

**STAFF ANALYSIS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT REGARDING REVIEW OF  
ROCKETSHIP ACADEMY FOR BRILLIANT MINDS CHARTER SCHOOL COUNTYWIDE RENEWAL PETITION AND  
REQUEST FOR MATERIAL REVISIONS**

NOVEMBER 20, 2024, posted NOVEMBER 5, 2024

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Rocketship Academy for Brilliant Minds Charter School (RBM) seeks approval to renew its Santa Clara County independent, or direct funded, countywide benefit charter school serving students in grades TK-5. RBM was initially approved in November 2011, for a five-year term to serve grades K-5 and was renewed in 2017. Its' governance structure was also materially revised in 2013 to bring all Rocketship schools under one governing board. RBM's current term expires June 30, 2025, as its current term was extended by two years in 2021 and for an additional year in 2023 by operation of law. RBM has requested renewal for a term of five years from July 2025 through June 2030, due to its designation by the California Department of Education (CDE) as a school in the middle performing category. RBM, operating within the boundaries of Santa Clara County and located in the Alum Rock Union School District (ARUSD), currently serves approximately 490 students.

**PROCEDURAL STATUS**

The Charter Schools Department (CSD) of the Santa Clara County Office of Education received a renewal charter petition (Renewal Petition or Charter), from RBM on September 3, 2024. RBM is operated and governed by Rocketship Education doing business as Rocketship Public Schools,<sup>1</sup> a nonprofit public benefit corporation. *Education Code (EC)* Sections 47607 and 47607.2 determine the length of charter renewal based on a charter school's placement in the high, middle, or low performance categories established by AB 1505. Pursuant to criterion in *EC* Sections 47607(c) and 47607.2(a), RBM is in the middle performing category, and the school qualifies for a five-year renewal term (see further analysis below). If the charter is renewed by the Santa Clara County Board of Education (SCCOE or County Board of Education<sup>2</sup>), the new term of the Charter would begin on July 1, 2025, and run through and including June 30, 2030. Renewals and material revisions of countywide charters are governed by the standards and criteria set forth in *EC* Sections 47605.6, 47607 and 47607.2.

As noted, RBM is operated by the RPS network of charter schools. This network includes Rocketship Sí Se Puede Academy Charter School (RSSP) and Rocketship Alma Academy (RSA), both of which are also up for renewal as SCCBOE-authorized middle performing charter schools on the same cycle, with the renewal term for each proposed to be July 1, 2025-June 30, 2030. The SCCBOE is scheduled to act on the RSSP renewal on November 6, 2024, while the RSA action is scheduled to be at the same meeting as the action on RBM, which is November 20, 2024. It is significant, however, that RSA and RBM are both countywide charters authorized and requesting renewal in accordance with *EC* Section 47605.6, while RRSP is a district appeal charter that was approved by the

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this document, Rocketship Education doing business as Rocketship Public Schools may be referred to for purposes of convenience as "RPS," "RSED," "CMO," or "Network," but the Rocketship Academy for Brilliant Minds charter school, Rocketship Public Schools and Rocketship Education may be referred to collectively, separately, or interchangeably as "RBM" or "Charter School" or "school."

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this document, references to "SCCBOE" or the "County Board of Education" are specifically to the Santa Clara County Board of Education. However, for purposes of convenience, the Santa Clara County Board of Education, the Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools, and the Santa Clara County Office of Education may be collectively or separately referred to herein as "SCCOE."

*RBM Charter School*

SCCBOE on appeal of denial by Alum Rock Union School District. The SCCBOE has substantial discretion in considering a countywide charter school, including the authority to deny a countywide charter on “[a]ny other basis [beyond those specified in statute] that the county board of education finds justifies the denial” and the authority to “impose any additional requirements beyond those required by [EC Section 47605.6] that it considers necessary for the sound operation of a countywide charter school.” (EC Section 47605.6.) Additionally, the denial of a renewal of a countywide charter school may not be appealed to the State Board of Education. (EC Section 47607.5.)

Unsurprisingly, given that all three schools are part of the same charter school network, while the RSA, RBM, and RSSP renewal charter petitions each contain information and data that is specific to the particular school, the general terms of each petition are virtually identical, so Staff’s analysis, recommendations, and recommended findings are also quite similar. However, in the case of RSA and RBM, Staff recommends that the County Board address concerns through requirements that it considers necessary to the sound operation of the schools as countywide charter schools, as explicitly provided for in Education Code Section 47605.6. Prior to the publication of this Staff Analysis, RPS submitted a response to the staff analysis and proposed findings of fact for the RSSP renewal, in which RPS generally expressed cooperation regarding Staff’s recommendations and recommended findings and conditions of renewal for RSSP. CSD Staff believes that RPS’s position would be the same relative to similar concerns in the analysis of RSA’s Renewal Petition as RPS’s expressed position regarding the RSSP analysis, so this Staff Analysis addresses some of those responses as pertinent to this Staff Analysis.

On October 2, 2024, the SCCBOE held a public hearing on the RBM Renewal Petition in accordance with the requirement to do so within 60 days of receipt of the Renewal Petition. On October 9, 2024, SCCOE Staff conducted a renewal site visit and held renewal interviews with RBM parents, students, staff, board members and representatives of RPS leadership as the charter management organization or network.

Pursuant to EC Sections 47607, 47607.2 and 47605.6, the County Board of Education has 90 days from receipt of the Renewal Petition to act, which may be extended by an additional 30 days by mutual agreement. SCCBOE will hold the decision hearing November 20, 2024, to act on the RBM request for renewal and request for material revisions.

In accordance with Board Policy 0420.4, SCCOE, RBM, and RSED/RPS, developed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2017 (2017 MOU). By its terms, this 2017 MOU “shall continue in full force and effect during the period of any renewal granted by the SCCBOE or during the pendency of an appeal of a denial of a renewal request unless and until such time as the Parties enter into a replacement MOU or specifically agree in writing that the MOU is terminated.” The 2017 MOU governs the respective fiscal, operational, administrative responsibilities, legal relationships, and other matters not otherwise fully addressed or resolved by the terms of the current charter or the Renewal Petition, pending any further direction or recommendations by the SCCBOE, including SCCBOE’s adoption of the SCCOE’s recommendations and recommended findings. By its terms, the 2017 MOU is incorporated into the Renewal Petition by reference, therefore, its terms supplement the Renewal Petition submitted by RBM and were considered as part of SCCOE’s analysis of the Renewal Petition and informed this analysis, including the assessment of whether the Renewal Petition includes reasonably comprehensive descriptions of each of the required charter elements, whether or not any specific provision of the 2017 MOU is referenced in this analysis, and it continues to bind the Parties unless and until revised or replaced by mutual agreement of the Parties, and if the Parties enter into a new MOU and/or addendum, as recommended herein, provisions from the 2017 MOU may need to be incorporated therein or the 2017 MOU remain in effect.

SCCOE has provided RBM an updated memorandum of understanding (2024 MOU) that is consistent with changes to law since entering into the 2017 MOU and reflects SCCOE’s current best practices. RBM has expressed its intent to enter into an updated memorandum of understanding and has met with SCCOE to discuss the terms of the

2024 MOU. RBM may sign the updated 2024 MOU prior to SCCBOE action on the Renewal Petition, but if the 2024 MOU is not signed by RBM prior to SCCBOE action, SCCOE will continue to work with RBM on finalizing the updated 2024 MOU or an addendum to the current 2017 MOU as necessary to reflect current law and best practices and recommends that this be a requirement of any renewal of RBM's Charter necessary to its sound operation as a countywide charter school.

The complete Renewal Petition on which the SCCBOE is acting is attached to the agenda item in BoardDocs and is also available for review at the following location: [https://www.sccoe.org/supoffice/charter-schools-office/Pending/Rocketship\\_Brilliant\\_Minds\\_Renewal\\_Petition.pdf](https://www.sccoe.org/supoffice/charter-schools-office/Pending/Rocketship_Brilliant_Minds_Renewal_Petition.pdf)

### **CRITERIA FOR RENEWAL OF A CHARTER PETITION**

Effective July 1, 2020, the legal standards for determining whether a charter petition should be renewed were updated. Pursuant to *EC* Section 47607(b) this countywide charter renewal is "governed by the standards and criteria" described in Section 47605.6, and "shall include, but not be limited to, a reasonably comprehensive description of any new requirement of charter schools enacted into law after the charter was originally granted or last renewed."

Pursuant to *EC* Section 47605.6, a charter petition may be denied on the basis of written factual findings that support one or more of the following:

1. The charter school presents an unsound educational program for the pupils to be enrolled in the charter school.
2. The petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program set forth in the petition.
3. The petition does not contain an affirmation of each of the conditions required by statute.
4. The petition does not contain a reasonably comprehensive description of all the required elements.
5. The petition does not contain a declaration of whether the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA).
6. Or any other basis the County Board determines justifies denial.

Additionally, as noted above, the County Board may "impose any additional requirements beyond those required by [EC Section 47605.6] that it considers necessary for the sound operation of a countywide charter school."

As an "additional criterion" for determining whether a charter should be renewed, the chartering authority is required to consider the charter school's performance on the state and local indicators included in the California School Dashboard. For this purpose, charter schools are now divided into high, middle, and low performance categories, plus Dashboard Alternative Status Schools ("DASS"), based on their performance during the two consecutive years immediately preceding the renewal decision. The pertinent renewal standards and the available length of the renewal term are dependent on this categorization. (*EC* Section 47607 and 47607.2.)

The CDE annually creates a list of all charter schools and ranks their academic performance indicators from the California School Dashboard, specifying whether each school is in the high, middle, or low performing category, or is a DASS program school. This list was intended to relieve the burden on chartering authorities and provide a starting place for the renewal process. The CDE has designated RBM as a "middle" performing charter school for purposes of this renewal request on the CDE's list issued in March 2024, and its middle performance status was reaffirmed on the CDE's updated list issued in October 2024.

As defined in *EC* Section 47607.2, "middle" performing charter schools are any charter school not deemed as "high" or "low" performing and are eligible to be considered for a five-year renewal term.

In determining whether to renew a middle performing charter, the chartering authority is to consider the following:

- i. *The schoolwide and subgroup performance on the state and local indicators on the Dashboard, giving greater weight to measurements of academic performance.*
- ii. *Clear and convincing evidence based on verified data showing either:*
  - a) *The school achieved measurable increases in academic achievement, defined by at least one year of growth for each year of school, OR*
  - b) *Strong post-secondary outcomes, as defined by college enrollment, persistence, and completion rates equal to similar peers.*

As a TK-5 school, the post-secondary outcomes standard is not applicable to RBM.

The chartering authority may deny a “middle” performing school on these bases only by making written factual findings, setting forth specific facts to support the findings, that the school:

- i. *Failed to meet or make sufficient progress toward meeting standards that provide a benefit to the pupils of the school;*
- ii. *Closure of the school is in the best interest of pupils; AND*
- iii. *If applicable, that the decision provided greater weight to performance on measurements of academic performance.*

Also, a chartering authority may deny renewal of a charter school in any of the performance categories if it finds the school is demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program due to any of the following:

- a. *Substantial fiscal factors,*
- b. *Substantial governance factors, or*
- c. *The charter school is not serving all pupils who wish to attend.*

In such cases, the chartering authority must provide the charter school at least 30 days’ notice of the alleged violation(s) and provide the charter school with a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation(s), including a corrective action plan proposed by the charter school. Pursuant to *EC Section 47607(e)*, the County Board of Education may then deny renewal on these bases only if it makes either of the following findings:

- a. *The corrective action proposed by the charter school has been unsuccessful, or*
- b. *The violations are sufficiently severe and pervasive as to render a corrective action plan unviable.*

#### **DETERMINATION CRITERIA FOR RENEWAL OF RBM**

As stated above, CDE has designated RBM as a school in the middle performance category for purposes of this renewal. In its Renewal Petition, RBM states it meets the minimum required academic performance standards, and its academic performance supports Charter renewal. To assess its academic performance against the criteria for middle-performing charter schools, RBM submitted its data from the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (“CAASPP”) as well as comparison data for the local district and local district schools RBM students would otherwise have attended. RBM states the data submitted on pages 11 through 25 of the Renewal Petition establishes RBM as a school in the middle performing category, meeting the criteria for charter renewal. Staff has not reproduced all the information provided by RBM in this Staff Analysis and Proposed Findings of Fact but incorporates it and the CAASPP data herein by this reference.

RBM was asked to submit additional data and information in response to questions that arose during the October 2, 2024, public hearing on the renewal Charter. At the time of publication, RBM had not yet submitted the data requested.

The data below represents key data provided by RBM and/or available for consideration of RBM’s academic performance.

**School Academics**

**California School Dashboard Data**

In 2017, the State of California instituted the California School Dashboard (<https://www.caschooldashboard.org/>) to help parents and educators identify strengths and areas for improvement. The Dashboard reports how districts, schools (including charter and DASS schools), and student groups are performing across state and local measures. For state measures, performance is based on two factors: (1) current year results, or Status; and (2) whether results improved or declined from the prior year, or Change. Performance on state measures, using comparable statewide data, is represented by one of five colors with Red being lowest and Blue being highest (see Object 1 below). A performance level, or color is not provided on the Dashboard when a student group has fewer than 30 students. However, the Status and Change data will be displayed. Further, when a student group has fewer than 11 students, the group does not receive a performance level (color) and the group’s Status and Change are not displayed to protect the anonymity of the students. This information is represented by using a grey color gauge with the words “No Performance Color.”

**Object 1: California Dashboard Performance Color Chart**



There was no data in 2019-20 or 2020-21 due to the cancelation of statewide testing as a result of COVID-19. The 2022 Dashboard (based on 2021-22 data) did not have any prior year data for comparison and, therefore, only included Status levels, which was represented by purple “cell phone bars.” No Change was included. The 2023 Dashboard (based on 2022-23 data) had prior year data for comparison. Thus, Change was reinstated. The following data is based on 2022 and 2023 Dashboard data which shows the performance level colors, or the Status from 2022-23, and the Change, or the difference (growth or decline), from 2021-22.

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**Object 2: RBM Performance on 2023 California School Dashboard**

2023 CALIFORNIA SCHOOL DASHBOARD										
	ELA		Math		ELPI		Chronic Absenteeism		Suspension	
	DFS	Level	DFS	Level	Rate	Level	Rate	Level	Rate	Level
All Students	-12.8	YELLOW	-19.3	GREEN	50.5%	GREEN	27.0%	YELLOW	0%	BLUE
Hispanic/Latino	-28.7	YELLOW	-37.3	YELLOW			27.7%	YELLOW	0%	BLUE
English Learners (EL)	-15.9	YELLOW	-27.2	YELLOW			24.9%	YELLOW	0%	BLUE
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	-126.9	NPC	-107.7	NPC			23.9%	ORANGE	0%	BLUE
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED)	-17.2	YELLOW	-26.6	YELLOW			27.5%	YELLOW	0%	BLUE
Asian	55.5	BLUE	50.5	BLUE			20.2%	ORANGE	0%	BLUE

In 2022-23, RBM received a Distance from Standard (DFS) score of -12.8 points in ELA and increased 9.8 points from the prior year, making the performance level for all students Yellow. RBM received a DFS score of -19.3 in Math and increased 12.9 points from the prior year, making the performance level for all students Green. RBM also increased 11.6 percentage points from the prior year and received Green on the English Learner Progress Indicator (ELPI).

