

Rocket Newsletter

January 2026



Important Dates:

- January 15: Semester 1 Finals - Day 1
- January 16: Semester 1 Finals - Day 2
- January 19: No School - Staff PD Day
- January 20: Start of Semester 2
- January 22: Winter FAST Testing
- January 29: Winter FAST Testing



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 New Year! As we enter 2026, I wish all of you the best in health and happiness to carry forward throughout the entire year. I continue to be so grateful for our community. We have begun discussing how to more articulately tell the story of our district: an all-magnet district with no waitlist or lottery, top 10 in the state for ACT average, over 50 college credits available to students, and coming soon we will have 15 career pathways! We also are up to 3 districts coming to visit RHS to see what's the secret in Rockford!

SENIOR PARENTS: I'm going to make this short so you commit this to memory. I have two things to communicate:

1. Your children will be ending the last marking period before they send colleges, employers, and military recruiters their transcript. Do your best to help them do their best.
2. We are missing a significant amount of senior photos for the yearbook (Due 1/15). 83 have turned in senior photos and 38 have not. If your family is one of the 38, please turn in a senior photo (does not need to be professional) or we will use the Josten's school photo. Please allow me to emphasize that I do not want 38 phone calls on 1/16 with people upset because they missed the window. Also, if you have a friend who is a parent of a senior who doesn't get around to reading the newsletter, please text them and ask them if they've submitted a photo. If not, please tell them to submit it or call the office by 1/15. We love to input our senior photos as it is typically such a genuine reflection of who they are and their interests. Thank you!

JUNIOR PARENTS: I've had a lot of talks with your students about a concept that is relatively new to education (for those of us who graduated before the smartphone). There are many different terms for grit, academic stamina, agency, etc. It's the idea that when things get hard we can't quit. As our juniors prepare for final exams and the start of a second semester, they are being highly challenged. Please support them in their studies and encourage them when they become tired, frustrated, confused, or discouraged. Junior year is the most difficult year of high school--and they are doing well!

SOPHOMORE PARENTS: A lot of eager students are completing Driver's Education at RHS! Please note: if your student begins driving to school, please fill out the permit request form located [here](#). Currently there is no cost for a parking permit, but it is required for safety and distinction from RCC members. I'm eager to see the personal projects that your children are creating. That is always a highlight of the year for me! Don't know about it? Ask them what they are doing! I'm sure it will blow you away.

FRESHMEN PARENTS: This month your children will earn the first permanent marks on their transcript. It is incredibly important that you attempt to strike the balance between motivating them to do their best and supporting them emotionally. These are their very first final exams, and the lower the earned GPA is freshman year, the harder it is to climb out and find academic success. There are also some car insurance benefits that would interest you if they perform well!

Go Rockets!

Sincerely,

Paul Menard
RHS Principal

Order Your Yearbook Today!

Yearbook preorders are now available!

To order your
yearbook, click [HERE!](#)

RHS | Parent-Community News



Free Nutritious Meals
For Kids 18 And Under

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

ACT Exam Registration Now Open!

RHS is offering the ACT without writing exam to RHS juniors and seniors on **March 5, 2026**.

Spots are limited and **sign up closes on Thursday, January 15th**.
The exam fee is \$55.00.

Use this form to register: [ACT Exam Registration Form](#)



SCHOOL STORE January 2026

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

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



Give Kids a Smile!

Lake Sarah Dental is hosting a free dental day!

Give Kids a Smile will be held on Friday, February 6th, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

If you are interested in scheduling, please call the clinic as these appointments are first come, first serve reserved time slots. Call: 763-575-8038

Services are provided free with no questions asked. A legal guardian or parent needs to be present unless paperwork is filled out prior.

The following information will be needed:

- Register your child
- Emergency Contact
- Medical History
- Completed Consent to Treat Form

Please Note: Any non-reversible procedures will require consent from a legal guardian or parent once it is determined what work is needed.

Appointments are accepted for children from birth to 18 years. If you have any questions please call the office.

