Rocket Newsletter

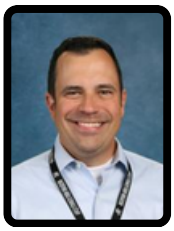
May 2026

Important Dates:

- May 12th: Senior Checkout
- May 13th: NHS Induction Night & Senior Awards Night
- May 15th: Choir Concert
- May 27th & 28th: Senior Finals Day
- May 29th: Graduation Rehearsal @ 10 am
- May 29th: 2026 Commencement Ceremony
- June 4th: Last Day of School

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,
Students asking, "Is there anything I can do [now five months into the semester] to raise my grade?" Teachers busy grading current work and stacks of late work. Office staff wondering if we can just get through the remaining days. Seniors trying to stay focused until graduation. All of us sharing summer plans and how much we are going to miss outgoing students and staff members. Welcome to May in an American high school! There is no other energy like it, and you can set your watch to the mix of emotions and how our amazing culture helps support one another through it all.

SENIOR PARENTS: This is the last month of your child's K-12 educational journey! Congratulations! As you reflect on this milestone throughout the month, please pay attention to our communications regarding senior checkout (May 12th--please make sure all fees are paid and school-owned property is returned before that date), awards ceremonies, final concerts and athletic events, and graduation. This month is all about sending seniors off proud of their growth and excited to hear of their bright futures.

JUNIOR PARENTS: During this final month of school, juniors at this point are already envisioning their transition to becoming leaders among the student body next year. Please discuss positive leadership traits such as encouraging others to do their best, modeling and teaching respect, practicing agency and responsibility, setting and meeting goals, and more. Feel like your student hasn't had much exposure to leadership? Offer them more opportunities--they could organize a neighborhood cookout, take on a new project or learn a new skill at work and teach it to a co-worker, engage in community service and get a friend to join, etc. It will be important to demonstrate leadership as your children apply for enlistment in the military, enrollment in college, or employment in their desired career field.

SOPHOMORE PARENTS: Continue to discuss your child's interests related to careers. Discuss our career pathways and what courses your child has taken. Strategize which pathways may be right for them and double check their schedule for next year. If adjustments need to be made, schedules will come out in August and students have through the third day of the semester to request any changes whatsoever.

FRESHMEN PARENTS: They did it! Your child finished their first year of high school. Didn't go as planned? Start developing better systems for organization, conditions under which you'll stay updated on their course completion, decide how and when you'll discuss school, and plans to retake or makeup work next year, and share your goals for them and ask how their goals might differ--creating a mutual definition of 'achievement' and 'success' for your family as it relates to high school performance. Went amazing? Take them out for ice cream, as Ms. Nyhus would say. While the middle school staff does an excellent job preparing students for high school, they are not in the developmental state to believe it until they experience it. Reframe high school as they go into their sophomore year so they can hit the ground running in the fall.

Go Rockets!
Sincerely,

Paul Menard
RHS Principal

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

REF News & Updates

May 2026

Small Grants, Big Impact

How Mini-Grants Are Making a Difference

What if a few hundred dollars could spark curiosity, support a struggling learner, or create a moment a student never forgets? That is exactly what the Rockford Education Foundation's Mini-Grant program does - every single year.

Since 2010, the Foundation has invested more than $141,000 into classrooms across the district through mini-grants. These grants empower teachers to bring innovative ideas to life - ideas that often fall outside traditional school budgets but make a powerful difference for students.
From preschool through high school, mini-grants are helping create meaningful, hands-on learning experiences:

- **Bringing learning to life:** Middle school students connect with author William Durbin, turning reading into a real-world experience and inspiring young writers.
- **Supporting all learners:** Tools like sensory bags, fidget-based learning games, and speech iPads are helping neurodivergent students thrive.
- **Enhancing classroom experiences:** Teachers are using grants for everything from science lab supplies and magazine subscriptions to flexible seating and art room organization.
- **Expanding opportunities:** Field trips to theater performances and interactive experiences give students access to learning beyond the classroom walls.