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**Object 3: 2022 and 2023 California School Dashboard Student Group Report for RBM**

	Suspension Rate		Chronic Absenteeism		English Language Arts		Mathematics		English Learner Progress	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
<b>All</b>	VERY LOW 0%	BLUE 0%	VERY HIGH 40.5%	YELLOW 27.0%	LOW -22.6 DFS	YELLOW -12.8 DFS	LOW -32.3 DFS	GREEN -19.3 DFS	LOW 39%	GREEN 50.5%
<b>EL</b>	VERY LOW 0%	BLUE 0%	VERY HIGH 36.9%	YELLOW 24.9%	LOW -34.1 DFS	YELLOW -15.9 DFS	LOW -44.4 DFS	YELLOW -27.2 DFS		
<b>SED</b>	VERY LOW 0%	BLUE 0%	VERY HIGH 39.7%	YELLOW 27.5%	LOW -34.1 DFS	YELLOW -17.2 DFS	LOW -44.5 DFS	YELLOW -26.6 DFS		
<b>SWD</b>	VERY LOW 0%	BLUE 0%	VERY HIGH 49.2%	ORANGE 23.9%	NPL -119 DFS	NPC -126.9 DFS	NPL -110.8 DFS	NPC -107.7 DFS		
<b>Asian</b>	VERY LOW 0%	BLUE 0%	VERY HIGH 25%	ORANGE 20.2%	VERY HIGH 35.8 DFS	BLUE 55.5 DFS	VERY HIGH 37.5 DFS	BLUE 50.5 DFS		
<b>Hispanic/ Latino</b>	VERY LOW 0%	BLUE 0%	VERY HIGH 42.2%	YELLOW 27.7%	LOW -36 DFS	YELLOW -28.7 DFS	LOW -47.3 DFS	YELLOW -37.3 DFS		
<b>White</b>	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC		
<b>African American</b>	NPC	NPC	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC		
<b>Filipino</b>	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC		
<b>Two or More Races</b>	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC		
<b>Pacific Islander</b>	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC		NPC		NPC		
<b>American Indian</b>	NPL	NPC	NPL	NPC						
<b>Homeless</b>	NPL 0%	NPC 0%	NPL 47.1%	NPC 23.3%		NPC		NPC		

\*No performance level (NPL) given for groups of less than 30 students. Status rates are not given for groups of less than 11 students.

\*\*No performance color (NPC) given for groups of less than 30 students.

Many areas of the RBM Dashboard have no performance color (“NPC”), or no performance level (“NPL”) due to the small size of the student group tested. Object 3 above shows RBM’s status for both the 2022 and 2023 Dashboard indicators for all students and all numerically significant student groups.

Object 4 below shows the Status and Change information from the 2022 and 2023 Dashboard indicators. For most of the Dashboard measures, the desired outcome is a high number or percentage in the current year as well as an

increase from the prior year. A distinguishing feature of the suspension measure is the desired outcomes are low suspension rate and low chronic absenteeism rates, which means a low percentage in the current year and a decline from the prior year rate. At RBM, both suspension and chronic absenteeism rates maintained or decreased for all students and for all numerically significant student groups.

**Object 4: 2023 California School Dashboard Student Status and Change Report for RBM**

	Suspension Rate	Chronic Absenteeism	English Language Arts	Mathematics	English Learner Progress
All	Maintained 0%	Declined 13.5%	Increased 9.8 points	Increased 12.9 points	Increased 11.6%
EL	Maintained 0%	Declined 12%	Increased 18.6 points	Increased 17.2 points	
SED	Maintained 0%	Declined 12.1%	Increased 16.9 points	Increased 17.9 points	
SWD	Maintained 0%	Declined 25.3%	NPC Declined 8 points	NPC Increased 3.1 points	
Asian	Maintained 0%	Declined 4.8%	Increased 19.6 points	Increased 13.1 points	
Hispanic/Latino	Maintained 0%	Declined 14.6%	Increased 7.3 points	Increased 10 points	
White	NPC	NPC	NPC	NPC	
Homeless	NPC Maintained 0%	NPC Declined 23.7%	NPC	NPC	

*\*No performance color (NPC) given for groups of less than 30 students. Status rates are not given for groups of less than 11 students. Suspension Rate and Chronic Absenteeism are reverse metrics, therefore increasing in score is not desired.*

Objects 5 and 6, below, show data comparing the Dashboard indicators for all students and by student group for RBM and the State in 2021-22 and 2022-23. On the 2021-22 Dashboard, RBM outperforms the State in ELA with the EL, SED, and Hispanic/Latino populations and in Math for all students and all numerically significant student groups. On the 2022-23 Dashboard, RBM outperforms the State in ELA and in Math with its EL, SED, and Hispanic populations. It is notable that RBM students outperform the State in multiple academic areas on both the 2021 and 2022 Dashboards in both ELA and Math, causing RBM to be in the middle performance category.

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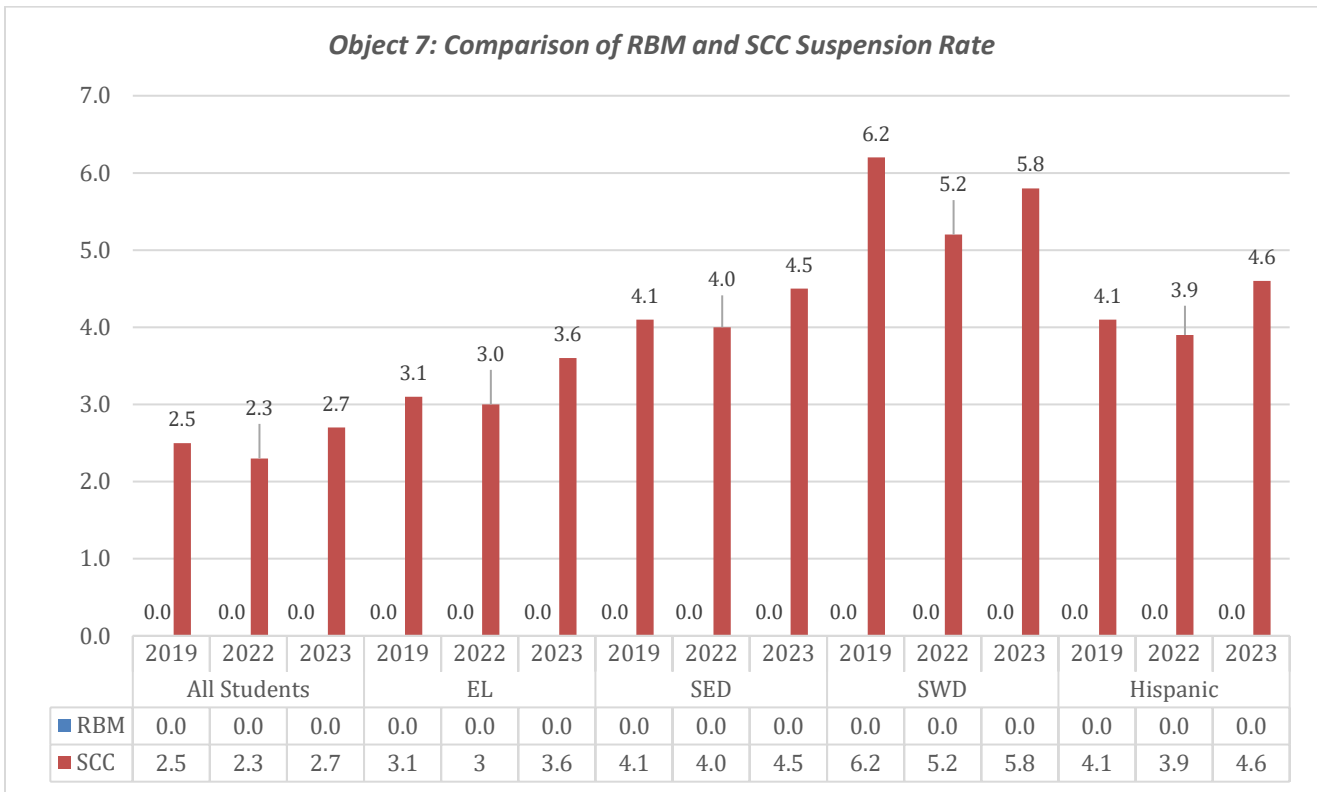
**Object 5: 2022 California School Dashboard Student Group Data for RBM and the State**

	Suspension Rate		Chronic Absenteeism		English Language Arts		Mathematics		English Learner Progress	
	RBM	State	RBM	State	RBM	State	RBM	State	RBM	State
<b>All</b>	VERY LOW 0%	MEDIUM 3.1%	VERY HIGH 40.5%	VERY HIGH 30%	LOW -22.6 DFS	LOW -12.2 DFS	LOW -32.3 DFS	LOW -51.7 DFS	LOW 39%	MEDIUM 51.7%
<b>EL</b>	VERY LOW 0%	MEDIUM 3.2%	VERY HIGH 36.9%	VERY HIGH 33.6%	LOW -34.1 DFS	LOW -61.2 DFS	LOW -44.4 DFS	LOW -92 DFS		
<b>SED</b>	VERY LOW 0%	MEDIUM 4%	VERY HIGH 39.7%	VERY HIGH 37.4%	LOW -34.1 DFS	LOW -41.4 DFS	LOW -44.5 DFS	LOW -84 DFS		
<b>SWD</b>	VERY LOW 0%	HIGH 5.4%	VERY HIGH 49.2%	VERY HIGH 39.6%	NPL -119 DFS	VERY LOW -97.3 DFS	NPL -110.8 DFS	VERY LOW -130 DFS		
<b>Hispanic/ Latino</b>	VERY LOW 0%	MEDIUM 3.3%	VERY HIGH 42.2%	VERY HIGH 35.8%	LOW -36 DFS	LOW -38.6 DFS	LOW -47.3 DFS	LOW -83.4 DFS		

**Object 6: 2023 California School Dashboard Student Group Data for RBM and the State**

	Suspension Rate		Chronic Absenteeism		English Language Arts		Mathematics		English Learner Progress	
	RBM	State	RBM	State	RBM	State	RBM	State	RBM	State
<b>All</b>	BLUE 0%	ORANGE 3.5%	YELLOW 27.0%	YELLOW 24.3%	YELLOW -12.8 DFS	ORANGE -13.6 DFS	GREEN -19.3 DFS	ORANGE -49.1 DFS	GREEN 50.5%	YELLOW 48.7%
<b>EL</b>	BLUE 0%	ORANGE 3.7%	YELLOW 24.9%	YELLOW 26.3%	YELLOW -15.9 DFS	ORANGE -67.7 DFS	YELLOW -27.2 DFS	ORANGE -93.4 DFS		
<b>SED</b>	BLUE 0%	ORANGE 4.5%	YELLOW 27.5%	YELLOW 29.9%	YELLOW -17.2 DFS	ORANGE -42.6 DFS	YELLOW -26.6 DFS	YELLOW -80.8 DFS		
<b>SWD</b>	BLUE 0%	ORANGE 5.9%	ORANGE 23.9%	YELLOW 33.1%	NPC -126.9 DFS	RED -96.3 DFS	NPC -107.7 DFS	ORANGE -127.3 DFS		
<b>Hispanic / Latino</b>	BLUE 0%	ORANGE 3.8%	YELLOW 27.7%	YELLOW 28.4%	YELLOW -28.7 DFS	ORANGE -40.2 DFS	YELLOW -37.3 DFS	ORANGE -80.8 DFS		

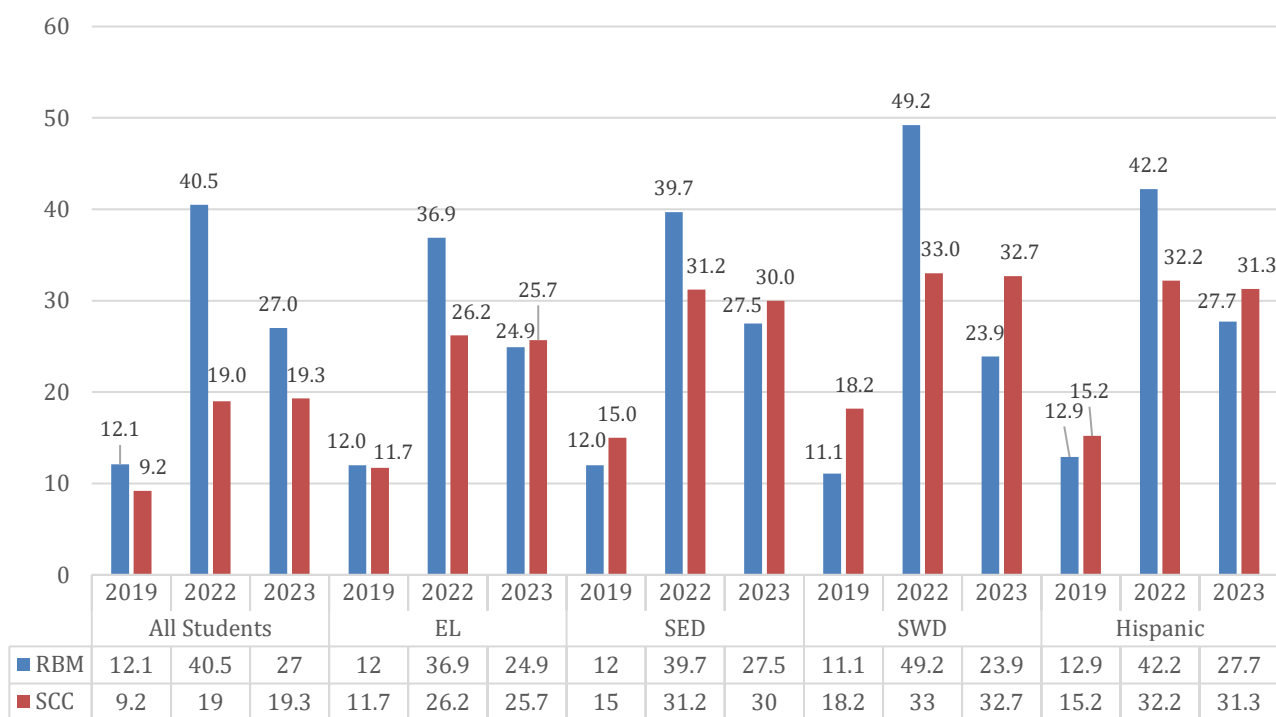
Object 7, below, shows data comparing the suspension indicator by student group for RBM and Santa Clara County (SCC) in 2018-19, 2021-22, and 2022-23. For most of the Dashboard measures, the desired outcome is a high number or percentage in the current year as well as an increase from the prior year. As noted above, a distinguishing feature of the suspension measure is the desired outcome is a low suspension rate, which means a low percentage in the current year and a decline from the prior year rate. While SCC showed mixed results for All Students and for each student group year over year, RBM maintained 0% suspensions for All Students and each targeted student group from 2018-19 to 2022-23.



