Rocket Newsletter

October 2025

Important Dates:

- October 7: Picture Retake Day
- October 8: PSAT
- October 15 - 17: MEA Break! No School
- October 21: RHS Career Fair
- October 23: Fall Conferences

October 10: World Mental Health Day!

On October 10th, our schools and community would like to take a moment to recognize the importance of health and wellness. We know that student well-being - both physical and emotional - is key to learning and growth.

This day offers a chance for us all to pause and think about healthy habits that support children and families; such as:

- Getting enough rest and staying active
- Eating balanced meals
- Talking openly about feelings and challenges
- Taking time for fun, creativity, and connection

Some choose to wear yellow on October 10 as a visible way to show support for health and wellness. Whether or not your child wears yellow, we hope this day sparks conversations at home about many ways we can nurture both body and mind.

The mission of Rockford High School is to foster the development of a caring environment by prioritizing personal relationships and creating a collaborative culture that prepares all students to become inquisitive lifelong learners who act as compassionate global citizens.

From the Principal



Greetings RHS Families,

Happy October! Our first month of the 25-26 school year flew by as students got used to new teachers, norms and expectations. We are excited to share information about the first few weeks of school in this newsletter and the goals that will guide our progress this year to achieve even greater results for our outstanding school community. Thank you for your support during another great start!

SENIOR PARENTS: October is "College Knowledge" month. There is a special focus on opportunity knowledge, college options, our direct admissions partnership with several public universities in Minnesota, and more. October is also the month we host our career fair; if your child's first foray into employment doesn't require additional schooling, they should be thinking about making contacts in their desired career field. If you haven't already, begin discussing your child's post-secondary plans to chart a course for the transition into full adulthood in the spring (it will come fast, and it will be okay).

JUNIOR PARENTS: I say it publicly every fall--not to intimidate, but to acknowledge--that junior year is the hardest year for many students. The rigor of courses increase among the CIS/IB SL and HL classes, responsibilities with family, jobs, and sports may increase as they take on roles as starters, captains, shift supervisors, and more. As parents, please reinforce the need for balance, realistic expectations, and routine.

SOPHOMORE PARENTS: Sophomore year involves a lot of exciting 'firsts' for students--typically their first driving experience, first job, first full-year knowing what high school entails, and more. I speak with the sophomores each fall to introduce them to IB DP level activities, and we discuss the conclusion of the MYP program as well as the transition to DP and CP pathway options before they register for next year's courses in December. Please discuss your student's experience thus far, how they are approaching their 10th grade workload, and map out what junior and senior year might look like (there is a tool called Academic Planner in the Student Portal if you want to actually complete this exercise).

