

RMS-CES ROCKET NEWSLETTER

April 2026



UPCOMING DATES:

May 12th

Ney Park Field Trip &
FAST Testing

May 20th

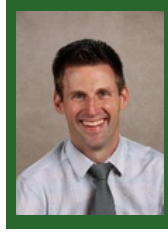
RMS Band Concert

May 25th

No School-Memorial
Day

June 4th

Last Day of the 2025-
2026 School Year



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 welcome Spring and the beautiful weather, it is a natural time for us to reflect on the year and appreciate all the ways that we have watched our students and school community at large come together. May is a time to both celebrate that growth while also wrapping up the logistics of a school year.

8th Grade Final Walk: Please know that on the last day of school at approximately 2:35 we will line both sides of the hallway and our 8th-grade students will be doing their final walk down the hallway as we celebrate them and their accomplishments that made them ready for great things in this world. Any family member, community member, coach, etc is welcome to come in anytime after 2:20pm and will stage just outside the office. There will not be a formal ceremony during this time, just a final lap! I have grown to truly appreciate each and every one of these 8th graders in their own way and will miss them dearly next year.

School Supply List: Are you ready to start thinking about school supplies for the fall yet? Me neither! Please know that our school supply list will soon be finalized, and we are moving to school wide common school supplies that include a binder to help with consistency for students, as we aim to help teach students the necessary skills to stay organized. We will be sending additional information within the next few weeks about what items will be included in that and we will also have an option to order a bundle of the supplies that we will have ready for your child on the first day of school!



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from the Principal...continued

FAST Testing: Please know that the Reading FAST test will be happening on May 12th and 13th and then Math will be happening on May 14th and 15th. FAST is one of many ways that we measure student growth in the areas of reading and math. These tests take place in your child's Math or Language Arts classroom.

Please know that within the last two weeks of the school year there will be many ways in which we wrap up the school year including things like locker clean outs, student celebrations, yearbook distribution, and finishing final assessments often in terms of tests, quizzes, or projects. Please know we will continue to communicate details with each grade level team as we all help our students finish on a positive note before heading into summer.

I am grateful for the partnership of parents that we have had throughout the school year. I wish you all a wonderful weekend ahead!

***Paul Warzecha,
RMS-CES Principal***



RMS-CES | PARENT-COMMUNITY Announcements



SUMMER 2026 LBX REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION DUE BY MAY 24TH

LBX is a RiverWorks program that helps ensure all children residing in the Rockford Area School District have access to nutritious meals during the summer season.

IMPORTANT DETAILS

- Deliveries every Wednesday
- June 17th - August 12th
NO delivery on July 1st
- Meals delivered between 10:30 - 11:30 AM



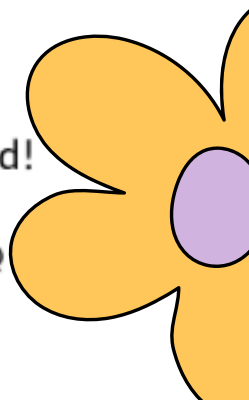
Scan the QR Code.

When you complete the application hit submit; and it's that easy you are registered!

IS LBX FOR MY FAMILY?

- Students must live within the boundaries of the Rockford School District.
- Your family receives free or reduced school lunches.
- Financially the cost of groceries is a concern for the summer months.

Questions? Please email The RiverWorks Food Shelf at foodshelf@riverworksonline.org or call 763-477-6098 and leave a message



RMS-CES | PARENT-COMMUNITY

School Pictures



NEW

**2026-2027
SCHOOL YEAR**

**School Pictures will be held
on OPEN HOUSE NIGHT
August 26th 2026!**



Location: Gymnasium

Time: 3:30-7:00pm

**★ Re-Take Day is September 8th,
during school hours: 7:30-11:30am**

RMS-CES | PARENT-COMMUNITY School Pictures



NEW

**2026-2027
SCHOOL YEAR**

Open Houses naturally create a free-flow environment, which can lead to long lines at the photo station. To help manage the crowd and keep wait times low, we recommend coming during these time slots!

Last Name starts with:

A–F: 3:30–4:30

G–M: 4:30–5:30

N–S: 5:30–6:20

T–Z: 6:20–7:00

Families who arrive outside their window can still be accommodated, but these time blocks help maintain a steady flow.

Social Media

Helpful Tips

Social media can be a great way to connect with friends, family and your community.

How does social media impact your life?