Object 8, below, displays Dashboard data comparing the chronic absenteeism rate indicator by student group for RBM and SCC in 2018-19, 2021-22, and 2022-23. In 2018-19, RBM’s chronic absenteeism rate was below or comparable to SCC for All Students and all numerically significant student groups. After COVID, RBM’s chronic absenteeism rate increased significantly for All Students and across all numerically significant student groups, outpacing SCC for 2021-22. For 2022-23, RBM’s rate declined for All Students and across all numerically significant groups; and although still higher than SCC for All Students, it was below SCC for all numerically significant student groups.

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**Object 8: Comparison of RBM and SCC Chronic Absenteeism Rate**



Data retrieved from: [www6.cde.ca.gov/californiamodel/](http://www6.cde.ca.gov/californiamodel/)

**CAASPP Data**

The tables below reflect the CAASPP data (<https://caaspp-elpac.cde.ca.gov/>) verified by SCCOE staff while determining RBM’s schoolwide student performance and progress relative to Santa Clara County (SCC) and schools with the largest student populations enrolled at RBM. Due to COVID-19, all statewide testing for 2019-20 was cancelled. Further, RBM submitted its Renewal Petition at the end of the 2023-24 school year, prior to the testing results for 2023-24 being available, however, on October 10, 2024, the State of California released the 2023-24 CAASPP data. The tables below constitute the most recent academic data available for review.

**Object 9: Percentage of ALL STUDENTS at or Above Standard on CAASPP in ELA and Math at RBM, SCC, and Statewide for 2022-23**

2022-23 CAASPP (ELA)			
Grade	RBM	SCC	State
3	37.68	54.96	42.96
4	52.27	56.82	43.73
5	50.94	60.36	46.69
All	47.14	59.48	46.66

2022-23 CAASPP (Math)			
Grade	RBM	SCC	State
3	34.78	58.40	45.11
4	46.59	56.62	40.79
5	41.51	50.57	33.38
All	41.43	51.42	34.62

Data retrieved from: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/Default>

**Object 9a: Percentage of ALL STUDENTS at or Above Standard on CAASPP in ELA and Math at RBM, SCC, and Statewide for 2023-24**

2023-24 CAASPP (ELA)			
Grade	RBM	SCC	State
3	45.45	53.69	42.80
4	40.28	55.72	43.90
5	56.86	59.55	47.37
All	46.50	59.17	47.04

2023-24 CAASPP (Math)			
Grade	RBM	SCC	State
3	57.14	58.79	45.63
4	44.44	56.25	41.20
5	47.06	51.08	35.02
All	50.00	52.09	35.54

Data retrieved from: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/Default>

Objects 9 and 9a, above, reflect the 2022-23 and 2023-24 CAASPP results in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math for RBM, SCC, and the State. In 2022-23, RBM is outperformed by both SCC and the State in ELA. In Math, RBM outperforms the State but is outperformed by SCC.

**Object 10: Four-Year Trend of the Percentage for ALL STUDENTS at or Above Standard on CAASPP ELA and Math at RBM, SCC, and Statewide**

Four-Year Trend CAASPP (ELA)				
	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
RBM	*	43.53	47.14	46.50
SCC	68.67	60.63	59.48	59.17
State	49.01	47.06	46.66	47.04

Four-Year Trend CAASPP (Math)				
	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
RBM	*	36.44	41.43	50.00
SCC	61.10	51.39	51.42	52.10
State	33.76	33.38	34.62	35.54

Data retrieved from: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/Default>

\* RBM did not administer the CAASPP in 2020-21, in accordance with the flexibility granted by the CDE during that school year.

Object 10, above, reflects schoolwide student achievement in ELA and Math across the last four years of CAASPP for RBM, SCC, and the State. In ELA, RBM outperforms the State in 2022-23, however, achievement declines in 2023-24, resulting in the State outperforming RBM in both 21-22 and 23-24. For the three years in which data is available for both entities, Santa Clara County outperforms RBM on the ELA CAASPP. In Math, RBM outperforms the State in all three years, but is outperformed by Santa Clara County in all three years. It should be noted that State and SCC scores include grades 6, 7, 8, and 11, negating one-to-one comparisons.

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**Object 11: Four-Year Trend of the Percentage of Numerically Significant Student Groups at or Above Standard on CAASPP in ELA and Math for RBM Grades 3-5**

ELA				
	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
ALL	*	43.53	47.14	46.50
SWD	*	7.14	18.18	3.70
Hispanic/Latino	*	38.71	40.12	40.40
SED	*	39.56	46.25	42.41
EL	*	32.37	31.25	21.11

Math				
	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
ALL	*	36.44	41.43	50.00
SWD	*	14.29	13.64	14.81
Hispanic/Latino	*	29.26	33.33	42.38
SED	*	32.43	38.75	44.30
EL	*	22.54	24.11	33.33

Data retrieved from: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/Default>

\* RBM did not administer the CAASPP in 2020-21, in accordance with the flexibility granted by the CDE during that school year.

Object 11, above, reflects the CAASPP results for numerically significant student groups at RBM over the last four years. RBM did not administer the CAASPP in 2020-21, under flexibility granted by CDE. In Math, the data shows an increase in the percentages of All Students and well as students who are Hispanic/Latino, SED and ELs performing at or above standard over the three years of available data. The ELA scores over the three years show uneven performance for SWDs and students who are SED, increasing from 2021-22 to 2022-23 and then declining in 2023-24. The ELA achievement of students who are ELs and SWDs declined overall in 2023-24 to lower than achievement in 2021-22. Students who are White and students who are Hispanic/Latino increased their ELA achievement in 2022-23 and maintained similar scores in 2023-24.

**Object 12: Comparison of the Percentage of Students At or Above Standard on 2023 CAASPP ELA Results for RBM, SCC, and Comparison Schools Near RBM**

2022-23 CAASPP (ELA)						
Group	RBM	SCC	Ryan	Lyndale	Mt. Pleasant	State
ALL	47.14	59.48	66.93	63.47	69.12	46.66
SED	46.25	35.65	61.31	54.96	60.82	35.27
Hispanic/Latino	31.25	65.56	58.38	46.67	60.82	36.08
EL	40.12	29.20	19.33	18.09	33.19	10.87
SWD	18.18	20.50	23.02	12.17	18.43	15.75

Data retrieved from: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/Default>

**Object 12a: Comparison of the Percentage of Students At or Above Standard on 2024 CAASPP ELA Results for RBM, SCC, and Comparison Schools Near RBM**

2023-24 CAASPP (ELA)						
Group	RBM	SCC	Ryan	Lyndale	Mt. Pleasant	State
ALL	46.50	59.17	15.97	21.64	19.81	47.04
SED	42.41	37.87	15.46	20.91	14.46	36.82
Hispanic/ Latino	21.11	32.42	13.00	19.13	18.09	36.78
EL	40.40	12.80	4.92	6.25	8.16	10.29
SWD	3.70	19.35	7.41	6.67	0.00	15.82

Data retrieved from: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/Default>

**Object 13: Comparison of the Percentage of Students At or Above Standard on 2023 CAASPP Math Results for RBM, SCC, and Comparison Schools Near RBM**

2022-23 CAASPP (Math)						
Group	RBM	SCC	Ryan	Lyndale	Mt. Pleasant	State
ALL	41.43	51.42	20.67	19.05	20.18	34.62
SED	38.75	25.47	17.46	15.53	16.05	22.91
Hispanic/ Latino	24.11	41.56	17.32	12.62	15.38	22.69
EL	33.33	30.58	8.97	6.45	7.27	9.93
SWD	13.64	18.24	3.85	14.29	0.00	12.26

Data retrieved from: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/Default>

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**Object 13a: Comparison of the Percentage of Students At or Above Standard on 2023 CAASPP Math Results for RBM, SCC, and Comparison Schools Near RBM**

2023-24 CAASPP (Math)						
Group	RBM	SCC	Ryan	Lyndale	Mt. Pleasant	State
ALL	50.00	52.10	17.93	12.70	18.69	35.54
SED	44.30	28.73	16.24	11.00	14.29	24.97
Hispanic/ Latino	33.33	15.43	14.4	7.48	18.95	23.73
EL	42.38	21.34	9.46	5.88	10.20	10.25
SWD	14.81	17.68	10.00	7.41	7.69	12.54

Data retrieved from: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/Default>

Objects 12, 12a, 13, and 13a above, reflect the 2022-23 and the 2023-24 CAASPP data as compared to the State, SCC and the schools RBM students would otherwise have attended or schools in close physical proximity to RBM: Ryan, Lyndale and Mt. Pleasant Elementary. Overall, RBM’s Math scores outperform the State and the comparison schools for all student groups in both years. However, RBM outperforms the County in both years for students who are SED and students who are ELs. RBM’s students who are Hispanic/Latino also outperform the County in Math in 2023-24. In ELA, the comparison of results was mixed in both years. Although RBM’s All Student population outperformed the State in 2022-23, the school was outperformed by all comparison schools and the County. In 2023-24, RBM’s All Students population outperformed all the comparison schools but was outperformed by the State and County in ELA. RBM’s populations of students who are EL and students who are SED outperformed the State, County and all comparison schools for both years in ELA.

**ELPI/ELPAC Data**

Objects 14 and 15, below (from <https://caaspp-elpac.cde.ca.gov/>), reflect the 2022-23 English Learner Proficiency Indicator (ELPI) data as determined by the English Language Proficiency Assessment of California (ELPAC). This is a comparison of RBM, the State, SCC, and the schools to which RBM students would otherwise have attended: Ryan, Lyndale and Mt. Pleasant Elementary. ELPI is not calculated at the County level. For comparison, ARUSD, the district in which RBM is located, has been included in the analysis below. For students who increased one or more ELPI levels, RBM was outperformed by the State and Mt. Pleasant Elementary, but outperformed the State, ARUSD, Ryan Elementary, and Lyndale Elementary in all other measures of EL progress.

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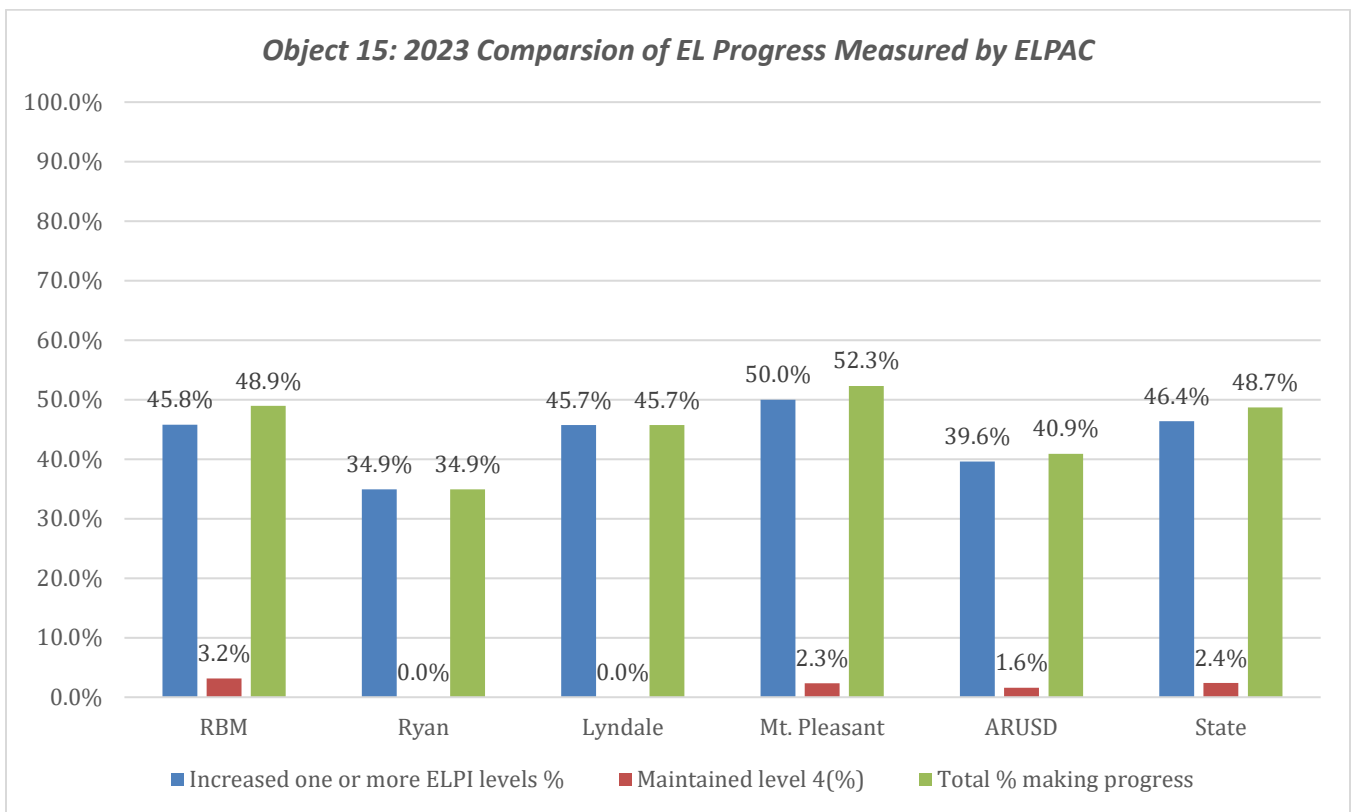
**Object 14: 2023 Comparison of EL Progress Measured by ELPAC**

	<b>RBM</b>	<b>Ryan</b>	<b>Lyndale</b>	<b>Mt. Pleasant</b>	<b>ARUSD*</b>	<b>State</b>
<b>Increased one or more ELPI levels</b>	45.8%	34.9%	45.7%	50.0%	39.6%	46.4%
<b>Maintained level 4</b>	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	1.6%	2.4%
<b>Total % making progress</b>	48.9%	34.9%	45.7%	52.3%	40.9%	48.7%
<b>Performance Level</b>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Red</i>	<i>Yellow</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Orange</i>	<i>Yellow</i>
<b>Number of Students</b>	190	106	105	86	2,368	829,209

Data retrieved from: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/Default>

\*ELPI is not calculated at the County level. For comparison ARUSD, where RBM is located, has been included.

**Object 15: 2023 Comparison of EL Progress Measured by ELPAC**



Data retrieved from: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/Default>

\*ELPI is not calculated at the County level. For comparison ARUSD, where RBM is located, has been included.