**** Not an ISD 883 Sponsored Event****

Services Include:

- Exam
- Cleaning
- Fluoride Treatment
- Sealants
- X-Rays

If Time Allows:

- Fillings
- Stainless Steel Crowns
- Primary Extractions

IN THE CLASSROOM: Physical Education



Mr. Hester



Students in Mr. Hester's Team and Dual Sports class have been playing various team and individual games throughout the semester. Some of the activities they have been participating in recently are indoor soccer, broomball, volleyball, and ping pong. The class provides a chance for students to unwind and relax without the stress associated with a more academic course.

Mr. McCoy



In Phy. Ed, we are wrapping up the semester with our basketball unit where students are learning how to manage calling offensive/defensive fouls and the reasoning as to why it is one or the other. After this, students will be using all of the skills, rules and strategies they have learned to create an entirely new game that they will be working on as their final.

In Health, we are creating our SMART goal presentation. If you have a student in Health, they have been working on a personal goal for the entire semester and they are now building a presentation that they will deliver to their class, focusing on good goal strategies that they used to be successful!



Meet the Teachers!



Meet Mr. McCoy!

After gathering a variety of experiences at the University of South Dakota and Minnesota State University Moorhead, I finished my undergraduate studies and graduated from St. Cloud State University in May, 2024. I am dual licensed in Health and Physical Education and currently pursuing a Master's degree in Kinesiology and Exercise Science at the University of South Dakota.

The 2024-2025 school year was my first experience holding a teaching position and I am excited to be involved in helping the Rockford community grow. I am currently an FCA leader, the head middle school track and field coach, and the Rocket Power strength and conditioning coach. I also teach physical education, health, sports science, and co-teach CNA.

Meet Mr. Hester!

I graduated from the St. Olaf College in 1989 with a degree in Exercise Studies. After completing my undergraduate degree, I continued my education at Emporia State University to earn my teaching license (1991) and earned my master's degree from St. Mary's University in 2000.

My teaching career began at Quinter High School (KS) in 1991. I have been teaching at Rockford since 1995. I teach middle school physical education as well as Team and Dual Sports and Peak Performance at the high school.



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](tel:763-477-5846), ext. 3020

Ms. Samantha Bloom,
Rockford High School
Counselor at
samantha.bloom@rockford883.org or call
[763-477-5846](tel:763-477-5846), ext. 3033

Mental Health Resources

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

Even in a test-optional world, scores still matter.

Why risk your results?

Maximize your scores by ZAPPING!® the test.

Your ACT® scores can help you:

- Jump ahead of students who don't submit scores
- Qualify for certain scholarships and grants
- Submit an application to a school that requires test scores
- Take classes in your first year that count towards graduation

Doorway to College helps you navigate standardized testing.

Improve your scores.

Register and attend our seminar!
You'll be glad you did!

I can't wait to see my test scores. I learned so much from my ZAPS!® seminar!

Visit Your Community Education website and REGISTER NOW!

Rockford Community Education is partnering with us to bring
ZAPSACT Test Prep to your student!

Receive the Nation's Best Test Strategy Prep at a special price of only **\$99.00!**

**ACT Test Prep Seminar
Rockford Community Center**

Room 804

Sunday, February 22, 2026

Time: 12:30 to 6:00 PM

Your Seminar: \$99.00

Secure a space for your student:

Register and pay by credit card by phone : 763-477-4563

**Online at: <https://rockford.ce.eleyo.com/course/1155/winter-24-25/act-test-prep-seminar>
or in person at the RCC front desk.**



**Doorway
to College**
Foundation



IN OUR SEMINAR, YOU'LL LEARN...

- Effective time management so you can use your time productively and pace yourself during the test.
- Strategic answer elimination to increase your chances of selecting correct responses.
- Anxiety management so you can stay calm and focused during the exam.
- Critical thinking skills to approach challenging questions with confidence and accuracy.

ZAPS[®]

FOCUSED TEST PREP



WHAT STUDENTS HAVE SHARED WITH US

"I took a month-long class last year, and I thought that this one seminar was as useful and productive, if not more so, than the month-long class."

—Matthew,
Arvada H.S., CO

"I found this seminar very useful! I appreciate the time and enthusiasm that was put into the presentation, and now feel 100 times more confident about testing. Thank you!"

—Olivia, Divine Savior
Academy, FL

"Most test practice seminars are very boring and not that helpful. This one is the first where I learned valuable tips and information, and, I actually can say I enjoyed."