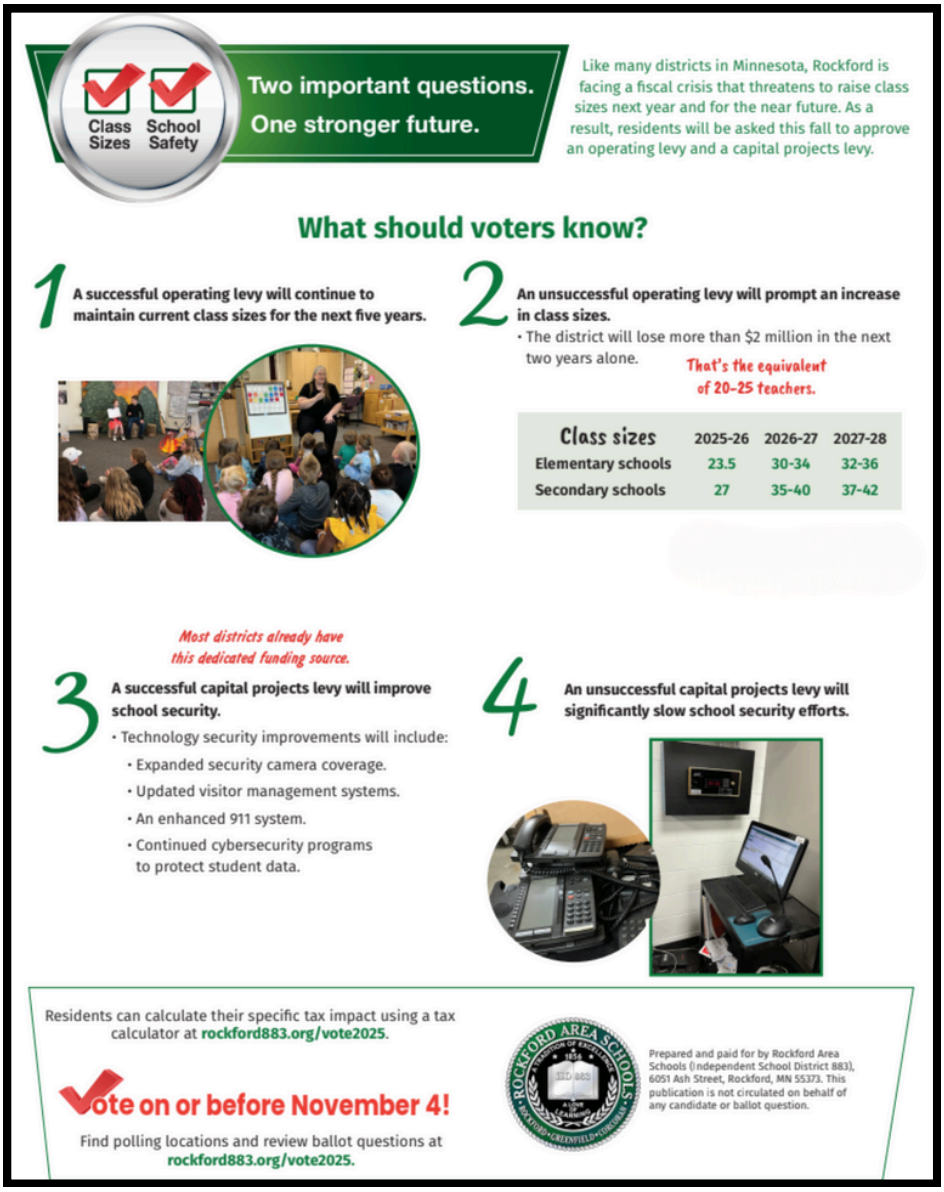
FRESHMEN PARENTS: There is a lot to wrap your head around as a 9th grade student. It's a new building, there is a significantly larger emphasis on student agency (instead of relying on adults to anticipate needs or communicate on your behalf), and a lot more autonomy than a middle school environment. Some students come equipped with skills to handle those freedoms, and others are learning quickly. Please talk to your student about their transition to high school, their ability to manage this next step in young adulthood, and what supports they may need.

Go Rockets!

Sincerely,

Paul Menard
RHS Principal

RHS | Parent-Community News





Dear Parents/Guardians,

Two very important questions will appear on the **November 4th general election ballot** and the outcome of the election will have a significant impact on our school operations.

The passage of the first question will allow us to sustain, and in some instances reduce, class size and the passage of the second question will allow us to upgrade and enhance school safety and security.

Rockford Area School continue to lag behind the other local districts in school funding and because state funding has not kept up with inflation, we are facing a critical funding gap. If you have not done so already, please visit: *https://www.rockford883.org/vote2025*
to become informed about the impact of the ballot questions.

RHS | Parent-Community News



Attention:

During the 2023 Minnesota Legislative Session, lawmakers signed into law the Free School Meals program for students, and this continues into the 25-26 school year.

All students will be eligible for one reimbursable breakfast and one reimbursable lunch per day free of charge. This is only for their first meal for breakfast and for lunch. A la Carte and anything extra still will add to your balance due.

Meal Prices

Breakfast

- Adult/Second full Student Meal: $2.50

Lunch

- Adult/Second full Student Meal: $5.05

Food Service Reminder

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.

Attendance Line: 763-477-7525

Please call our attendance line to report your student's absence.