**Verified Data**

Pursuant to EC Section 47607.2(b), schools in the middle performance category are to provide additional sources of verified data to provide clear and convincing evidence to support renewal, including that the school achieved measurable increases in academic achievement, defined by at least one year’s progress for each year in school. The verified data come from a list of valid and reliable assessments and measures adopted by the State Board of Education. RBM provided data from the Northwest Evaluation Association’s (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments to show academic growth by its students. Guidance from NWEA states schools and other educational partners can use the Conditional Growth Index (CGI) to measure the growth of groups of

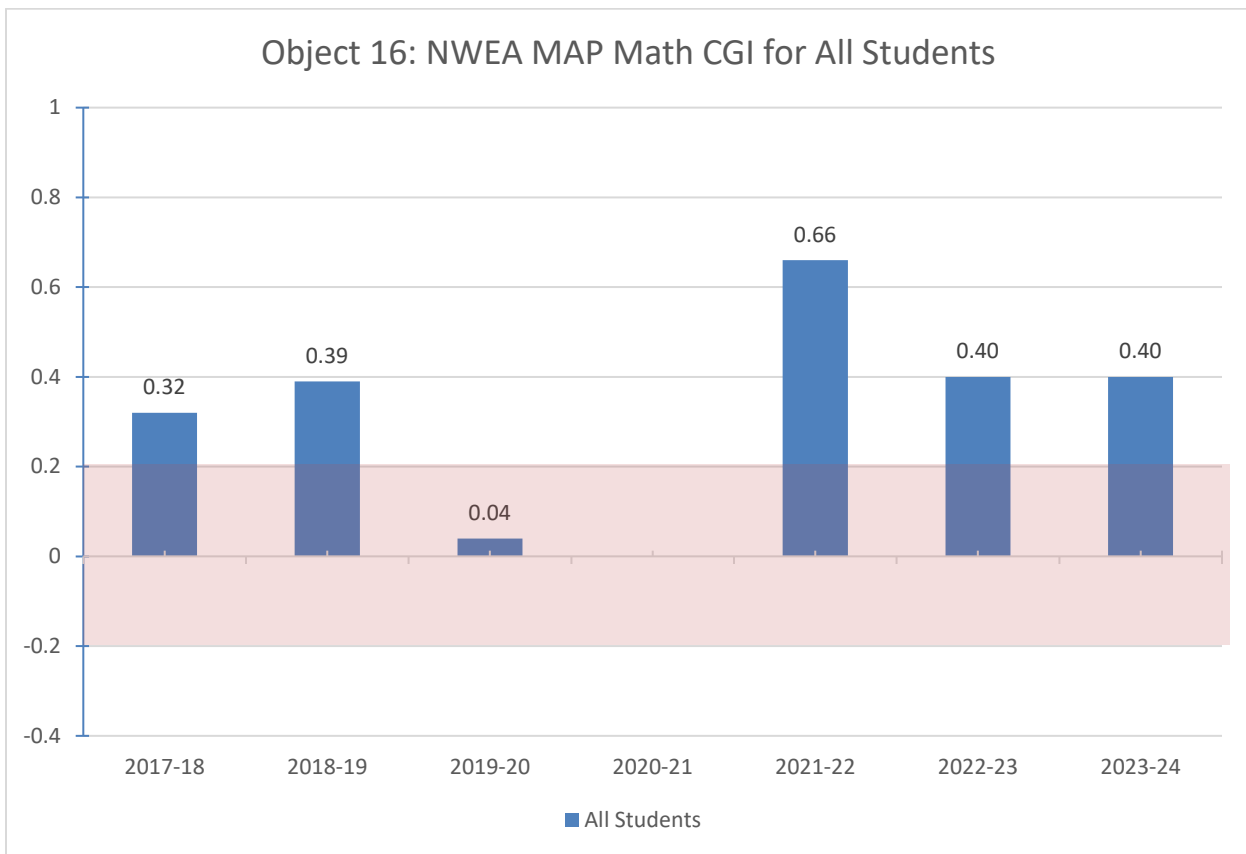


*RBM Charter School*

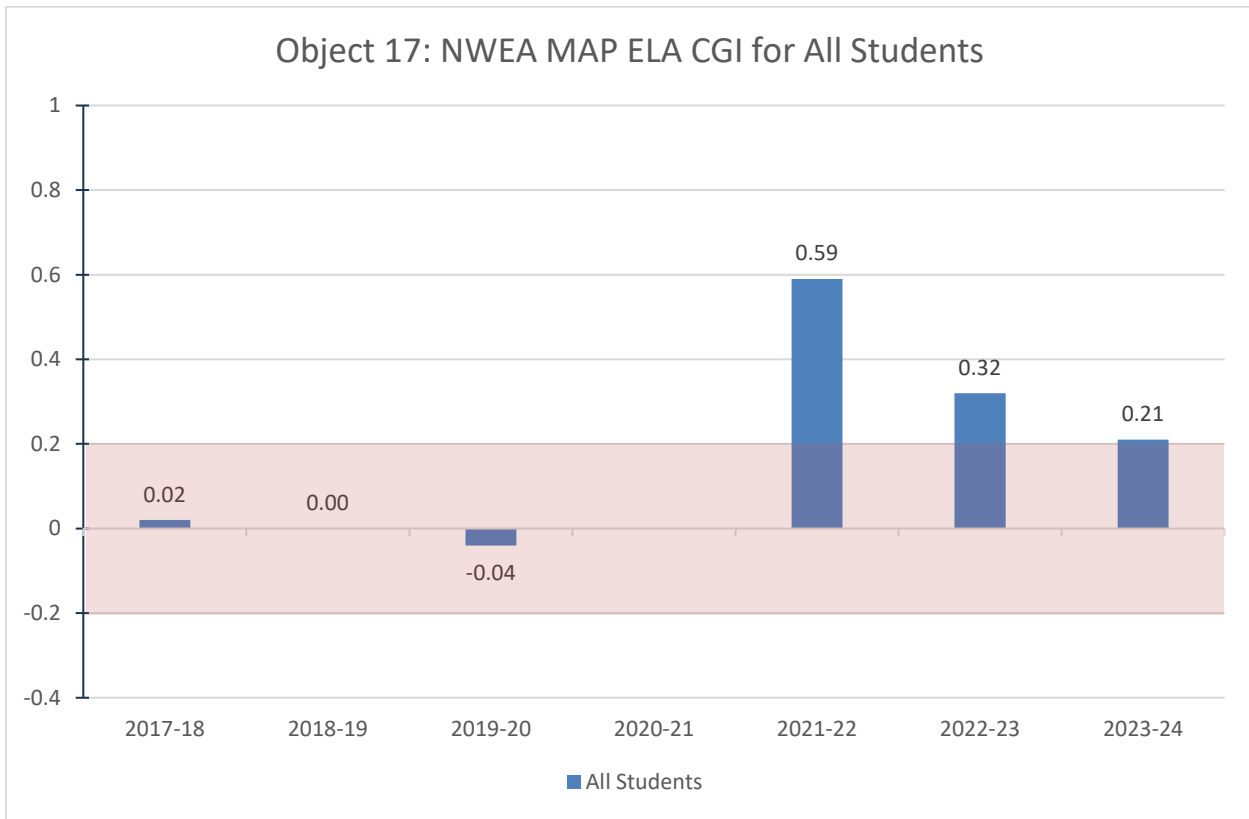
students, and average CGI scores within the -0.2 and 0.2 range are considered to have met growth targets for one year.

In Object 16 and Object 17 below, the CGI for each year of the charter term has been tracked for all students each year. The pink bar highlights the range for “one year’s growth,” which is -0.2 to 0.2. In both ELA and Math, all students at RBM made at least one year’s growth in each school year. No data was available in 2020-21 due to COVID. In both Objects, the schoolwide average for CGI meets or exceeds NWEA’s “one year’s growth” threshold for each year the assessment was administered.

Considering RBM’s performance information, including the Dashboard and clear and convincing evidence demonstrated by verified data that RBM achieved measurable increases in academic achievement, SCCOE Staff does not recommend denial of RBM on the basis of the performance criterion. Giving greater weight to performance on measurements of academic performance, Staff does not find that RBM failed to make sufficient progress towards standards that benefit its students or that closure of RBM is in the best interests of pupils.



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**Renewal Site Visit**

On October 9, 2024, CSD staff conducted a Renewal Site Visit to the RBM campus. CSD staff visited classrooms, met with site and network leadership, and conducted focus group interviews with educational partners such as current students, parents, and teachers. During the visit, CSD staff observed instructional practices and routines consistent with the academic model outlined in the petition.

**Finances**

Object 18, below, provides an eight-year historical financial summary for RBM from Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-17 through FY 2023-24. The financial data for FY 2023-24 is based on unaudited actuals, while data from prior years is supported by audited financial reports. Over these years, RBM has demonstrated a stable financial position by successfully meeting and exceeding the 4% reserve requirement in its 2017 MOU with the SCCOE.

RBM’s total revenues have shown steady growth, increasing from \$7.6 million in 2016-17 to \$12.1 million in FY 2022-23. However, unaudited actuals for FY 2023-24 indicate a 2% decline in revenue, bringing it to \$11.9 million. This slight decrease is expected as RBM revenues normalize following an influx of one-time funds. A significant increase in revenue in recent years is primarily due to various one-time funding, such as Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER), Learning Loss Mitigation Funds (LLMF), and other state and federal funds received by charter schools to address the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. RBM utilized these one-time funds to meet increased operational costs, sustain continuity of education, maintain safe learning environments, and address both immediate and long-term impacts of the pandemic on students, staff, and school operations.

*RBM Charter School*

In alignment with revenue growth, RBM’s total expenses have also shown an upward trend, increasing from \$6.8 million in 2016-17 to approximately \$10.8 million by 2023-24. While expenses have generally followed revenue growth, RBM experienced slight deficit spending in FY 2021-22, amounting to [-\$181,537]. Despite this brief period of deficit spending, RBM has maintained an average fund balance percentage of approximately 40% over the review period.

As of June 30, 2023, RBM reported an audited reserve balance of \$5,800,696, representing 58% of total expenses. The Independent Auditor’s Report for the Year Ending June 30, 2023, issued an Unmodified Opinion on RBM’s financial statement and its State and Federal compliance. Additionally, the audit identified no deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls over financial statements and compliance for FY 2022-23. RBM has consistently fulfilled its obligations to submit all fiscal reports required by law and SCCOE in a timely manner.

The Charter Schools Department Fiscal Staff is not aware of any significant financial concerns for RBM.

		Object 18: RBM Historical Financial Summary <sup>1</sup>							
		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
[A]	<b>Total Revenues</b>	7,688,639	7,626,464	8,554,714	8,472,836	8,967,958	9,387,875	12,151,514	11,905,203
[B]	<b>Total Expenses</b>	6,832,195	7,302,125	7,668,346	7,988,617	8,043,719	9,569,412	10,082,483	10,849,717
[C] = [A - B]	<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	856,444	324,339	886,368	484,219	924,239	(181,537)	2,069,031	1,055,486
[D]	<b>Beginning Fund Balance</b>	437,593	1,294,037	1,618,376	2,504,744	2,988,963	3,913,202	3,731,665	5,800,696
[E]	<b>Adjustment to Beg. Fund Balance</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
[F] = [(C+D) + E]	<b>Total Net Assets, End of Year</b>	\$ 1,294,037	\$ 1,618,376	\$ 2,504,744	\$ 2,988,963	\$ 3,913,202	\$ 3,731,665	\$ 5,800,696	\$ 6,856,182
[G] = [F/B]	<b>Fund Balance %</b>	19%	22%	33%	37%	49%	39%	58%	63%

1. Source of Data: Audited Financial Reports for FY 2016-17 - 2022-23. FY 2023-24 is based on Unaudited Actuals.

**Demographic Data**

In accordance with EC Section 47607(d)(1)(B) and (C), SCCOE requested, received from CDE, and reviewed aggregate data reflecting pupil enrollment patterns and test score patterns at RBM, as well as other demographic data from CDE through the CDE website.

In Objects 19 and 20, a comparison of the average Distance from Standard (DFS) academic assessment scores is made between students who left RBM and DFS for the students remaining at RBM. Object 19 reviews the average DFS for students who left after Census Day and Object 20 reviews the data for the students who left RBM at the end of the year and could have returned for the following school year but did not. This does not include students who would age out of the school. Based on the aggregate data from CDE, students who leave RBM are not students who appear to have been counseled out based on lower academic performance, as the average DFS in academic assessments for students leaving RBM and/or not returning to RBM are higher than or comparable to the students remaining at RBM. Further, the student enrollment numbers for the students who left RBM are for all grades, whereas the students tested includes grades 3-5 only. There was no statewide testing for 2019-20, therefore DFS is not available.

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**Object 19: Comparison of Average DFS for Students Who Left RBM After Census Day and RBM DFS**

Academic Year	Subject	Enrolled Beginning of Year but Not Enrolled Conclusion	Cumulative Enrollment	Percent Enrolled Beginning Not Enrolled Conclusion	Number of Students Tested who left RBM	DFS Average for Students who left RBM	DFS Average for Students Remaining at RBM
2016-17	ELA	112	657	17.05	42	-60.31	-26.8
2016-17	Math	112	657	17.05	42	-12.64	-12.6
2017-18	ELA	116	635	18.27	39	-28.15	-25.0
2017-18	Math	116	635	18.27	39	4.54	-29.2
2018-19	ELA	73	649	11.25	21	-11.52	-9.6
2018-19	Math	73	649	11.25	21	23.48	15.1
2019-20	ELA	64	662	9.67	32	9.16	*
2019-20	Math	64	662	9.67	32	36.91	*
2022-23	ELA	56	507	11.05	35	-12.17	-12.8
2022-23	Math	56	507	11.05	35	-7.34	-19.3

**Object 20: Comparison of Average DFS for Students Attended RBM for at Least 90 days and Did Not Return the Following Year and RBM DFS**

Academic Year	Subject	Enrolled for 90 days in Prior Year but Not on Census Day of Current Year	Prior Year Cumulative Enrollment	Percent Enrolled for 90 days Prior Year but Not on Census Day	Number of Students Tested who left RBM	DFS Average for Students who left RBM	DFS Average for Students Remaining at RBM
2016-17	ELA	114	608	18.75	41	-17.54	-26.8
2016-17	Math	114	608	18.75	41	20.17	-12.6
2017-18	ELA	153	657	23.29	55	-24.67	-25.0
2017-18	Math	153	657	23.29	55	-6.44	-29.2
2018-19	ELA	135	635	21.26	60	-26.23	-9.6
2018-19	Math	135	635	21.26	59	-2.83	15.1
2019-20	ELA	78	649	12.02	26	-15.81	*
2019-20	Math	78	649	12.02	28	10.71	*
2022-23	ELA	83	566	14.66	44	-49.52	-12.8
2022-23	Math	83	566	14.66	45	-53.87	-19.3

Objects 21 and 22 show the cumulative enrollment data for RBM from 2016-17 to 2022-23, the total enrollment data for RBM from 2016-17 to 2023-24, and the enrollment stability data for RBM from 2016-17 to 2022-23. Cumulative enrollment data for 2023-24 was not available as it is still being formulated by CDE. Cumulative enrollment consists of the total number of unduplicated primary and short-term enrollments within the academic year (July 1 to June 30), regardless of whether the student is enrolled multiple times within a school or district.