What makes mini-grants so impactful is their immediacy and flexibility. Teachers identify a need, apply, and - thanks to community support - quickly put resources directly into students' hands. And that support truly comes from you!

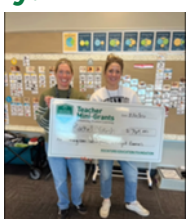
Mini-grants are made possible through the generosity of our community—whether you:

- Purchase Gratitude Gifts during the holidays or in the spring
- Join us for Bingo at Clays through our partnership with DAYHA
- Order school supplies through our School Tool Box fundraiser

Each of these simple actions adds up to something powerful—direct support for classrooms, teachers, and students.

Every mini-grant tells a story—of a student engaged, a teacher empowered, and a classroom transformed. **Thank you for being part of that story!**





Upcoming Events



Celebrate spring and finish the school year with a shout out to amazing Rockford staff. Every donation to the Rockford Education Foundation will support the Mini-Grant Program!

Gratitude Gift Details:

- $10, $20 and $50 donation options
- All gifts include a gift card for the recipient - *see example*
- Gifts are delivered to the school between May 27-29
- All donations support the *Mini-Grant Program*!

Thank a teacher, para, custodian, bus driver, or any person that made it a great year!

ORDER GIFTS HERE: https://www.rockfordfoundation.org/gratitude-gifts/
Deadline to order: May 17th at Midnight

This is not an ISD 883 Sponsored Event.





Skip the Store - Have School Supplies Delivered to Your Door!

Get a head start on next year and order your 2026-27 school supplies online. They will be delivered right to your door - no lines, no fuss.

- Super convenient
- Fun for kids to open their box
- Customize your kit - remove any items you already have
- 15% of your order supports our Mini-Grant Program

ORDER HERE

Site opens June 1st and orders typically ship within 5 days

Get Involved - We Need Volunteers!

As REF 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/

RHS | Prom 2026 - Enchanted Garden

Photos by Images of Hope Photography
































METROPOLITAN


SCHOOL BUS








METROPOLITAN










IN THE CLASSROOM



Landscape Design

The Rockford High School Landscape Design class collaborated with RAISE (Rockford Area Indigenous Student Education) to help prepare the Three Sisters Garden and the Medicine Wheel Garden.

The students helped clear the beds of weeds and debris before laying down mulch in the planting beds and granite paths.
Students learned about the meaning and significance of the gardens as well as who the first people of Rockford were.







Art 1: Multimedia

The Art 1 students have just completed their Pop Art Sculptures.
Students made a variety of interesting sculptures through collaboration with other students.

IN THE CLASSROOM



Advanced Acting

The Advanced Acting class attended the Guthrie Theaters performance of Little Woman on May 5th.



Students enjoyed the student matinee and had a great time experiencing live professional theater together.

Watching a professional production gave students the opportunity to observe strong acting techniques, character development, stage movement, and technical elements such as lighting, costumes, and set design.



Experiences like this help students build a deeper appreciation for theater while inspiring them to grow as performers in the classroom.

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*

Helpful 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
- Wright County Resource Link
- **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
- **Change to Chill Resource Quiz -** *https://changetochill.org/resource-quiz/*

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.