Option 1: REAMS
Options 2: RMS-CES
Option 3: RHS
Option 4: Galaxy
Option 5: Launching Pad Preschool

RHS | Parent-Community News

Welcome Back to School!

Attendance Policy & Procedures

Whether your student arrives late, leaves early, is gone for an entire day or will be gone for an extended period of time, we ask that you follow our attendance procedures and policies in a timely manner.



You can utilize the *NEW Infinite Campus Feature: Absence Request* (*click here to learn more*) or our Attendance line to submit absences.

Important!

While we ask the you call in every time your students attendance needs to be adjusted, they will only be given an excused absence/tardy if it is on our list of excused reasons.

Review the Student Handbook for more information

- **Arriving Late/Leaving Early**: Use one of these options
  - Call and leave a voicemail - Students name, grade, what time they will arrive/leave, and why
  - Call and speak to someone in the front office - Use this if your student needs to leave at the time of the call
  - Utilize Absence Request function on Infinite Campus
- **One Day Absence**: Use one of these options
  - Call and leave a voicemail - Students name, grade, what day they will be gone and why
  - Call and speak to someone in the front office
  - Utilize Absence Request function on Infinite Campus
- **Extended Absence**:
  - Leave a voicemail, speak with someone in the office, or utilize Absence Request on Infinite Campus
  - Pick-Up a Pre-Excused Absence form from the front office. Your student will bring this to all of their teachers to note the missing classwork/homework. After, the parent/guardian will need to sign it, excusing their absence. Return the form to the front office after it is completed.

RHS | Parent-Community News

ATTENTION SENIORS!

Senior Portrait submissions are now open!

Senior Portraits are due at 11:59 pm on January 15th, 2026. **NO LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED!**

Please submit your Senior Portrait using this link: *https://photos.jostens.com/6YK8U8*

If you are using a professional photographer, you can share this link with them to submit your photo.
**Please make sure the file is saved as LAST NAME FIRST NAME.*

You can also order specialized ads for your graduating senior!

To purchase an ad, use this link: *https://www.jostens.com/apps/jcom/router.mvc?affiliateId=1062202*

Ads are $24 per ⅛ page
Purchases are due January 15th, 2026. **NO EXCPETIONS!**

School Pictures are Here!

Good news! School Pictures are now available for parents/guardians to view and order online!

To Order

- Visit *https://shop.jostenspix.com/login*
- Sign in or create an account if you do not already have one.
- You will need the following information:
  - Event Code: FE73325
  - Student First & Last Name
  - School Name: Rockford High School
  - Infinite Campus Student ID

Order Your Yearbook Today!

Yearbook preorders are now available!

To order your yearbook, click *HERE*!

You can also customize your students yearbook! *Pricing available in the link.*

- Custom Text/Name on yearbook cover
- Personalized Icons (Up to 4)
- Color Autograph Section
- Clear Protective Cover
- Photo Pockets

RHS | Parent-Community News

Support Your 2026 Prom Committee!

Mini Photo Sessions

This year the 2026 Prom Committee will be offering Mini Photo sessions to help raise money for Prom! There will be a Fall photo session offered in October and a Holiday photo session offered in November with Images of Hope Photography.

These are 15 minutes sessions with fully edited photos. To reserve your spot, use the Sign-Up Genius links below!



Fall Mini Photo Session

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0949AAF28A1FA7-57908489-fall

Holiday Mini Photo Session

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0949AAF28A1FA7-57929738-holiday