**Object 21: Cumulative Enrollment for RBM from 2016-17 to 2022-23**

	Cumulative Total Number of Students	Number of Hispanic or Latino	Number of Asian	Number of Filipino	Number of White	Number of African American	Number of Two or More Races	Number of Not Reported
<b>2016-17</b>	657	510	77	*	*	13	11	27
<b>2017-18</b>	635	516	74	*	*	*	11	13
<b>2018-19</b>	649	509	85	*	*	11	*	18
<b>2019-20</b>	662	523	77	*	*	*	*	28
<b>2020-21</b>	622	483	90	*	*	*	11	17
<b>2021-22</b>	566	443	85	*	*	*	*	*
<b>2022-23</b>	507	383	94	*	*	*	*	*

\*Data is suppressed for categories if the student population (cumulative students) is 10 or less.

**Object 22: Cumulative RBM Student Group Data from 2016-17 to 2022-23**

	Cumulative Total Number of Students	Number of SED	Number of EL	Number of SWD	Number of Homeless
<b>2016-17</b>	657	540	372	50	86
<b>2017-18</b>	635	491	361	53	*
<b>2018-19</b>	649	514	333	64	0
<b>2019-20</b>	662	527	387	67	20
<b>2020-21</b>	622	510	359	66	18
<b>2021-22</b>	566	427	328	65	17
<b>2022-23</b>	507	396	289	71	30

\*Data is suppressed for categories if the student population (cumulative students) is 10 or less.

The total enrollment for a school is established on California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS) day in early October. CBEDS is a moment in time snapshot of all the educational demographic data across California. Objects 23 and 24 below, show the total enrollment demographic and student group data for the number of students enrolled in each category across the charter term for RBM on CBEDS day.

**Object 23: RBM Total Enrollment Demographic Data from 2016-17 to 2023-24**

	Total Number of Students	Number of Hispanic or Latino	Number of Asian	Number of Filipino	Number of White	Number of African American	Number of Two or More Races	Number of Not Reported
<b>2016-17</b>	657	510	77	0	0	13	11	27
<b>2017-18</b>	569	467	67	8	1	5	12	7
<b>2018-19</b>	586	461	82	6	5	5	9	15
<b>2019-20</b>	635	502	72	4	4	8	8	29
<b>2020-21</b>	606	470	90	4	3	8	11	14
<b>2021-22</b>	524	408	82	6	7	7	5	0
<b>2022-23</b>	504	381	93	6	8	5	3	0
<b>2023-24</b>	486	364	95	7	7	1	3	0

Data gathered from Dataquest: <https://data1.cde.ca.gov>

**Object 24: RBM Total Enrollment Student Group Data from 2016-17 to 2023-24**

	Total Number of Students	Total Number of SED	Total Number of EL	Total Number of SWD
<b>2016-17</b>	657	540	372	50
<b>2017-18</b>	569	449	331	45
<b>2018-19</b>	586	450	246	54
<b>2019-20</b>	635	510	353	59
<b>2020-21</b>	606	500	343	59
<b>2021-22</b>	524	402	303	46
<b>2022-23</b>	504	386	287	56
<b>2023-24</b>	486	370	261	60

Data gathered from Dataquest: <https://data1.cde.ca.gov>

Objects 25 and 26 show the Stability Rate data for RBM from 2017-18 to 2022-23. The Stability Rate is defined as the percentage of California public school students enrolled during the academic year (July 1 – June 30) who completed a "full year" of learning in one school. The Stability Rate data below shows the percentage of students who remained at RBM throughout each school year. RBM's stability percentage is on average 89.9%. The stability rates averaged across student groups from 2017-18 through 2022-23 are equivalent to the overall average: approximately 90.7% for ELs, approximately 91.1% for SED, and approximately 90.9% for SWD.

**Object 25: RBM Enrollment Demographic Stability Percentage Data from 2017-18 to 2022-23**

	Total Number of Students	% Total	% Hispanic or Latino	% Asian	% Filipino	% White	% African American	% Two or More Races	% Not Reported
<b>2017-18</b>	528	83.1	84.5	82.4	*	*	*	81.8	61.5
<b>2018-19</b>	559	86.1	86.8	90.6	*	*	45.5	*	72.2
<b>2019-20</b>	606	91.5	91.2	93.5	*	*	*	*	96.4
<b>2020-21</b>	589	94.8	94.2	98.9	*	*	*	100.0	82.4
<b>2021-22</b>	496	87.6	88.3	92.9	*	*	*	*	*
<b>2022-23</b>	489	96.4	97.1	98.9	100.0	87.5	20.0	66.7	0.0

Data gathered from Dataquest: <https://data1.cde.ca.gov>

\*To protect student privacy, data are suppressed population size within a selected student population (eligible cumulative enrollment) is 10 or less.

**Object 26: RBM Student Group Stability Percentage Data from 2017-18 to 2022-23**

	Total Number of Students	Stability Percentage SED	Stability Percentage EL	Stability Percentage SWD
<b>2017-18</b>	528	85.9	85.3	90.6
<b>2018-19</b>	559	87.0	87.1	85.9
<b>2019-20</b>	606	92.6	91.2	94.0
<b>2020-21</b>	589	95.5	94.4	95.4
<b>2021-22</b>	496	89.9	89.9	86.2
<b>2022-23</b>	489	95.5	96.2	93.0

Data gathered from Dataquest: <https://data1.cde.ca.gov>

## **REVIEW OF THE CHARTER PETITION**

SCCOE Staff reviewed the Renewal Petition using the criteria established in California *EC* Sections 47605.6(c), 47607, and 47607.2, consistent with County Board Policy 0420.4(c), and found the following:

### **1. Sound Education Program**

Rocketship Academy for Brilliant Minds as part of the broader Rocketship Public Schools network, follows a consistent educational model based on three foundational pillars: (1) personalized learning, (2) talent development, and (3) parent empowerment. These pillars serve as the foundation for RBM's program, which aims to unlock the potential of every student by tailoring the learning experience to meet individual needs, fostering growth among educators, and engaging parents as advocates for their children's education.

RBM provides instruction through a blended learning model. Students rotate between four distinct content blocks: Humanities, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), Learning Lab, and Enrichment. This block schedule allows teachers to specialize in specific content areas, increasing instructional quality through collaboration and focus. The curriculum is aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and integrates social-emotional learning alongside academic content. Teachers lead a combination of whole-group, small-group, and individualized instruction to ensure that students receive targeted support based on their academic needs.

Each Rocketship school adopts four core values (persistence, empathy, responsibility, and respect), with a unique fifth value selected by the school. RBM's additional value is "Initiative," emphasizing student self-advocacy and initiative in academic pursuits and beyond. Social-emotional learning (SEL) is integrated through the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework and The Shortest Distance SEL curriculum, helping students articulate and manage their emotions effectively. RBM further strengthens the school-home connection through tools like Parent Square. Parent engagement remains a cornerstone of RBM's model, with teachers visiting every student's home at the start of the school year to build strong relationships.

Finally, RBM affirms its commitment to serving a predominantly socio-economically disadvantaged student population, with a significant percentage of English learners and students requiring special education services. The school actively seeks to close the achievement gap for students who often enter below grade level, utilizing personalized, data-informed instruction and a community-centered approach to education. By participating in initiatives like the California Community Schools Partnership Program, RBM ensures that students and families receive the support they need, from academic interventions to mental health and social services. RBM's Learning Lab and Online Learning Platforms (OLPs) are central to its personalized learning model, offering tailored academic support outside the traditional classroom setting. The Learning Lab provides students with opportunities for small-group instruction, enrichment, and intervention. During this time, students can engage with hands-on activities, independent reading, or targeted skills practice. The Lab is staffed by Individualized Learning Specialists (ILSs), who help monitor and facilitate learning interventions, often with the support of online learning programs.

### **Students Performing Below Grade Level:**

RBM serves a significant portion of students who enter the school performing below grade level and are considered "at promise students." The school's educational program is designed with personalized

learning pathways that address the unique needs of these students. The instructional model uses real-time data from assessments to guide interventions and instructional adjustments. Teachers and ILs provide targeted small-group instruction and differentiated learning activities to address gaps in foundational skills. Data from assessments such as Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and bi-monthly standards-based tests help inform these interventions, ensuring that students receive the support they need to progress toward grade-level mastery.

To ensure that students performing below grade level are consistently monitored, RBM employs a tiered approach to instruction. Through the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework, at-risk students receive tiered interventions, starting with core classroom instruction and progressing to more intensive support if needed. This model includes not only academic tutoring but also enrichment opportunities to build confidence and engagement in learning. Personalized learning platforms also play a role in helping students reinforce foundational skills through adaptive, individualized lessons, further allowing them to bridge learning gaps. The school emphasizes proactive intervention to prevent further academic delays, striving to move students toward grade-level proficiency through structured remediation.

The Charter includes a discussion of Extended Learning Time for RBM students. RBM affirms that it will meet the or exceed the minimum state requirements for annual instructional minutes. This section specifies that RBM reserves “the right to adjust students’ instructional minutes in each subject and learning space based on students’ personalized learning needs.” As a condition of approval RBM’s 2017 Renewal and RBM’s 2017 MOU, RBM was required to add language specifying “No such adjustments shall result in Brilliant Minds meeting the minimum number of instructional minutes from instruction by any individual other than a credentialed teacher.” RBM submitted a revised Charter in 2017 to comply with this condition. However, this provision of the Renewal Petition has been modified to specify that “instructional minutes” are defined as “minutes spent under the immediate supervision and control of a certificated employee ((Education Code Section 47612.5()),” and omitting the prior language about instruction by certificated teachers. As such, all instructional minutes as described in the Renewal Petition, even if “adjusted” as described therein, are, by definition, under the immediate supervision of a properly credentialed employee, so the additional assurance language required at the time of the last renewal is not necessary.

### **Special Education:**

RBM’s special education program is grounded in the principles of inclusion and tailored support for students with exceptional needs. As a member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA, RBM operates as an independent Local Educational Agency (LEA) for special education. This affiliation enables the school to receive state and federal funding directly and to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). RBM is committed to providing a free and appropriate public education to all students, regardless of disability, and to working collaboratively with the SELPA to meet these obligations. RBM is also committed to, and has plans and staffing to enable, compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Staffing at RBM includes a team of qualified special education professionals, including special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and education specialists. These staff members participate in ongoing training through RPS, the county, or the SELPA to ensure they are equipped to meet the diverse needs of students. RBM also employs or contracts with itinerant staff such as speech therapists, occupational therapists, and behavioral therapists to provide necessary related services as indicated in students’ Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).



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RBM's approach to inclusion involves both push-in and pull-out support strategies. Push-in support allows special education staff to work alongside general education teachers in the classroom, providing targeted assistance to students with special needs. Pull-out support is available for students requiring more intensive, small-group instruction to make academic progress. This support can focus on accessing grade-level content or addressing foundational skill gaps. Related services, including speech therapy, counseling, and occupational therapy, are provided based on the specific needs outlined in each student's IEP.

The IEP process at RBM is collaborative. IEP teams at RBM include special education teachers, general education teachers, parents, RPS representatives (if necessary), SELPA representatives (if necessary), and other relevant professionals. These teams work with parents and guardians to ensure their participation, providing interpreters and alternative meeting methods, as necessary. IEPs are reviewed annually to assess their effectiveness and are reassessed every three years as part of a comprehensive reevaluation. RBM ensures all accommodations, modifications, and services outlined in the IEPs are implemented by qualified personnel and progress is communicated to parents.

**Object 27: 2023-24 Special Education Enrollment by Program Setting for RBM and Comparison Schools and County and State**

	<b>RBM</b>	<b>Thomas P. Ryan Elementary</b>	<b>Lyndale Elementary</b>	<b>Mt. Pleasant Elementary</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>State</b>
<b>Special Education Enrollment</b>	60.0%	45.0%	71.0%	38.0%	29,459	836,846
<b>Regular Class 80% or More of the Day</b>	76.7%	68.9%	45.1%	63.2%	56.8%	59.1%
<b>Regular Class 40-79% of the Day</b>	13.3%	2.2%	0.0%	2.6%	17.5%	15.2%
<b>Regular Class 39% or Less of the Day</b>	6.7%	26.7%	22.5%	5.3%	17.3%	17.1%
<b>Separate School &amp; Other Settings</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	2.5%
<b>Preschool Setting</b>	3.3%	2.2%	32.4%	28.9%	5.8%	6.1%
<b>Missing/Unknown</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Data gathered from Dataquest: <https://data1.cde.ca.gov>

**English Learners (EL):**

RBM integrates English Language Development (ELD) standards into its instructional program, ensuring both integrated and designated support for English Learners (ELs). The school uses data-driven strategies to monitor the progress of ELs, employing assessments like the state-mandated English Language Proficiency Assessment of California (ELPAC) and ongoing classroom evaluations. This helps identify specific linguistic gaps, allowing teachers to design targeted interventions and adjust instruction to meet individual language development needs. Teachers employ explicit vocabulary instruction and ensure that ELs engage with content through scaffolded academic language strategies.

Additionally, RBM supports English Learners by integrating ELD with content learning, particularly in literacy and STEM subjects. Teachers are trained to differentiate instruction by incorporating strategies such as visual supports, modeling language use, and fostering collaborative learning environments where

ELs practice academic discussions. ELs are also exposed to diverse reading materials that build both language proficiency and content knowledge, contributing to their holistic academic development.

Designated instruction is a protected time during the school day when teachers use English Language Development (ELD) standards to help English Learners (ELs) develop the language skills necessary for academic success. This instruction is integrated with content learning and focuses on developing discourse practices, grammar, and vocabulary. Teachers group students based on their language development stage (expanding, emerging, bridging) to target specific needs and accelerate their progress in English. There is a strong emphasis on oral language development, alongside reading and writing tasks. For example, teachers may guide students through analyzing language in texts, learning academic vocabulary, and engaging in discussions or debates to reinforce language comprehension and use.

### **Educational Leadership**

The Principal and Assistant Principals are the educational and instructional leaders at RBM, in addition to being responsible for teacher supervision, evaluation, and providing input and approval of each faculty and staff member's Goals. In the 2017-2025 RBM Charter, administrators are required to possess valid teaching credentials. Notably, however, this requirement has been removed from the employee qualifications in the Renewal Petition. Staff notes that RBM revised the qualifications for the positions of Principal and Assistant Principal by eliminating the requirement that these positions require a valid teaching credential. The sample job descriptions for the Principal and the Assistant Principals included in the Renewal Petition also specify that the positions only require "2+ years of teaching experience in an urban city classroom and realizing significant gains," consistent with the elimination of the credential requirement in Element F of the Charter. The proposed elimination of this significant professional qualification for the positions of Principal and Assistant Principal constitutes a request for material revision to the Charter as employee qualifications are a required charter element, and this proposed change has a potentially substantial effect on the quality of the educational program and teaching at RBM, impacting the overall soundness and implementation of the program. (EC 47605.6(c)(1), (2), and (5)(F).) The SCCBOE may act on the material revision request separately from its action on the request for renewal.