—Jillian,
Batavia H.S., IL



Help Your Student Even More

Checkout other helpful prep resources
available on our website:
www.DoorwayToCollege.org/shop



**Doorway
to College**
Foundation



877-927-8378



prep@doorwaytocollege.org



Doorway to College



@Doorway2College



www.DoorwayToCollege.org

Neither Doorway to College Foundation nor ZAPS![®] is in any way associated or affiliated with ACT[®] or The College Board[®]. Score increases are not guaranteed. Student test scores are outside of our control and cannot be guaranteed, but with 40 years of ZAPPING![®] experience and feedback, we know that most students see improvement when they learn and use our tips and strategies.

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!

Senior Portraits & Recognition Ads

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>

**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: [Yearbook Recognition Ads](#)

Ads are \$24 per ⅛ page

Purchases are due February 8th, 2026. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Important Dates to Know!

- **Thursday, February 5th - RB1**
 - Dollars for Scholars Meeting - Applying for scholarships
- **Thursday, March 26th - RB1**
 - FINAL Dollars for Scholars Meeting - Deadline March 27th
- **Thursday, April 16th - Time TBD**
 - Senior Meeting with Mr. Menard - Information about Graduation and Senior Checkout
 - All Seniors should plan on attending (Including PSEO and OJT Students)
- **Tuesday May 12th - Lunch Periods**
 - Senior Checkout Day - Wrap Up, Pay Fees, Graduation requirements, collect your Cap & Gown!
- **Thursday May 28th - Senior Last Day**
 - Finals and Chromebook Check-In
- **Friday, May 29th - Graduation Rehearsal and Graduation Ceremony**
 - Rehearsal is at 10:00 am in the RCC Fieldhouse. ALL SENIORS are required to attend rehearsal (With Cap & Gown).
 - Ceremony begins at 5:00 pm. Seniors in Commons at 4:30 pm.

National Signing Day!

If your senior athlete has committed to playing a college sport and is ready to sign his/her written offer, we want to celebrate you!

Rockford High School will conduct a National Signing Day Ceremony on **Wednesday, February 4th, 2026**. If your senior is committing to play a sport at the collegiate level next year and wants to participate in this event, please have them complete the National Signing day Form linked below. *The form must be submitted by the end of the day, January 21st, 2026*. Details of the ceremony will be shared with participating seniors and their families as the date draws closer.

[National Signing Day at RHS Form](#)

Star Tribune Athlete of the Week

Congratulations to Ethan Robran on being selected as a Star Tribune Athlete of the Week! Ethan was nominated by his coach Mike Tauber. Here is what he has to say about Ethan:

"Ethan filled up the stat sheet with 57 points and 42 rebounds in 3 games within one week. Highlights include 21 rebounds in a 5-51 win over Brooklyn Center and 25 points and rebounds in every game so far this season. He is involved in many activities in our school, including football, FCA, Band, and a multiple-time participant in the State Track & Field meet! He is also a great student in the classroom and a respectful young man that we expect to only keep improving throughout the season as he continues to learn in practice and grow with experience."



Nice work representing Rockford Boys Basketball and the Rockford community Ethan!

Rockford Dance

January is an exciting month for the Rockford Dance Team!

Our dancers attended the Pact Invite last weekend where Varsity Kick placed 3rd and JV Kick placed 1st! The team also recently placed at the Hutchinson Invite - with Varsity Jazz taking 1st place and JV Jazz placing 2nd!



Upcoming Events:

- January 12th : WCC at Litchfield
- January 17th : YME Invite
- January 23rd : New London-Spicer Invite
- February 7th: Sections at Melrose

Rockford Wrestling

Isaac Staggemeyer is currently ranked 9th in the Guillotine Wrestling AA Rankings for 107. Several of the wrestlers are approaching some milestone victories! Bradley Graunke is approaching 85 wins and Roman Morgan is approaching 75 wins. Through the victories the team is also battling some injuries but the wrestlers are working hard to get back in to shape to join the team again!

Upcoming Events:

- January 15th: Triangular at Home vs. Westonka & Anoka
- January 17th: Rumble at the Rock
- January 22nd: Triangular at Home vs. Watertown-Mayer and Lakeville South