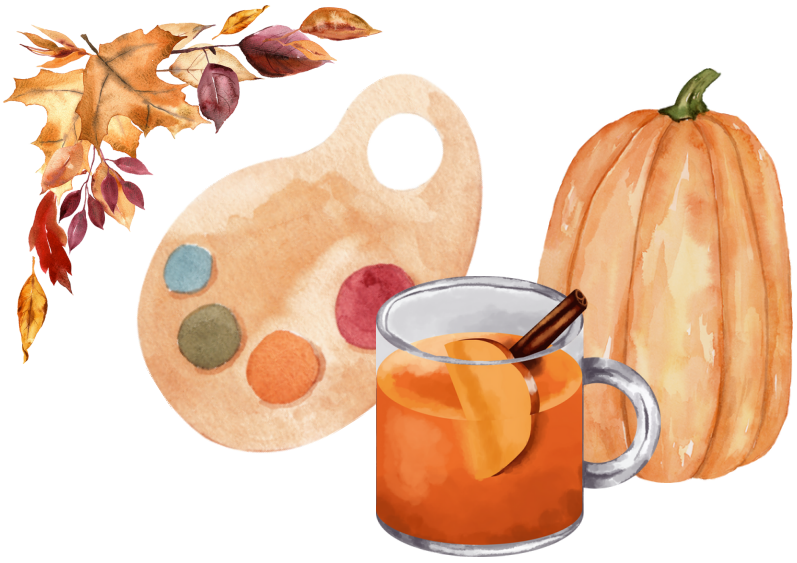
To support our student-led fundraiser, we kindly ask for a minimum donation of $50. Your generosity beyond that is always welcome. You can Venmo @RHS2027 or set-up payment arrangement with Candice Lark to save your registrations.



If you have any questions, you can contact Candice Lark at 763-202-9143.

Not an ISD 883 Sponsored Event

RHS | Parent-Community News



Paint & Sip for Prom!

Join us on Sunday, October 5th and Clay's Bar & Grill for our Fall Paint & Sip fundraiser!

To register, click the link below: https://forms.monday.com/forms/7c6d2fbbd2f51bb833d615280a830047?r=use1

Registration is $45 per person, which includes paint supplies, one canvas and live instructions By DrunkenEasel
Clays Bar and Grill full bar and food will be available for you to purchase. Thank you for your support!

BIG Cash Bingo!

Grab your friends, family and neighbors for our BINGO fundraiser on Saturday, November 8th at Clay's Bar & Grill! Come early as it's first come, first serve!

$1,500 Final Coverall, $500 First Coverall, 6 games with a $200 payout and 8 games with a $28 package!
Any questions, please email cmlark@me.com

Thank you for your support and have an amazing school year!
Not an ISD 883 Sponsored Event



RHS | Parent-Community News



Art of the Dog Exhibition

Mrs. Weber's drawing class and Mr. Tauber's marketing class will collaborate with The Spot to create the Art of the Dog Exhibition!

Students from Mrs. Weber's art class held a photo shoot at The Spot in late September. From these photos, students will then create their original drawings. Mr. Tauber's marketing class will create the promotional and marketing portion of the collaboration

Join us on Oct. 28th at 6:00 pm at The Spot. Drawings will be auctioned off that evening and proceeds will be going to the Rockford Art Program. Snacks and water will be provided by The Spot! We hope to see you there!

SCHOOL STORE

October 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 Store Hours: 5-8pm	10 Store Hours: 5-7pm	11
12	13	14 Store Hours: 4-6pm	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 Store Hours: 5-7pm	24	25
26	27	28	29 Store Hours: 5-7pm	30	31 Happy Halloween!	

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

REF News & Updates

OCTOBER 2025

Welcome Back to School!

The Rockford Education Foundation (REF) is excited to kick-off another amazing school year! Thank you for supporting our mission to enhance education and create opportunities for Rockford students from PreK-12.

Fundraiser Successes



Your generosity continues to make a difference!

- **DAYHA "Support Our Teachers" Bingo** at Clays in late August raised **$1,000** to support our Mini-Grant fund and provided schools and staff with additional school supplies.
- **School Toolbox Fundraiser** raised **over $2,300** to help fund impactful and innovative projects throughout the district.