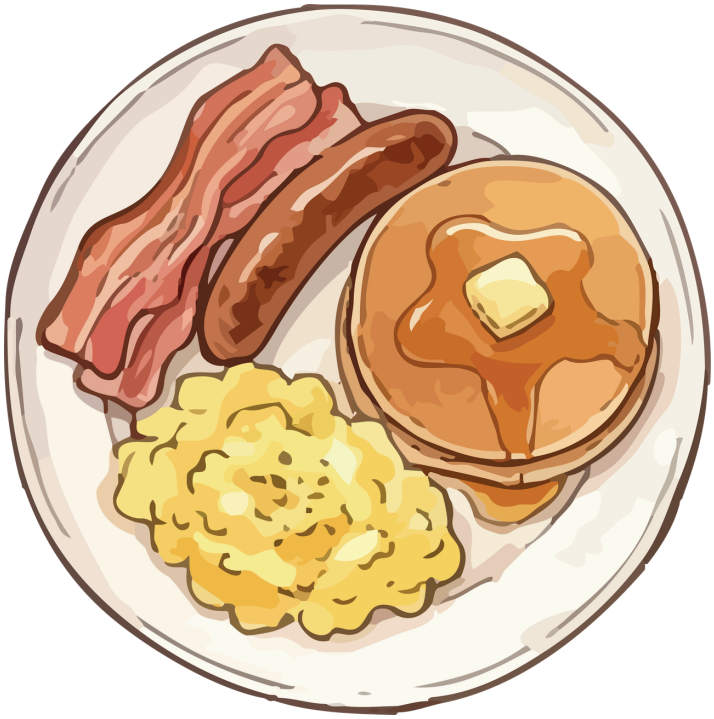
Early support changes lives–and we're here to make that happen for your family!

RHS | Senior Section

Important Dates to Know!

- **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.

Senior Breakfast!



The Class of 2026 Parents are once again hosting the annual Senior Breakfast to help celebrate our graudating seniors!

The Senior Breakfast will take place Friday, May 29th from 8:30 am to 9:45 am at the Lions Park prior to the graduation rehearsal. Students who drive to school may drive to the breakfast. Any students who take the bus will be provided bussing to and from the Lions Park.

Donation/Volunteer Opportunity!

If you would like to donate to the Senior Breakfast (food, utensils, griddle or volunteer time) please sign-up using the Sign-Up Genius link below. Donations can be dropped off at the Lions Park shelter building on May 29th between 7:30 am - 7:45 am

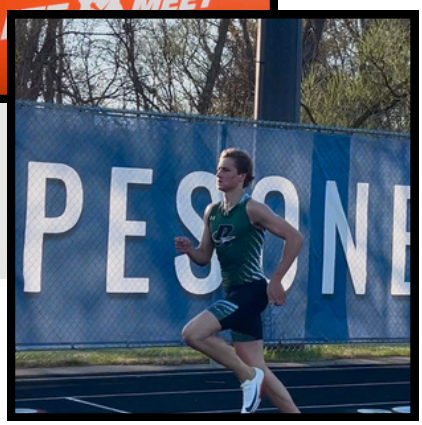
Class of 2026: RHS Class of 2026 Graduation Day Breakfast

RHS | Athletics & Activities

Track & Field Setting Records: Current Students AND Alumni!

Congratulations to these Rocket T&F athletes on an outstanding start to their season…watch for more to come as we begin Championship season in May and work our way towards STATE!





The Hamline Elite Meet is held annually at Hamline University in St. Paul, MN. It serves as a premier regular-season showdown that brings together the 9 (more in some events) top-ranked high school athletes regardless of MSHSL classes (A, AA, and AAA) to compete against each other. Results: Ethan Robran (11th), Tessa Birznieks (11th), Wilmot Bemah (12th) & Cora Larson (9th) placed 4th out of 9 teams in the mixed 4x400m relay (2 boys, 2 girls). Their time of 3:39.61 is a new School Record (3:46.96 in 25'), a qualifying time for Nike Nationals (3:41) plus New Balance Nationals. Ehtan Robran also set a new school record in the 400 meter at the Spartan Invitational in Orono. He broke the 50 second barrier and ran 49.9 breaking a 40-year old record of 50.25 set by Joe Rux in 1986.



<u>Sibling Record Holders!</u>

Alayna & Brian Schloeder, Rockford Graduates in 2020, and 2024 respectively and Rocket T&F Alumni and current Rockford Rocket Record holders, now hold the Women's and Men's Naval Academy Pole Vault Records respectively.