The job duties assigned to these administrative positions are consistent with the need for at least a valid teaching credential, if not an administrative credential. This is particularly true in light of the mandate that all charter schoolteachers now hold the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment. RBM's Principal and Assistant Principals should also meet this requirement applicable to the teachers they train, supervise, and evaluate. As such, there is a greater need for a teaching credential, and CSD Staff finds specifically a California teaching credential, for these leadership positions now than at the time of approval of the current charter. The lack of a California teaching credential for a person holding one of these positions could negatively impact the quality of educational services provided to RBM students, and requiring teaching credentials is consistent with the County Board of Education's expressed expectations for charter schools under its oversight in order to help ensure a sound educational program. Additionally, if RBM administrators "cover" classes for teachers when a substitute is not available, they are required to hold a California teaching credential, or at least a substitute credential. This proposed material revision to the Renewal Petition may result in a situation in which the Principal or Assistant Principals would be unable to cover classrooms when needed.

In considering RBM's request for material revision to the employment qualifications for these two academic leadership positions, it is instructive to review the specific descriptions of the job duties for the positions, as specified in the Renewal Petition.

The Charter specifies the following regarding the role of the Principal (emphasis added):

**The Principal is the instructional, cultural, managerial, and community leader of the Charter School.** The Principal sets the vision for the Charter School and **ensures that the Charter School is a high-achieving college preparatory environment where all students finish the fifth grade at or above grade level.** Additionally, **the Principal directly manages, supports, and develops the Assistant Principal and the Office Manager.** **The Principal may serve as the manager and coach of all educators, which includes conducting observation cycles, modeling lessons, and providing support and resources aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness and leadership.** The Principal is also responsible for engaging and empowering parents to become lifelong advocates for their children's education.

The Charter specifies the following role for the Assistant Principals (emphasis added):

RBM will have at least two Assistant Principals, **focused full-time on the implementation of RBM's academic systems and mentoring teachers to improve their effectiveness.**

Reporting directly to the Principal, **the Assistant Principal plays a critical role in driving academic achievement for students.** **The Assistant Principal ensures academic excellence by working closely with the Principal to lead and implement the instructional vision for the Charter School.** **The Assistant Principal leads two primary streams of work: teacher coaching and professional development ("PD").** **The Assistant Principal directly coaches a number of educators, which includes conducting observation cycles, modeling lessons, co-planning lessons, real-time coaching, and providing support and resources aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness and leadership.** **The Assistant Principal also leads the design and implementation of group teacher professional development and collaborative planning time.** **This individual provides staff with the appropriate resources and support to ensure that each Rocketship school's Rocketeers realize over a year's worth of progress annually.**

As evidenced by the educational and academic leadership, modeling, coaching, planning, and related duties of these positions, at minimum these educational leadership positions should require valid teaching credentials, if not administrative credentials. Rocketship provided no explanation or justification in the Renewal Petition for this proposed substantial reduction in the qualifications for these educational leadership positions. These revisions are inconsistent with the duties of the positions, and undermine the soundness of the educational program, undermine the ability to implement the educational program as the persons holding the positions responsible for leadership and management of such implementation would not be required to be properly qualified, and do not constitute a reasonably comprehensive description of the Employee Qualifications element of the Renewal Petition as the proposed qualifications for the positions are inconsistent with the job duties.

In its response to the RSSP recommendations, RPS specified:

At the outset, we wish to clarify an important point: the Element E revisions in question in the Staff Report as they relate to the employment qualifications for the Principal and Assistant Principal in the RSSP renewal petition were made to accurately reflect the legal framework under which RSSP operates. Specifically, as a charter school, RSSP is not legally obligated to require the Principal or Assistant Principal to have any particular credential. Notwithstanding that framework, at this time we would like to make clear that we agree with the practice of having our Principal and Assistant Principal hold a valid teaching credential. Moreover, we would like to highlight that all principals and assistant principals at RSED-operated charter schools hold the credential. Therefore, we are prepared to work with SCCOE to update our petition, without the need to pursue a material revision to the charter, to clarify that the Principal and Assistant Principal positions must be held by an individual with a teaching credential.

Staff notes that it does not agree with RPS's framing of this issue as "accurately reflecting the legal framework" under which its schools operate since charter school administrators are not legally required to hold any particular credential. The Charter Schools Act specifically requires that this element of each charter set forth a reasonably comprehensive description of the qualifications for employment by the particular charter school. Thus, it is incumbent on RPS to specify in each charter the qualifications for employment in each position, including the positions of Principal and Assistant Principal, not that it eliminate appropriate qualifications from the positions on the basis that a particular qualification is not legally required. In any event, it appears that, given its agreement that a teaching credential is an appropriate qualification for these positions, RPS is indicating that it is not interested in pursuing the material revision included in the Renewal Petition to delete the teaching credential requirement for these positions, which Staff acknowledges and appreciates.

SCCOE Staff recommends the SCCBOE deny these material revisions to the RBM charter and maintain the minimum requirement for the positions of Principal and Assistant Principals requiring a valid teaching credential. Moreover, Staff recommends that the SCCBOE require that these positions include a California teaching credential as a minimum qualification and that a valid administrative credential is preferred as requirements necessary for the sound operation of RBM as a countywide charter school.

The Charter Schools Department Staff concluded the RBM Renewal Petition provides sufficient information to substantiate the required elements for a sound educational program, apart from the credential requirements for the Principal and Assistant Principal positions. As such, Staff recommends denying the material revisions to the Renewal Petition and requiring the Principal and Assistant Principals' employment qualifications to be updated to include valid California teaching credentials and to specify valid administrative credentials are preferred for these positions.

## **2. Ability to successfully implement the program set forth in the Petition**

Staff found facts demonstrating the Petitioners are likely to successfully implement the program only if RBM resolves the identified requirements, concerns, and conditions through the MOU or an addendum to the MOU, as described more fully throughout this Staff Analysis and Findings of Fact and if the SCCBOE denies the request for material revisions to eliminate the requirement that the Principal and Assistant Principal employment qualifications include, at minimum, a valid California teaching credential for those positions, because eliminating that requirement would negatively impact program implementation, as described in greater detail above and incorporated herein by this reference.

### 3. Affirmation of each of the conditions required by statute

SCCOE Staff found the Renewal Petition contains the required affirmations. While the Affirmations section at the beginning of the Charter does not specify that the notice prepared by the California Department of Education per EC 47605.6(e)(4)(D) will be posted on the website, that affirmation is part of the reasonably comprehensive description later in the Renewal Petition and Staff further notes that notice is posted on RBM's website.

### 4. Reasonably comprehensive description of the required elements

For the description of each element to be considered "reasonably comprehensive," it is not enough for the Renewal Petition to include a description, but, rather, the description in a countywide charter petition must be acceptable to SCCOE and be consistent with and not contrary to SCCOE's standards and expectations for charter schools under its oversight. SCCOE's indication that the description of an element is "reasonably comprehensive" should not be interpreted to mean SCCOE does not believe additional or different terms relating to an element would need to be agreed to by the Petitioner through the MOU and addendum process. Further, while SCCOE may, in this Staff Analysis, make recommendations for remediation in an area or specify issues or terms that have been or will need to be clarified or resolved through the MOU or an addendum to the MOU, this does not mean other areas may not need additional correction to be included in the MOU or in an addendum to the MOU. Further, Staff's determination an element as reasonably comprehensive may be premised on noted issues being remediated through the MOU and addendum process.

The Charter Schools Department Staff found, as detailed below, that additional specificity and requirements governing RBM's educational program, governance and operations, including its compliance with the required charter elements, will need to be addressed through the MOU and/or an addendum among RBM and the SCCOE.

In preparing the Renewal Petition, RBM appears to have overlooked some updates. For example, failing to fully update the petition to designate the County as the authorizer. This Staff Analysis will not detail each of these omissions and concerns, but SCCOE Staff recommends the SCCBOE require RBM to address these oversights and omissions because this is necessary for the sound operation of RBM as a countywide charter school.

#### A. Element One: Description of the Educational Program/Plan for Student Academic Achievement

The instructional approach at RBM is heavily data-driven, with continuous assessments guiding instructional planning and interventions. RBM's Program Team collaborates with analytics and school staff to develop curriculum maps, analyze student data, and refine instructional strategies as needed. The focus is on fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and meta-cognitive skills across subject areas, ensuring students can apply their knowledge in novel situations. RBM also emphasizes the development of writing skills and mathematical reasoning.

RBM's core curriculum is designed to align with California's Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English/Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, as well as the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for science and state standards for Social Science. In ELA, the curriculum focuses on building literacy skills across reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The school uses an integrated approach, combining phonics, reading comprehension, and writing instruction to develop students' critical thinking and communication skills. A heavy emphasis is placed on

reading both literature and informational texts, ensuring students can analyze, synthesize, and respond to complex material. Writing instruction follows a structured process, teaching students to articulate ideas across various genres, including narrative, informative, and argumentative texts.

Mathematics instruction at RBM is centered on building conceptual understanding through problem-solving and application of mathematical practices. The program emphasizes the eight Mathematical Practice Standards and uses the Eureka Math curriculum to guide daily lessons. Students engage in fluency activities, collaborative problem-solving, and independent practice, with regular assessments guiding instruction. Science and Social Science are taught in an integrated format, where science content is embedded into STEM blocks, and social science topics are included within ELA lessons. This approach ensures that students are consistently exposed to cross-curricular content.

Online Learning Platforms further individualize instruction by providing adaptive lessons that adjust based on a student's progress. Programs like Lexia Core 5, ST Math, and Reflex allow students to work at their own pace, practicing skills where they need the most help. These platforms also generate data that teachers and school leaders use to personalize instruction further, creating a seamless feedback loop that supports both in-class and independent learning. This technology ensures that students receive continuous, personalized instruction that adapts to their evolving needs.

The Charter Schools Department Staff concluded the RBM Renewal Petition provides sufficient information to substantiate the required elements for a sound educational program, only with the denial of the material revision to the Principal and Assistant Principals' employment qualifications and a requirement for these positions of a California teaching credential, with a valid administrative credential preferred, given their central roles in educational and academic leadership, planning, and implementation of the educational program, as discussed more fully above.

**B. Element Two: Measurable Student Outcomes**

RBM's student outcomes are tied to both state and school-specific priorities, with a focus on academic achievement, student safety, attendance, and campus climate. Key outcomes include meeting or exceeding CAASPP standards in English Language Arts, mathematics, and science, as well as goals for student growth in reading and English Language proficiency. These outcomes align with the Eight State Priorities required by California's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), ensuring that the school addresses core areas like academic achievement, student engagement, and school climate. Some outcomes, such as CAASPP performance and growth metrics in reading, are associated with specific years and must be updated annually to reflect new targets.

RBM's Renewal Petition affirms that these outcomes cover a broad range of student skills, from academic performance to social-emotional well-being. In the Renewal Petition, RBM commits to continually updating its goals and performance expectations to reflect the evolving needs of students and state requirements.

The affirmations portion of this Element refers exclusively to Rocketship Alma Academy (RSA). This appears to be a typographical error; however, the MOU should be updated to affirm that all

conditions, affirmations, and descriptions in the petition are intended to exclusively pertain to Rocketship Academy Brilliant Minds (RBM).

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description only if RBM commits through the MOU/addendum to the correct the errors and reaffirm RBM as the sole subject of this petition.

**C. Element Three: Method by Which Pupil Progress in Meeting Outcomes will be Measured**

To measure the student outcomes listed in Element B, RBM utilizes several standardized assessments. These include the CAASPP for English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science, the Smarter Balanced Assessments, and the California Standards Test for Science for fifth graders. English Learners are assessed annually through the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). Additionally, RBM administers the DIBELS assessments three times per year for K-5 students to measure literacy development, and the NWEA MAP interim assessments are used three times annually to track student progress in both reading and math.

In addition to these standardized tools, RBM uses various internal assessments developed by Rocketship Public Schools. These include formative assessments for daily learning, such as teacher observations, lesson exit tickets, and writing checklists. The school also implements unit-based assessments in core subjects like mathematics and science to evaluate student understanding and progress. Interim assessments are used throughout the year to gauge students' mastery of content and prepare them for end-of-year summative evaluations.

Assessment data is integral to driving instruction at RBM. Teachers frequently analyze individual and class-level performance to identify patterns, areas of strength, and students in need of additional support. Data dashboards help streamline this process by providing real-time insights, allowing teachers and school leaders to make informed decisions that enhance student achievement. This data is shared with educational partners, including parents, through progress reports and conferences, and with chartering authority and other relevant entities through formal reports.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description.

**D. Element Four: Location**

The RBM Renewal Petition states Rocketship Brilliant Minds will be located at 2960 Story Road, in San Jose, California. The facility was originally built for RBM's specific program and has been updated and maintained through RBM's occupancy.

**E. Element Five: Governance Structure**

The Rocketship Academy for Brilliant Minds charter school is operated and governed by Rocketship Education doing business as Rocketship Public Schools, a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) California nonprofit public benefit corporation. The RBM Renewal Petition states the Board will consist of at least three (3) members and no more than twenty-five (25), including parent members. The Charter recognizes the chartering authorities' rights to appoint a representative to the Board. The BM Renewal Petition shows that RSED/RPS currently has twenty-one (21) seats on

its Board. RBM provided the board member names and qualifications as required. The description of the Governance Structure is also specifically supplemented by a number of provisions of the 2017 MOU.

The Bylaws specify that any representative of a chartering authority pursuant to the Charter Schools Act “shall serve only in the authorizer’s discretion,” but also include the contradictory statement that such representatives “shall be reviewed by the Nominating Committee and all other approval protocols followed by other nominated members of the Rocketship Board.” This is inconsistent with both the provisions of *EC 47604(c)* and the explicit requirements of the 2017 MOU, which specify that the SCCBOE or its designee, at its discretion, shall appoint the SCCBOE representative and that such representative shall serve solely at the SCCBOE’s discretion. The Nominations Committee process in the Bylaws provides for the Nominating Committee to identify and nominate potential candidates for the RSED/RPS Board and the Board votes on such appointments. Such a process by which the RSED/RPS Board may vote to approve or deny the SCCBOE representative is thus inconsistent with the sole discretion of the SCCBOE or its designee to appoint the representative. Additionally, the Bylaws provide that the RSED/RPS Board may remove any director, with or without cause, by majority vote, without exempting any SCCBOE representative from that process. Again, that is contrary to the specific requirement that any SCCBOE representative shall serve at the SCCBOE or designee’s sole discretion and would fundamentally undermine the chartering authority’s ability to designate a representative as it deems appropriate, as provided in the Charter Schools Act. These provisions of the Bylaws are also inconsistent with addenda to other memoranda of understanding among SCCOE and RPS that require that the Bylaws must specify that “no limitations or qualification for service on the RPS Board applicable to other members shall apply to any such SCCBOE representative, who will be selected in the SCCBOE or designee’s sole discretion.” As such, the Bylaws must be revised to exclude any SCCBOE representative pursuant to *EC 47604(c)* from any rules, requirements, or procedures for selection, appointment, or removal from the RSED/RPS Board and affirm that all such determinations are within the SCCBOE or designee’s sole discretion.