Because of your ongoing support, REF has recently funded:

- **REAMS & RMS Student Planners**
- **Hospitality & Tourism Management Course Textbooks** for the RHS Career Path program
- **Activities for Rocket Block Responsive Sessions** at RHS
- **New Staff Gifts** for 27 new hires







MADE POSSIBLE BY DONORS OF ROCKFORD EDUCATION FOUNDATION ISD 883 MN

SUPPORTING EDUCATION AND GROWTH

Upcoming Events

Family Bingo Night & Costume Swap



Friday, October 3rd doors open at 5:30pm | Bingo starts at 6:00pm
REAMS Common Area - enter through door 35
FREE Event - bring the family for a fun night of fun! **Register Here**
Concessions available for purchase



REAMS Kindness Fundraiser

October 14-30

Join us in raising funds for ARTS EXPERIENCES - including field trips, artist in residency, theater program, and much more - while spreading acts of kindness throughout the community.

80's Game Show Night



✨ Our biggest fundraiser of the year! ✨

We're calling for **sponsors** and **in-kind donations** to help make this night unforgettable.

For more information, visit:
https://www.rockfordfoundation.org/events/fall-event/
or email Nikki Arvold at nikki@rockfordfoundation.org

Tickets on sale October 24 for the general public. Don't miss your chance to join the fun!

Stay Connected

Stay up to date on events, fundraisers, and the impact you're making!

Get Involved - We Need Volunteers!

AsREF expands its community events and fundraisers, we need volunteers to help bring these opportunities to life!
Sign up to volunteer: www.rockfordfoundation.org/get-involved/

IN THE CLASSROOM



IB Program - “Launch Your Future” Initiative

At Rockford High School, education is a mission that goes beyond academics. Students are called to Engage in Learning, Ignite their Curiosity, and Launch their Futures—a guiding philosophy that empowers them to take control of their education and future.

Through rigorous coursework, students build critical thinking and problem-solving skills while developing a strong academic foundation. Each student designs a personalized four-year plan, encouraging ownership of their learning and helping them stay on track toward their goals.

Rockford offers specialized classes and programs that expose students to real-world career pathways—from engineering and healthcare to business, the arts, and more—supporting each student’s unique passions and aspirations.

Throughout their journey, students will:

- Think critically and solve complex problems
- Set personal goals and map out their learning
- Explore career options through diverse classes
- Collaborate and communicate effectively
- Stay curious, creative, and open to innovation





Rockford High School prepares students not just for graduation, but for life. By fostering independence, curiosity, and essential life skills, Rockford helps every student launch into a successful and fulfilling future.

Meet the Coordinator

Jill Gordee has been a school counselor since 2001 and joined Rockford High School in 2015 after serving as a school counselor for 13 years in Wisconsin. She now serves as our AVID Coordinator and International Baccalaureate Coordinator for MYP, DP, and CP programs.

While she doesn’t teach in a classroom, Ms. Gordee loves helping students build organizational skills, explore pathways, and prepare for future success.



Into the Classroom



Intro to Education

This year at Rockford High School, there is a new class and concurrent enrollment opportunity that supports an education pathway! The **Introduction to Education** class allows junior and senior students who are interested in Education to explore and experience the teaching profession. So far this semester, students have been reflecting on teachers - in school and life - who have impacted them, learning about educational philosophies, and considering how to build positive learning environments.

One student shared, “I enjoy the work we do in this class.” Key components of the class, in alignment with the St. Cloud State class, are a philosophy paper and a twenty hour field experience. For the field experience, students are paired with a Cooperating Teacher at REAMS or RMS-CES based on what grade level or subject they’re interested in. Already, students have shared powerful reflections:

- ***“The field experience is really fun!”***
- ***“I have enjoyed getting field experience and making decisions that could impact my future.”***
- ***“I’m excited to have this experience so that I can see if teaching is truly something I want to do, but also because I’m getting to already start learning how to teach. I chose to do this class because I want to be the best teacher I can be and I’m looking forward to learning more about education both in class and during field training, and gaining some knowledge and skills before college.***

As these reflections show, it’s going to be a great semester!



Meet the Teacher

I graduated from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities in 2003 with a degree in English. After completing my undergraduate degree, I continued my education at the U to earn my teaching license (2004) and, eventually, my master's degree (2006). I earned a graduate certificate in Universal Design for Learning in May 2021.