To have a brother - sister tandem both hold school records is a very rare accomplishment in Division 1 athletics. Rocket Pride! To top it off, Alayna's twin brother, Austin, is presently competing Pole Vault in the MIAC and currently ranked 33 nationally for Division 3 Hamline University.

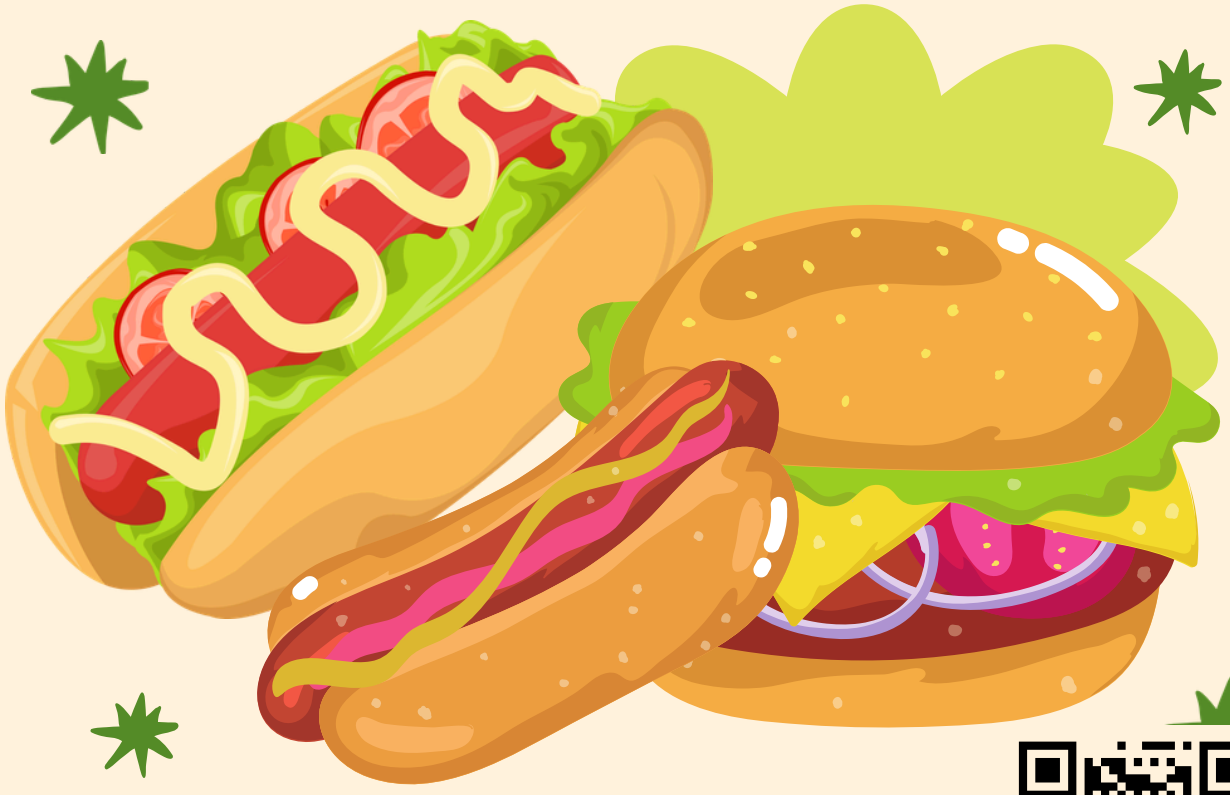
We welcome all students, alumni, and community members to join Rockford FFA for an exciting end of the year...

BBQ PARTY!

YOU'RE INVITED

Friday,
15th of MAY 2026
5 PM – 7 PM

Location:
Rockford High School
Ag Room 603



No cost to attend!
RSVP at: