Foundation



PASSPORT TO TRAVEL



 **FLIGHT 883 / FIRST CLASS Invitation**

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Passport to Travel Fall Event on Friday, November 22nd! It was a huge success, and we raised over \$118,898 to continue providing support to Rockford Area Schools, staff, and students. The event highlighted fund-a-need projects for each school:

- **REAMS Art Experience**
- **RMS-CES Environmental Experiences**
- **RHS 'Find Your Way' Career Exploration**

THANK YOU!



If you would still like to contribute to one of these fund-a-needs, please visit:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/2024fund-a-needdonation>

RMS-CES | PARENT-COMMUNITY

Rockford Education Foundation



With the holidays quickly approaching, are you looking for the perfect gift for the incredible staff at Rockford Schools? The Rockford Education Foundation has you covered! Order a Gratitude Gift and show your appreciation while supporting the Mini-Grant Program.

Gratitude Gift Details:

- Donation Options: \$10, \$20, and \$50
- Gift Includes: A personalized gift card for the recipient ([see example](#))
- Delivery: Gifts will be delivered to the school between December 17-19
- Purpose: All donations support the Mini-Grant Program!

Spread some holiday cheer to a teacher, para, custodian, bus driver, or any staff member who has made an impact on you or your student!

Order Your Gratitude Gifts Here:

<https://www.rockfordfoundation.org/events/gratitude-gifts/>

Deadline to order: December 13th at Midnight

Please note: This is not an ISD 883 sponsored event.

**Stay up-to-date on events and funding by following us
on Facebook:**

www.facebook.com/rockfordeducationfoundation

RMS-CES| POINTS OF PRIDE Veterans Day



We were honored to have Post 377 Honor Guard with us again this year to lead our program with thier flag ceremony. Thank you!



RMS Band played "The Star Spangled Banner"



Principal Mr. Paul Warzecha opened our program with a few words then turned it over to our Student Council, led by one of our teachers, Abbey Kaufman



RMS Student Council collectively wrote a speech & each of them shared, here's a quote, "Showing respect for this country and all of the people in it is something we can all do. Kindness is a choice you make every single day"



RMS-CES | PARENT-COMMUNITY

Staff Spotlight



Emily Herold
8th Grade math



This is my first year teaching at Rockford Middle School! I graduated in 2024 from Bemidji State University with two Bachelor of Science degrees—one in Mathematics and the other in Math Education. I'm licensed to teach grades 5-12 and currently teach 8th-grade math. I also serve as one of the ADSIS Math Interventionists, helping support students in their mathematical growth. I'm so glad to be starting my teaching career here at Rockford!

Favorite Things:

Baking
Traveling/Exploring New Places
Staying active



I teach sixth grade math/ social studies and 2024-25 is my first year at Rockford Middle School- Center of Environmental Studies! This is my third year teaching in total, previously I taught third grade and eighth grade math. I graduated from the University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with a minor in General Science.



Andraya Hill
6th Grade math

Favorite Things:

Going to the dog park
Fishing on Mille Lacs Lake
Fall (season)
Iced coffee



Ashley Pellaton
7th Grade math



I graduated from the College of Saint Benedict with a degree in K-6 elementary education with a concentration in 5-8 mathematics. I have been teaching for 14 years and have taught all ages from birth to high school. Most recently I have been an interventionist within the Monticello district but am thrilled to be in Rockford teaching my favorite subject. This year I have the pleasure of teaching 7th grade math at RMS-CES.

Favorite Things:

Math concept: fractions and algebraic equations
Sport: MN hockey
Season: Fall

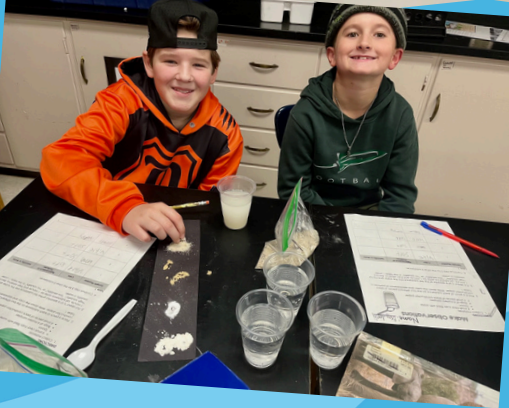
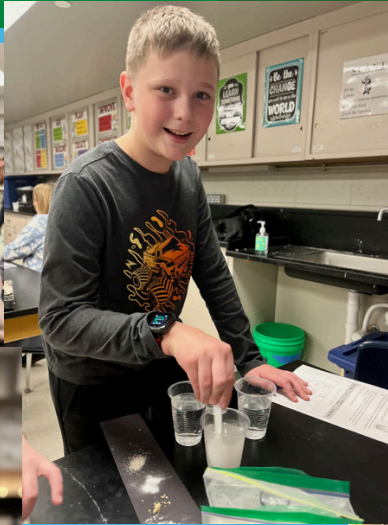