PROS

- Connect with friends and social supports
- Explore interests and identity
- Access knowledge
- Hear from diverse perspectives
- Develop personal and professional skills

CONS

- Increase risk of poor mental health
- Lose sleep
- Increase contact with cyberbullies and harmful language
- Miss out on in-person connections

Is social media making you feel disconnected?

- Pay attention to how you feel while you're scrolling
 - If you notice yourself getting stressed or jealous, take a break
 - Avoid doomscrolling and content that causes you stress
 - Find content that makes you feel good
- Reach out to friends about their posts instead of reacting and scrolling on
- Stay in the moment
 - Wait until you get home to post about your day

Do you take control of your accounts?

- Adjust your algorithm
 - Interact with posts that make you feel good and unfollow accounts that make you feel bad
 - Search for terms that enrich your feed
 - Examples: #queerbooks, #hijabstyle, #mentalhealth, #paraathletics
- Change your settings
 - Make your accounts private
 - Turn off notifications

How do you protect yourself from cyberbullies?

- If you're being cyberbullied or harassed online, tell a trusted adult
- Report cyberbullying and exploitation
 - Cyber Tipline (missingkids.org)
 - TakeItDown.ncmec.org
 - LoveIsRespect.org
 - StopBullying.gov
- Report, Mute, Block!



Sources:

<https://engage.youth.gov/resources/tip-sheet-social-media-use-and-mental-health>
<https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/youth-mental-health/index.html>
<https://www.unicef.org/stories/5-ways-better-mental-health-online>



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.

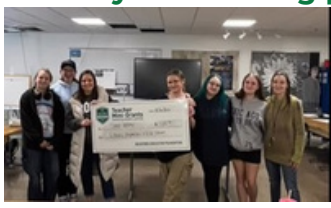
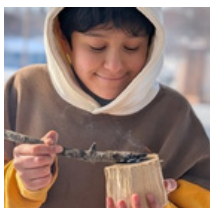
What makes mini-grants so impactful is their immediacy and flexibility. Teachers identify a need, apply, and - thanks to community support - quickly put resources directly into students' hands. And that support truly comes from you!

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

GRATITUDE GIFTS

Thank a teacher for a great school year!



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.



Rockford K-12 School Supplies

REAMS / RMS-CES / RHS



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/

RMS-CES | POINTS OF PRIDE BAND



"CONGRATS!"



On Saturday, April 25, several members of the Rockford 8th Grade Band performed in the Allegro Honor Band at Buffalo High School. The Allegro Honor is an ensemble made up of 7 area middle schools. Students are selected by director recommendation. Students that were selected rehearsed throughout the day with a final concert in the afternoon. The following students were selected from Rockford: Abigail Kinnan on clarinet, Corbyn Ash on clarinet, Cora Sjodin on alto saxophone, Callen Van Denheuvel on tenor saxophone, Joseph Pauley on french horn, Ephraim Nyerkeh on baritone, Madalynn Iacono on bass guitar, Tucker Ehret on percussion, and Russell Purser on clarinet (not pictured).

Congratulations to our fine musicians!



ADIS Math & Reading

Research consistently shows that students can lose some of the academic progress they made during the school year over the summer months, often referred to as the “summer slide.” The good news is that small, consistent efforts in reading and math can make a big difference in maintaining—and even strengthening—your child’s skills.

Why Reading Matters Over the Summer

Reading is one of the most powerful ways to support your child’s academic growth. Just 15–20 minutes of reading a day can help maintain vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. More importantly, it nurtures imagination and builds a lifelong love of learning.

Encourage your child to choose books that genuinely interest them—whether it’s adventure stories, graphic novels, biographies, or even magazines. Trips to the local library can make reading feel like an exciting activity rather than a chore. You can also make reading a family habit by setting aside time each day when everyone reads together.

Keeping Math Skills Sharp

Math practice doesn’t have to mean worksheets at the kitchen table (unless that works for your child). Everyday activities offer natural ways to reinforce math skills:

- Cooking and baking help children practice measuring and fractions
- Shopping can build skills in budgeting, addition, and comparison
- Road trips provide opportunities to estimate distances and track time
- Games and puzzles strengthen problem-solving and logical thinking

Short, regular practice—about 10–15 minutes a few times a week—can help prevent skill loss and build confidence.

Thank you for your continued support in your child’s learning journey. Your involvement makes a lasting difference!

Mrs. Nolby and Ms. Beattie