In its response relative to the RSSP recommendations, RPS asserted that it could address the concerns relative to the selection, appointment, or removal of a representative to the RSED/RPS Board in an MOU. RPS specified, “There should not be a need to amend the Bylaws to include for this [sic]. The reasoning behind this is that nonprofit corporate governance law and standards reserve certain rights of the Board of Directors. Amending By-laws is no light issue, and it is something that is done infrequently and at the Board’s discretion.” SCCOE Staff disagrees with RPS’s assertions on this point. The corporation is bound to comply with law, including the Charter Schools Act, its various charters and MOUs, and is also bound to comply with the terms of its Bylaws. As detailed above, the current Bylaws are in direct conflict with the rights of chartering authorities to appoint representatives and the provisions of the SCCBOE-approved RPS charters and MOUs, including the 2017 MOU, which is incorporated into the current RBM charter and Renewal Petition. RPS may not agree through the MOU to violate the provisions of its Bylaws and continue to maintain those Bylaws without updating them to be consistent with its other legal obligations. As such, the Bylaws must be revised.

The Renewal Provision also specifies that the RPS Board has created a California Committee, comprised of parents and civic and business leaders, that serves as an advisory board to the Board of Directors. This California Committee provides advice and counsel to the California Executive Director and input to the Board of Directors on topics such as plans and strategies for local growth,



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model improvement, and operational plans, and builds partnerships to enhance the quality and sustainability of RPS schools.

The Renewal Petition specifies RBM shall comply with the Brown Act, the Political Reform Act of 1974, and *Government Code* Section 1090 et seq., and provide annual training on these topics. No interested persons may serve on the board.

The Renewal Petition states the Board will comply with all federal, state, and local laws applicable to independent public charter schools and has adopted a Conflict of Interest (COI) Code (included in the appendix section) that has been approved by the County Board of Supervisors. The COI Code was approved on March 31, 2022.

In accordance with the Political Reform Act and the Conflict of Interest (COI) Code, all directors and senior RSED/RPS and RBM staff are required to file a "Form 700" annually disclosing specified interests. During the charter term, SCCOE staff have reviewed the Forms 700 filed on behalf of RSED/RPS reporters and found that directors or staff have identified reportable interests as required.

RBM has both a School Site Council and an English Learner Advisory Committee that encourage parents to advocate and participate in their children's education.

Consistent with the requirements of the 2017 MOU, the Bylaws provide that written notice of any proposed revisions to the RSED/RPS Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws shall be submitted to the County Superintendent at least three weeks prior to the RSED/RPS Board's consideration of the revision(s). If the County Superintendent or designee considers the proposed revision(s) to be a material revision to RSED/RPS's governance structure or a charter authorized by the County Board, such revision(s) may not be adopted unless and until the revision(s) is first approved through the material revision process.

RSED/RPS adopted revised Bylaws at its April 18, 2023, meeting. These revisions were undertaken without compliance with this prior notice requirement, so it is necessary for RPS to come into compliance with this requirement of the charter/2017 MOU and its Bylaws by providing notice now of the specific revisions that were made in 2023. If the County Superintendent determines that the revisions constituted a material revision to the governance structure or charter, RPS will need to take action to reverse those revisions and/or seek approval of a material revision to comport with its desired Bylaws revisions.

The Charter provides for the RSED/RPS Board to delegate the implementation of its duties (other than those specifically excluded from such delegation authority) to employees or other responsible parties. The Board currently oversees operations, with day-to-day authority delegated to the Chief Executive Officer. It must be made clear through the MOU or an addendum thereto that the Board may not delegate the authority to close Rocketship Academy for Brilliant Minds charter school, as that must be a decision of the Board. The Principal is the senior authority at the school site, but final management authority is with the CEO and ultimate overall organizational authority retained by the Board.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description with the clarification regarding closure and only if the Bylaws are revised, as described above, to exclude any SCCBOE representative pursuant to *EC 47604(c)* from any rules,

requirements, or procedures for or involvement by the Nominating Committee or RSED/RPS Board in the selection, appointment, or removal from the RSED/RPS Board and to affirm that such appointment, service, and removal is within the sole discretion of the SCCBOE or designee and if RBM comes into compliance with its obligations relative to Bylaws revisions.

**F. Element Six: Employee Qualifications**

RBM states it recruits qualified personnel for all administrative, instructional, instructional support, and non-instructional support capacities. RBM further asserts the staff recruited believe in the instructional philosophy outlined in its vision statement. In accordance with *EC* 47605.6(b)(5)(f), RBM shall be nonsectarian in its employment practices and all other operations. RBM shall not discriminate against any individual (employee or student) on the basis of the characteristics listed in *EC* Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the *Penal Code*, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

Staff notes that RBM proposed material revisions to this element of the Renewal Petition by revising the qualifications for the positions of Principal and Assistant Principal by eliminating the requirement that these positions require a valid California teaching credential. SCCOE Staff believes that this change would negatively impact the school's educational program and soundness, is inconsistent with best practices particularly in light of the changes to the law to require all charter schoolteachers to hold credentials and eliminating the "flexibility" afforded to some charter school teachers, is inconsistent with the job duties of these positions, specifically including the educational and instructional leadership duties, and inconsistent with the requirements necessary for the sound operation of a countywide charter school. Possession of at least a California teaching credential is necessary even to allow those administrators to cover classrooms or teach classes as needs arise. The job duties assigned to the RBM Principal and Assistant Principal – including but not limited to supervision, one-on-one coaching, and evaluation of teachers, and the Principal's role as the instructional leader of the school and the Assistant Principals' full-time focus on "the implementation of RBM's academic systems and mentoring teacher to improve their effectiveness" – are consistent with the need for at least a valid California teaching credential, if not an administrative credential. SCCOE Staff recommends that the SCCBOE deny the requested material revisions to these employment qualifications and continue to require the minimum qualifications for the positions of Principal and Assistant Principal include a valid California teaching credential and specify that an administrative credential is preferred.

RBM continues to work with SCCOE Human Resources to make sure that the teaching staff meet all the legal requirements for them to perform as teachers. RPS has an experienced teacher as its network program director and two specialists who are supporting the special education staff at the site and across the network to monitor all special education needs.

As part of the annual review process, SCCOE Staff will determine whether all RBM Staff meet the current credentialing requirements.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description only if the SCCBOE denies the material revision to the charter and maintains the requirement that the minimum qualifications for the Principal and Assistant Principals include a

valid California teaching credential and specify that an administrative credential is preferred for these positions.

**G. Element Seven: Health and Safety**

The Renewal Petition specifies that Rocketship maintains and regularly reviews and updates Board-approved policies and procedures to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. RBM provided an overview of Health and Safety Policies and Procedures and the process for employee fingerprinting and background checks. All staff are expected to comply with *EC 47605.b(c)(5)(g)*, *EC 44691*, and all other legal requirements, and RBM states it is committed to providing a safe, compliant working environment. RBM submitted its 2023-24 Comprehensive School Safety Plan and declared RBM will review and update the plan by March 1 of every year and that the plan shall include the required safety topics. The Renewal Petition specifies that its Employee Handbook, School Safety Plan, and Student/Parent Handbook are all reviewed, updated, and presented to the RPS Board annually for approval in order to ensure ongoing compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. RBM has updated its description of health and safety policies and procedures to address some changes and new requirements of law that have gone into effect since its Charter was last renewed.

The referenced Board-approved policies and procedures were not readily located by CSD staff on the Rocketship website, including, but not limited to, the required Title IX Policy and Grievance Procedure, the Uniform Complaint Procedures, or any other complaint policies and procedures or other health and safety policies and procedures. While the handbooks included in the appendices refer to some such procedures – such as the mandatory Title IX Policy and Grievance Procedure – those policies are not set forth in full in the handbooks. In order for many of the required policies and procedures to be appropriate, effective, and comply with law, they must be readily available to students, parents, staff, chartering authorities, and the public. As such, CSD staff recommends that RBM be required to make these policies and procedures readily locatable on its website to the County Superintendent or designee’s satisfaction. Staff appreciates that in its response to the RSSP recommendations, RPS provided direction on where to locate some of these items on the website and specified that it is willing to work on this in consultation with CSD Staff. The identified location does not include copies of each of the actual policies and procedures, and Staff continues to believe that this is an area that can be improved upon and looks forward to working with RBM on this issue.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description only if RBM is required to ensure through the MOU/addendum that its policies and procedures, including but not limited to its full complaint policies and procedures, can be readily located on its website. The Charter Schools Department Staff notes the 2024 MOU provided to RBM includes supplemental information on compliance with additional health and safety requirements.

**H. Element Eight: Racial, Ethnic, English Learner, and Special Education Balance**

On July 1, 2020, *AB 1505* took effect, updating Element H to require schools to provide a reasonably comprehensive description of how the school will achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils, reflective of the general population residing within the territorial

jurisdiction of the SCCBOE. RBM’s Renewal Petition has been updated to reflect this updated requirement.

Object 28, below, demonstrates that RBM's student race/ethnic distribution is not reflective of the surrounding County (SCC) or the schools RBM students would otherwise have attended. The population of students who are Hispanic/Latino at RBM is 74.9%, larger than the 40.5% in SCC, and lower than the populations at Ryan, Lyndale, and Mt. Pleasant, with 89.1%, 83.1%, and 84.9%, respectively. Further, the Asian population 19.5% at RBM is 19.5% and to 30.8% in SCC.

Object 29, below, highlights student group population differences between RBM and SCC. At 76.1%, RBM has a higher percentage of socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED) students than the 38.1% in SCC and lower percentage than nearby schools Ryan and Lyndale which have 85.1% and 84.2%, respectively. RBM’s percentage of students who are ELs at 53.7% is higher than SCC at 22.7% in SCC but lower than comparison schools Ryan’s at 60.1% and Lyndale’s at 59.2%. The percentage of SWD at RBM is 12.3%, slightly higher than SCC's 12.1% and lower than Ryan (16.3%), Mt. Pleasant (16.6%) and Lyndale (19.4%).

**Object 28: Comparison of 2023-24 Demographic Data Among RBM, SCC, and Schools RBM Students Would Otherwise Have Attended**

	Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Filipino	White	African American	Two or More Races
<b>RBM</b>	74.9%	19.5%	1.4%	1.4%	0.2%	0.6%
<b>SCC</b>	40.5%	30.8%	3.6%	15.7%	1.7%	5.9%
<b>Ryan</b>	89.1%	3.3%	4.7%	1.1%	0.0%	1.8%
<b>Lyndale</b>	83.1%	5.6%	5.3%	1.1%	0.0%	3.5%
<b>Mt. Pleasant</b>	84.9%	8.8%	0.5%	1.0%	0.0%	3.9%

Data gathered from Dataquest: <https://data1.cde.ca.gov>

**Object 29: Comparison of 2023-24 Student Group Data Among RBM, SCC, and Schools RBM Students Would Otherwise Have Attended**

	Total Number of Students	SED	EL	SWD
<b>RBM</b>	486	76.1%	53.7%	12.3%
<b>SCC</b>	234,027	38.1%	22.7%	12.1%
<b>Ryan</b>	276	85.1%	60.1%	16.3%
<b>Lyndale</b>	284	84.2%	59.2%	19.4%
<b>Mt. Pleasant</b>	205	76.1%	50.7%	16.6%

Data gathered from Dataquest: <https://data1.cde.ca.gov>

RBM’s recruitment plan outlines broad strategies to attract a student population reflective of County. The plan includes both outreach and admissions practices designed to ensure diversity in racial, ethnic, and special student populations. Recruitment materials are printed in multiple languages to accommodate the linguistic diversity of the community, and partnerships are formed with local organizations that serve diverse populations. A key focus of RBM’s recruitment is on person-to-person engagement, including holding focus groups with parents and community

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organizations, cultivating relationships with local community members, and employing staff from the local area to lead recruitment efforts.

While the plan includes effective outreach strategies such as distributing promotional materials, conducting community events at various times, and using data-driven research to inform recruitment efforts, it is a generic template used across Rocketship schools. Staff previously noted there are no specific strategies targeting the unique needs of RBM as a specific countywide charter school. The plan does not specifically set forth localized, targeted recruitment efforts tailored to the demographics and specific challenges of the county in which RBM is located. In its RSSP response, RPS explained that it disagrees because the actions specify that they relate to the “local community” (the phrase used in the Renewal Petition is “community”) and indicated that as each charter is specific to a school, it follows that the reference specifically means that charter school’s community and that the plan is meant to be highly localized to the specific school. Staff appreciates this clarification, and notes that for RBM as a countywide charter school, the focus of this charter element – thus the “RBM community” for these purposes – is the entire community within the County Board’s territorial jurisdiction.

**Object 30: RBM Demographic Data from 2016-17 to 2023-24**

	Total Number of Students	Hispanic or Latino %	Asian %	Filipino %	White %	African American %	Two or More Races %
<b>2016-17</b>	657	77.6	11.7	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.7
<b>2017-18</b>	569	82.1	11.8	1.4	0.2	0.9	2.1
<b>2018-19</b>	586	78.7	14.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.5
<b>2019-20</b>	635	79.1	11.3	0.6	0.6	1.3	1.3
<b>2020-21</b>	606	77.6	14.9	0.7	0.5	1.3	1.8
<b>2021-22</b>	524	77.9	15.6	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.0
<b>2022-23</b>	504	75.6	18.5	1.2	1.6	1.0	0.6
<b>2023-24</b>	486	74.9	19.5	1.4	1.4	0.2	0.6

Data gathered from Dataquest: <https://data1.cde.ca.gov>

**Object 31: RBM Student Group Data from 2016-17 to 2023-24**

	Total Number of Students	Percentage of SED	Percentage of EL	Percentage of SWD
<b>2016-17</b>	657	82.2	56.6	7.6
<b>2017-18</b>	569	78.9	58.2	7.9
<b>2018-19</b>	586	76.8	42.0	9.2
<b>2019-20</b>	635	80.3	55.6	9.3
<b>2020-21</b>	606	82.5	56.6	9.7
<b>2021-22</b>	524	76.7	57.8	8.8
<b>2022-23</b>	504	76.6	56.9	11.1
<b>2023-24</b>	486	76.1	53.7	12.3

Data gathered from Dataquest: <https://data1.cde.ca.gov>

Object 30, above, shows that RBM's racial and ethnic demographic composition has remained relatively stable from 2016-17 to 2023-24. The population of students who are Hispanic/Latino consistently represents the majority of students, ranging from 74.9% to 82.1%, with 74.9% recorded in 2023-24. The Asian population has steadily increased over the years, rising from 11.7% in 2016-17 to 19.5% in 2023-24. Other racial groups, such as Filipino, White, and African American, have maintained low representation. Notably, the White population saw a slight increase to 1.6% in 2022-23 but fell to 1.4% in 2023-24, while the African American population has consistently remained below 2%, decreasing to 0.2% in 2023-24.