I also love to spend time with my husband & 2 girls at home and bake when I can

RMS-CES | POINTS OF PRIDE

5th

Science w/ Ms. O

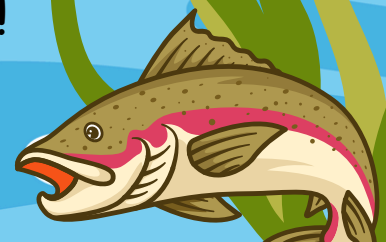


TROUT TANK



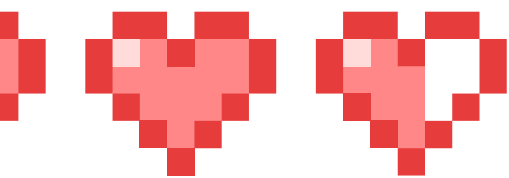
IN SCIENCE THIS FALL WE HAVE BEEN WORKING ON GETTING OUR TROUT TANK READY FOR OUR RAINBOW TROUT EGGS WHICH ARRIVE ON DECEMBER 11TH. STUDENTS WORKED TOGETHER TO CLEAN THE SUPPLIES, ADD WATER, AND HAVE BEEN TESTING THE WATER CHEMISTRY ALONG THE WAY. WE HAVE DISCUSSED THE IMPORTANCE OF GROWING "GOOD" BACTERIA THAT ARE NECESSARY IN THE TANK TO HELP KEEP THE WATER CLEAN AFTER THE EGGS ARRIVE AND HATCH INTO RAINBOW TROUT. WE HAVE ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF COLD, CLEAN, OXYGENATED WATER OUR TROUT NEED TO SURVIVE AS THEY ARE A FRAGILE SPECIES. THE FIFTH GRADERS AND I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHERE THIS PROJECT TAKES US NEXT!

FIFTH GRADE SCIENTISTS HAVE BEEN WORKING TO DETERMINE WHAT MATTER IS AND IDENTIFYING SUBSTANCES BASED UPON THEIR PROPERTIES. STUDENTS TESTED THE SOLUBILITY OF FOUR MYSTERY SUBSTANCES TO IDENTIFY EACH SUBSTANCE. STUDENTS ALSO TESTED THE CONDUCTIVITY AND REFLECTIVITY OF 6 MYSTERY BLOCKS TO HELP IDENTIFY THOSE MATERIALS AS WELL! NEXT, WE ARE DIVING HEAD FIRST INTO CHEMISTRY WITH PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL CHANGES!

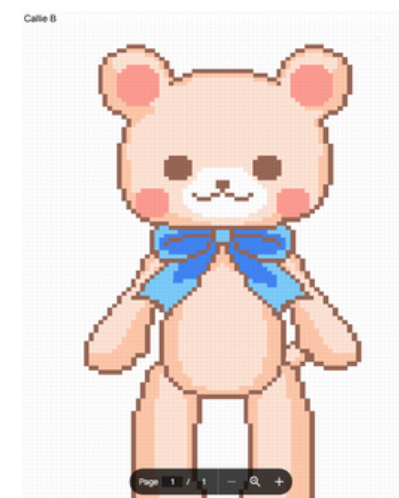
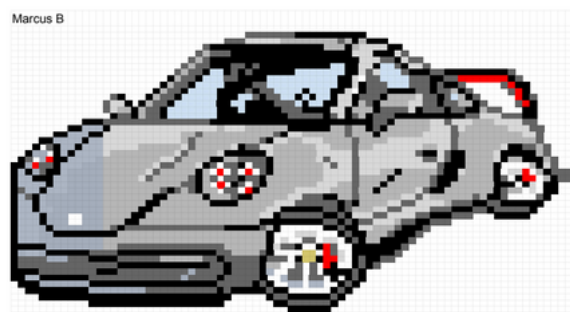