My teaching career began at Rockford High School in 2004. In 2023, I became the district Learning & Innovation Specialist and continued teaching English. The 2025-2026 school year is my first in the Learning & Innovation role full-time, aside from our new Intro to Education elective.

RHS | Counselor's Corner

Meet The Counselors



Ellie Engstrom: 9th & 10th Grade

Hello! My name is Ellie Engstrom and I've been at Rockford High School since 2023. I have also been at Rockford Middle School - Center for Environmental Studies since 2022. I graduated from St. Cloud State University with both my Bachelor's and Master's degree. In my spare time, I love to be up north spending time on the lake.



Samantha Bloom: 11th & 12th Grade

My name is Samantha Bloom and I have been at Rockford High School as a Counselor since 2020. I received my Undergrad in Psychology from St. Scholastica, and my Master of Education Degree in School Counseling Pre-K through 12 from the University of Wisconsin Superior. In my free time I enjoy reading and spending time on the lake.

Contact Us!

Ms. Ellie Engstrom, Rockford High School Counselor at *ellie.engstrom@rockford883.org* or call *763-477-5846, ext. 3020*

Ms. Samantha Bloom, Rockford High School Counselor at *samantha.bloom@rockford883.org* or call *763-477-5846, ext. 3033*

Mental Health Resources

- **Crisis Text Line- Suicide Prevention Resource for Teens:** Text "*MN*" to 741741
- **Hennepin County Mental Health Crisis Response Line:** 1-612-348-2233 (adult)
- **Wright County Mental Health Crisis Response Line:** 1-800-635-8008
- **Trevor Project for LGBTQ Youth in Need:** Text "*start*" to 678-678 or call 1-866-488-7386
- **National Sexual Assault Telephone Hotline:** 800-656-4673
- **PrairieCare- Assessment and Intake Team:** 952-826-8475

CARING FOR YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH!

Transformational Therapy Services now offers in-school mental health at all Rockford Schools!

At Transformational Therapy Services (TTS), we know how much you want your children to feel happy, confident, and supported–both in school and at home. That's why we've partnered with Rockford Schools to bring mental health and wellness services directly to your family's fingertips.

How We Can Help Your Child:

- School-based therapy for anxiety, depression, ADHD, trauma, and behavioral challenges
- Medication management with a skilled psychiatric team when needed
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) sessions to build resilience, emotional awareness, and healthy coping skills
- Family therapy and supports to strengthen relationships and communication at home

Signs Your Child May Need Extra Support:

- Sudden changes in mood, sleep, or appetite
- Trouble focusing or declining grades
- Withdrawal from friends or activities
- Big emotional reactions or frequent meltdowns
- Persistent worry, sadness, or irritability

If you've noticed any of these, early support can make a lasting difference!

Services are available in-school or in-clinic Your child can access support during their school day or after school in office in Rockford. We make the process simple and confidential.

Let's Take the Next Step Together

Email us: info@transformationaltherapymn.com

Visit us: www.transformationaltherapymn.com

or

Ask your child's teacher about a referral for school-based therapy.

Early support changes lives–and we're here to make that happen for your family!

OCTOBER IS COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE MONTH

2025-26 RHS Senior Welcome Letter

October is College Knowledge Month at RHS! Students will meet with their counselor to review the college application process, how to request a letter of recommendation, how to request their transcript, apply for scholarships, and more! Please read through out **Welcome Letter** for all the exciting things going on in October for our seniors.

College Applications

Most Minnesota colleges and universities waive application fees in the month of October. See the full list **HERE**.

Direct Admissions

RHS participates in the Direct Admissions program through the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. As students begin planning for their future, we want to make sure they know they have options for education and training after high school. In October, students will receive an email from MDE - Direct Admissions which, based on their academic record, will let them know which colleges and universities in Minnesota they have met the admissions criteria for and have direct admission to. Direct Admission also eliminates the application fee and streamlines the admissions process for those school. *This is not a commitment from students to attend.* The list of participating schools can be found **HERE**.

FAFSA- Free Application for Federal Student Aid

The college Planning Series is a series of FREE zoom sessions created specifically for students and families to help them prepare for the financial aid process, college applications, scholarships, and more! Sessions are on Tuesdays at 7:00 pm during the months of September - November.

- Sept. 30 - Explore College Options
- Oct. 7 - Apply to College
- Oct. 14 - Understand Financial Aid
- Oct. 21 - FAFSA 101
- Oct. 28 - Dream Act 101
- Nov. 18 Scholarships 101

To learn more about the sessions and to register, use the **LINK HERE**.

RHS | Athletics & Activities

Highlights from the Summer!



The Rockford Youth Wrestling Camp!
The varsity Rockford Wrestling team held their annual Youth Wrestling summer camp.

The young wrestlers spent their time learning about the sport, and played fun games that helped develop the various wrestling skills they learned! The campers and varsity team had a blast!



The Rockford Trap Team attended Nationals this summer!
The team put up a tough fight, with the team getting behind in the qualifier round 1 but made an amazing comeback ad fought their way back into the finals.

Overall, Rockford took 72nd out of the 240 TEAMS who were there representing the best of the 1,815 teams across the country! Way to go Rockets!

Rockford Boys Cross Country

The Rockford Boys Cross Country team took home the 2025 Lions Invite Team Title for the first time in 30 years!
Led by Juniors Will Czech (4th overall) and Connor Ellos (8th overall), the #8 ranked Class AA team took the Championship Title on September 9th at the 2025 Lions Invitational at Baylor Park. The boys placed all top-5 scoring runners in the top-30 of their race. This is their second win of the season and the first for the boys team at this invitational since 1995!



Homecoming Week



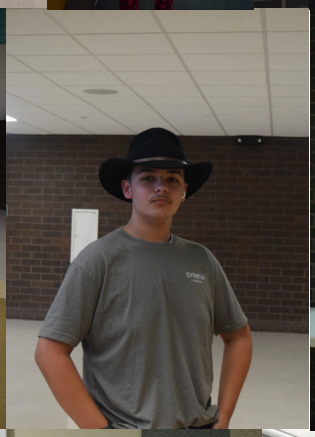




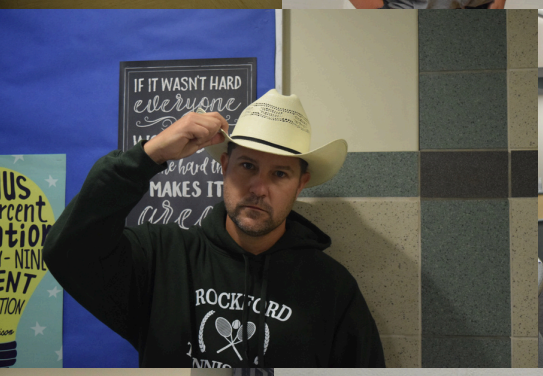






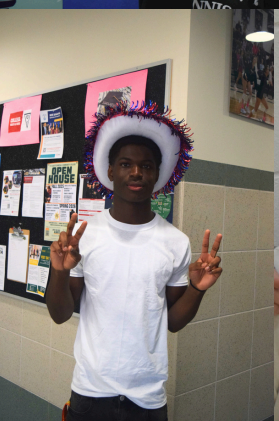





















ROCKFORD





ROCKFORD
CENTRAL
ROCKETS
ROYALS
RAIDERS





Rockets
Band
Seating Area



MOUND
WESTONKA
Proud Partner of the MSHSL
ARMANDALE
CARDINALS
DASSEL
COKATO


ROCKETS


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OF THE ROCKETS
2:54
QTR
GUEST
Down
To Go









THE
ROCKETS
ARE
BRINGING
HEAT






58













ROCKEE






ROCKFORD HIGH SCHOOL
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ROCKFORD HIGH SCHOOL
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