RMS-CES| POINTS OF PRIDE

Digital Skills w/ Ms. Russell

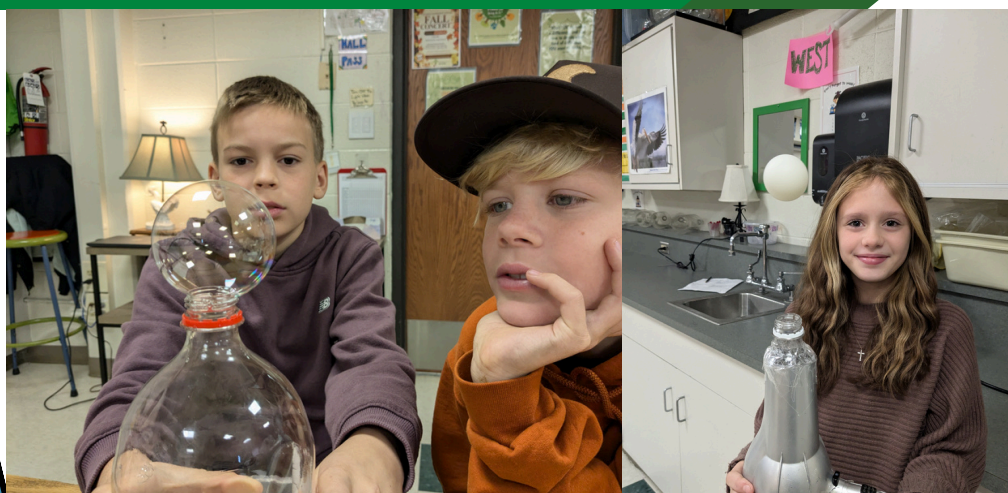
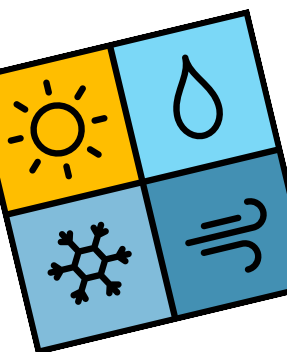


6TH GRADE DIGITAL SKILLS
STUDENTS USED CONDITIONAL
FORMATTING IN GOOGLE
SHEETS TO CREATE PIXEL ART.
STUDENTS HAD TO SELECT
THE CELLS, THEN FORMAT THE
SHEET TO HAVE THE CELL
CHANGE TO A SPECIFIC COLOR,
DEPENDING ON WHAT NUMBER
OR LETTER WAS TYPED IN. THE
ARTWORK TURNED OUT GREAT!



RMS-CES| POINTS OF PRIDE

Science w/ Ms. Werth



Over the last month or so of school, 6th graders in science have been working to answer the question, "Why does hail form on some days and not others?" This has led us to investigate many influencing factors including what happens to the air near the ground on a sunny day, what happens when a parcel of air (a balloon) is heated, where does the water in the air come from, and what happens to the water in the air when we cool the air. Most recently, we have started to investigate why the water droplets and ice crystals that make up clouds don't just fall immediately down to Earth when they form. We discussed weight, looked at how opposing forces could counteract motion of gravity, and showed a few examples of that happening in the classroom!



RMS-CES | POINTS OF PRIDE

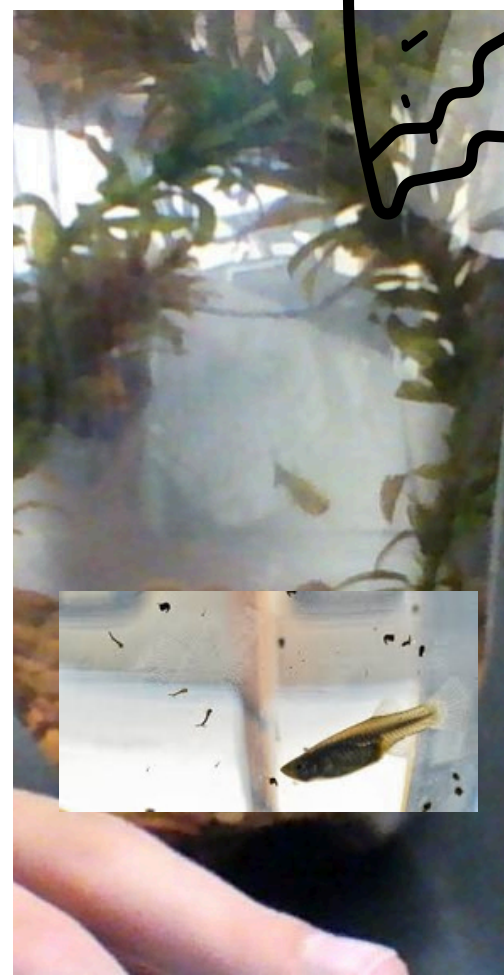
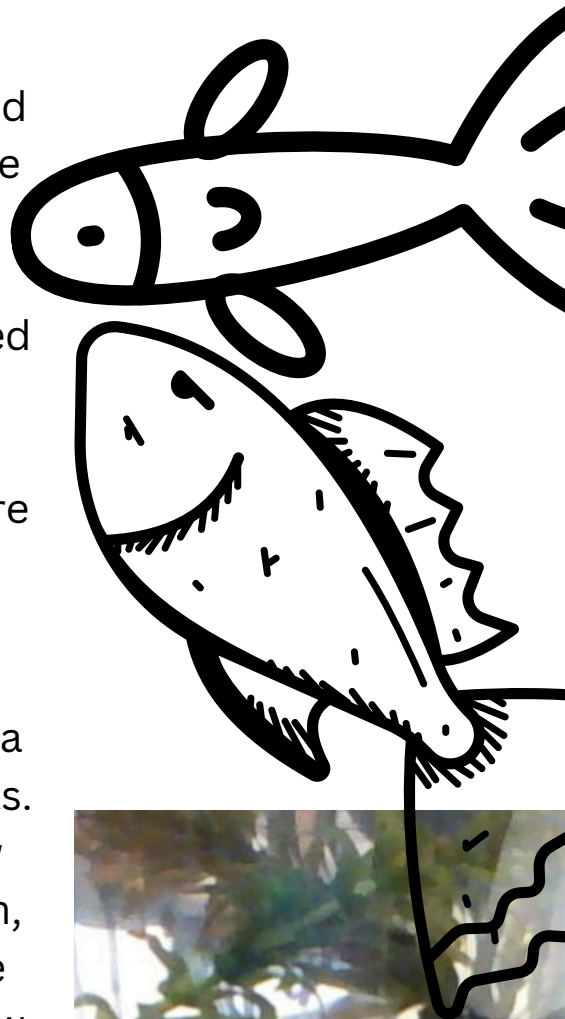
Science w/ Ms. Sarsland



We have had another exciting year with Bottle Biology. It started with a surprise donation of around 100 guppies from a wonderful 8th Grade donor! The students study the Scientific Method with this project and Ecosystems. Each project was able to choose a question using objects they were interested in trying with the guppies. From Music to Colored Beads, from Blowing Bubbles to Mirrors, from Watching Videos to Paper Clip hoops and many more items we had an opportunity to once again do a wonderful Inquiry Project.

As we hit the 30+ year mark, it is amazing how such a simple creature can touch the hearts of our students. From having "guppy babies" to learning about how photosynthesis from the plant gives the fish oxygen, it continues not to disappoint. We sent them home and even had a few move down the hallway to fellow teachers' classes. You will see "Guppy Selfies" with our students, graphs we made to show their responses and our students did a wonderful job of sharing their findings in small groups.

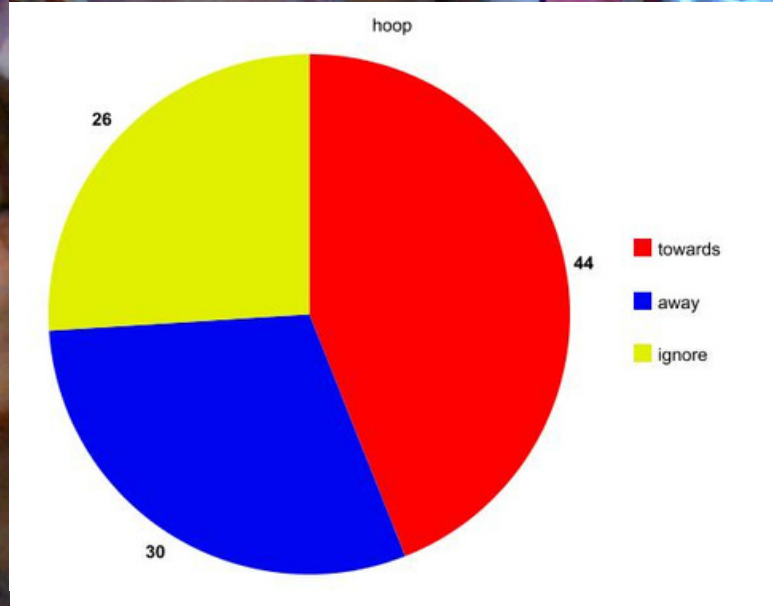
As we continue to move forward, we will look back at Bottle Biology with fond memories. It's always fun to watch our students take ownership of this project. Thanks to all the parents who are willing to assist the transition and allow this little creature to come home, a big thank you!!!



RMS-CES | POINTS OF PRIDE

Science w/ Ms. Sarsland

7



RMS-CES | POINTS OF PRIDE

Science w/ Ms. Budde

8th



Eighth grade students have been busy during the month of November learning about energy transfers and transformations! We studied collisions between moving objects, modeled heat transfer between hot and cold materials, and used the engineering design process to design, build, and test our own lunch boxes made from recyclable materials to minimize thermal energy transfer. We also completed a detailed case study about Urban Heat Islands, learning about their causes and consequences for the environment and public health.

Check out a few "projects in progress"
in the featured photos, and come to the STEM Showcase this spring to see more of our best lunch box designs on display!