Object 31, above, indicates that the population of students who are ELs at RBM has fluctuated over time, peaking at 58.2% in 2017-18 and then gradually declining to 53.7% in 2023-24. The percentage of SWD has seen steady growth, rising from 7.6% in 2016-17 to 12.3% in 2023-24. The percentage of students who are SED has remained consistent, fluctuating between 76.1% and 82.5%, with 76.1% reported in 2023-24. These data points reflect RBM serving a high-need student population, particularly in terms of students who are SED, EL, and SWD, in alignment with Rocketship's stated mission to provide equitable access to high-quality education.

RBM needs to continue its work towards achieving the student balance provided for in this element of the Charter Schools Act, while continuing to implement its mission of catalyzing transformative change in low-income communities. This includes through revisions as necessary to its recruitment plans to make them more specific to the particular circumstances of RBM and the county.

The Charter specifies that RBM will "analyze the success and/or weakness of its outreach initiatives" and "utilize the data from the programmatic audit to make any necessary revisions to the outreach initiatives in order to correct student population imbalances." Consistent with SCCOE's best practices and expectations for charter schools, and RBM's explanation that the "plan is updated annually, based on contemporary information and data," RBM's commitment to conducting this analysis and update process at least annually taking account of the results of the most recent open enrollment process should be explicitly specified in the MOU/addendum.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description only if RBM commits through the MOU/addendum to the ongoing work, implementation, review, and revision of its plan to achieve the pupil balance provided for in the Charter Schools Act as described above.

#### **I. Element Nine: Financial Audit**

RBM states in the Renewal Petition that the audit will be conducted in accordance with *EC* Sections 47605.6(b)(5)(I) and 47605.6(m), generally accepted accounting procedures, and with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller's K-12 Audit Guide. The Renewal Petition describes RBM financial audit procedures, which include how the independent auditor will be selected and retained, the qualifications the independent auditor needs to possess, the timing of the audit, how any deficiencies will be resolved, and how this will be communicated to the necessary outside parties. RBM has a finance committee that selects the independent auditor. CSD staff notes and appreciates that RBM incorporated additional provisions related to the audit procedures and SCCOE's right to request or conduct an audit at any time from the 2017 MOU.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes that this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description.

**J. Element Ten: Student Suspension/Expulsion Procedures**

RBM's Renewal Petition includes its comprehensive suspension and expulsion policies and procedures that have generally been updated to reflect current law, in the Student/Parent Handbook attached as Appendix 25 to the Renewal Petition, which is attached and fully incorporated by reference into the Renewal Petition. As such, these are the causes for suspension and expulsion and the procedures to be followed by RBM and may not be substantively revised, except to comport with requirements of law or to track revisions to the causes and procedures applicable to non-charter California public schools, without a determination from the County Superintendent or designee whether the proposed revision(s) is a material revision to the Renewal Petition.

These policies and procedures are generally consistent with SCCOE's usual practices and with the changes to this portion of the Charter Schools Act. However, there are some internal inconsistencies and confusion in the procedures as described in the Handbook regarding the entity responsible for expulsion decisions and appeals. For example, there are some references to the Board making the decision, which has been delegated to the Academic Affairs Committee, and the discussion of appeal indicates that some expulsion decisions would inexplicably be made by a body other than the Academic Affairs Committee and also refers to the Executive Committee of the Board, which is not identified.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description, only if the above issues are clarified and corrected through the MOU/addendum process.

**K. Element Eleven: Employee Retirement Systems**

The RBM Renewal Petition states all certificated employees of RBM shall participate in the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), and all other employees will participate in the federal social security system. The Renewal Petition also states that all full-time employees at RBM will be offered a 403(b) program with a 3% match from Rocketship Public Schools. Rocketship's Human Resources team, in conjunction with the principal at RBM, ensures that appropriate arrangements for each employee have been made available.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description.

**L. Element Twelve: Dispute Resolution**

The Renewal Petition includes the dispute resolution language from the 2017 MOU, which is reasonably comprehensive, with the provisions regarding internal disputes that relate to violations of the Charter applying equally to violations of any MOU/addendum that is made a part of the Charter, including the 2017 MOU, 2024 MOU, and/or any MOU/addendum entered into pursuant to the SCCBOE's action on the Renewal Petition. However, the provision entitled "Internal Disputes" as revised in the Renewal Petition is partly in conflict with the other provisions

of this element. It incorrectly purports to require SCCOE to “refer all disputes not related to a possible violation of the charter or law to Rocketship,” which is inconsistent with the other language in this element and RBM cannot limit its chartering entity’s authority in this manner.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description with the correction through the MOU/addendum of the above-identified concern.

**M. Element Thirteen: Admissions Policies and Procedures**

RBM says it has articulated student admission policies and procedures. The school is nonsectarian, tuition free, and does not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of protected characteristics.

With the changes to the Charter Schools Act since RBM’s most recent renewal, the actual policies and procedures for admission – including how RBM implements the admission preferences, conducts the admission public random drawing (lottery) procedures, adds students to the waitlist, and offers them admission from the waitlist – must also be included in the Renewal Petition. RBM has updated the Renewal Petition to include these items, though there are a few clarifications needed, as described below.

The Renewal Petition requests County Board approval of revised and additional admission preferences in cases in which there are more applicants than spaces at a particular grade level. RBM is seeking approval of the following preferences in the following order:

1. Siblings of students currently admitted to or attending RBM
2. Children of employees of RBM (not to exceed 10% of total enrollment)
3. Students who qualify for free or reduced price meals
4. Residents of Santa Clara County
5. Other California residents

The previously approved preferences that are currently in effect are:

- a. Siblings of currently enrolled students
- b. Children of employees of RBM (not to exceed 10% of total enrollment)
- c. Residents of the Alum Rock Unified District
- d. Other California Residents

Admission to the school is not determined by the place of residence of pupils or parents, except in the case of a public random drawing, as allowed by law. Staff notes that RBM did update the preferences as required by the 2017 MOU to “Residents of Santa Clara County.”

Whether to approve any or all the requested preferences, other than the preference for residents Santa Clara County, is within the discretion of the SCCBOE, per *EC* Section 47605.6(e)(2)(B). If the County Board does not approve all the preferences, RBM would be required to revise this provision of the Charter and its admission policies and procedures accordingly.

The Renewal Petition does not specify its reason(s) for seeking the revised preferences. However, in its response to the RSSP recommendations, RPS specified:



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RSSP changed the admission preference for siblings to reflect state law, which changed since the last renewal; see Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B) [for a countywide charter, 47605.6(e)(2)(B)]. RSSP changed the preference for district residents simply to correctly identify the name of the district. Finally, the preference for students who qualify for free or reduced price meals was included with the intention of serving the most underserved student populations.

This explanation regarding the change to the sibling preference being revised “to reflect state law” is not accurate. The Charter Schools Act has always provided, and continues to provide, that the chartering authority must approve any voluntary/discretionary admissions preferences requested by the charter school. This provision of law has been modified to include additional requirements for the chartering authority’s approval of any such preferences, “including, but not limited to, siblings of pupils admitted or attending the charter school ....” Thus, the reference in the law to any sibling admissions preference is only by way of example of the types of preferences a particular charter school might seek to provide, but which is not mandatory for the charter school to request nor is the chartering authority required to grant such a preference. As such, the revision to provide admission preference to siblings of students who are admitted to RBM is a request for the SCCBOE to approve an additional preference, which is within the SCCBOE’s discretion.

Consistent with RPS’s explanation, above, the preference for students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals (FRPM) increases enrollment opportunities for historically underserved students, so CSD staff recommends approval of this preference.

RBM currently has as its first preference siblings of students who are currently enrolled at RBM. The Charter School is seeking to expand that preference to include not only students who are currently enrolled, but students whose siblings are admitted during the particular lottery. In other words, as currently authorized by SCCBOE, if a student who is attending RBM in 2024-25 has a sibling apply during the open enrollment process for admission for 2025-26, that student would be eligible for a sibling preference. As proposed in the Renewal Petition, that preference would continue to apply, but, additionally, if two siblings who do not attend RBM in 2024-25 both apply for admission for 2025-26, immediately upon one of those siblings receiving a place through the lottery, the other sibling would automatically be entitled to an admission preference even though neither of the siblings are current RBM students. The Renewal Petition does not, however, explain the specifics of how the admitted sibling preference would be implemented in practice, particularly if a sibling is drawn in the lottery after their sibling in a lower grade was placed on the waitlist rather than offered admission. The process for implementing the sibling preference – and ensuring that it is only a preference, not an exemption from the lottery, including if one sibling is admitted during the lottery and another sibling(s) is participating in the same lottery – must be clearly described in the MOU or an addendum thereto.

CSD staff recognizes the benefits of allowing families to enroll all of their children at the same school, so recommends that the SCCBOE approve the addition of the preference for siblings of students who are admitted to RBM.

The Renewal Petition specifies, “applications received after the application deadline will be held in abeyance for a subsequent lottery, if needed.” Clarification is needed regarding what occurs if a student applies after the open enrollment period when there is an open space(s) at the requested grade level.

The Renewal Petition also states that students “may also apply to RSSP after the open application period.” CSD acknowledges that this is likely a typographical error; however, the MOU should be updated to affirm that all conditions, affirmations, and descriptions in the petition are intended to exclusively pertain to Rocketship Academy Brilliant Minds (RBM).

The Charter Schools Department Staff recommends that the SCCBOE approve the preferences as proposed by RBM. The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description only if, through the MOU and/or an addendum thereto, the public random drawing procedures are clarified, as described above.

**N. Element Fourteen: Public School Attendance Alternatives**

Santa Clara County resident students who choose not to attend RBM may attend other school district schools. The Renewal Petition says such students may also “pursue an intra- or inter-district transfer in accordance with existing County enrollment and transfer policies.” However, students who reside within Santa Clara County are generally subject to the attendance requirements and intra- or inter-district transfer policy requirements of their district of residence, not to SCCOE policies. Thus, this explanation must be corrected through the MOU/addendum. Parents and guardians of each student enrolled in RBM will be informed their students have no right to admission to a particular school of any local education agency as a consequence of enrollment in RBM, except to the extent such a right is extended by the local education agency.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description with the corrections identified about through the MOU/addendum.

**O. Element Fifteen: Description of the Rights of An Employee of the County Superintendent of Schools, Upon Leaving the Employment of the County Superintendent of Schools, to be Employed by the Charter School**

RBM states in this element that no employees of the county office of education are required to work at the charter school. The discussion in this element provides that such employees have no automatic rights of return and only such rights as the county office of education may choose to provide, and that employment at Rocketship does not provide any rights of employment at any other entity, including in the case of closure of Rocketship.

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description.

**P. Element Sixteen: Closure Protocol**

RBM outlines a process to be used if the charter school closes and CSD staff notes and appreciates that RBM incorporated directly into the Renewal Petition the closure protocol language from the 2017 MOU. (In doing so, RBM inadvertently included a few clerical errors that can be addressed through technical corrections in the MOU/addendum.)

The Charter Schools Department Staff believes this section includes a reasonably comprehensive description.

**Required Supplemental Information**

CSD Staff reviewed the RBM Renewal Petition, which includes the budget narrative, projected budget, and cash flow for Fiscal Years (FY) 2024-25 through 2028-29. CSD Staff also reviewed supplemental documents and the public hearing information to assess and provide clarification on RBM's financial position. The supplemental documents include, but are not limited to, financial audits, monthly financial statements, state-required financial reports, annual visit documents, and the Fiscal Crisis Management Assessment Team (FCMAT) Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Calculator, which CSD Staff recreated to recalculate the LCFF Revenue sources reported in the Renewal Petition for accuracy.

**Enrollment & Average Daily Attendance (ADA)**

Object 32, below, provides RBM's historical and projected enrollment and Average Daily Attendance (ADA) data. The historical data indicates that RBM's enrollment has fluctuated from 607 students in 2016-17 to 486 students in 2023-24, representing a cumulative decline of 121 students (-19.93%). Notably, RBM experienced an enrollment increase of 49 students (8%) in FY 2019-20, but this was followed by a significant drop between FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22, with a decrease of 82 students (-14%). Although enrollment further declined in FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24, the most recent fiscal year (2023-24) saw a smaller reduction of 11 students, resulting in a total enrollment of 486 students.

Additionally, as reflected in Object 33 and stated in the RBM Renewal Petition, Rocketship Schools often experience higher attrition in 5<sup>th</sup> grade as students transition to middle school charters that begin at this grade level, exercising school choice. As a result, RBM has consistently experienced significant attrition between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Historical data shows a consistent reduction in students progressing from 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade, ranging from 25 to 47 students per year. In 2023-24, this trend continued with a 39-student decline, a 42% drop from 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Rocketship actively encourages this transition to middle school charters, supporting families in exercising their choice.

Similarly, RBM's ADA has mirrored its enrollment trends. ADA declined from 573.13 in 2016-17 to 450.11 in 2023-24. The most significant drop occurred in 2021-22, when ADA decreased to 462.44. Over this eight-year period, the ADA percentage, which measures the proportion of enrolled students attending daily, remained relatively stable, with an average ADA percentage of 93%. However, FY 2021-22 saw a notable deviation, with the ADA percentage dropping to 88%. Despite this dip, RBM's overall ADA percentage indicates consistent daily attendance relative to enrollment.

Furthermore, Object 34 shows that RBM's Renewal Petition projects an enrollment increase from 486 in FY 2023-24 to 520 students in FY 2024-25, representing an increase of 34 students (+7%). The petition projects that enrollment will stabilize at 520 students from 2024-25 onwards. As noted, and reflected in object 32, although RBM has experienced historical enrollment fluctuations, the most recent data show smaller reductions, which indicate that enrollment decline is stabilizing. The projected renewal petition enrollment and ADA reflect moderate growth and appear reasonable. Additionally, the RBM Renewal Petition indicates that the school plans to address potential attrition by filling vacated spots continuously to maintain stable enrollment levels.

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Overall, RBM’s enrollment and ADA projections in the Renewal Petition appear reasonable and are consistent with its historical enrollment trends.

Object 32: RBM Historical and Projected Enrollment and ADA1													
	Historical Data								Enrollment Projection				
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
GradeTK								38	46	46	46	46	46
Grade K	151	116	146	128	113	112	104	76	96	96	96	96	96
Grade 1	110	102	104	118	101	81	93	82	86	86	86	86	86
Grade 2	109	97	94	110	114	84	87	82	81	81	81	81	81
Grade 3	106	100	99	105	105	99	73	80	79	79	79	79	79
Grade 4	104	96	92	107	103	92	93	74	79	79	79	79	79
Grade 5	27	58	51	67	70	56	54	54	53	53	53	53	53
Grade 6													
Grade 7													
Grade 8													
[A] Actual Enrollment	607	569	586	635	606	524	504	486					
[B] Projected Enrollment									520	520	520	520	520
[C] Year-Over-Year (YOY) Enrollment Change <sup>2</sup>	23	(38)	17	49	(29)	(82)	(20)	(18)	34	0	0	0	0
[D] YOY Enrollment Change (%) <sup>3</sup>	4%	-6%	3%	8%	-5%	-14%	-4%	-4%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%
[E] YOY Enrollment Growth/Decline Rate <sup>4</sup>		-10%	9%	5%	-13%	-9%	10%	0%	11%	-7%	0%	0%	0%
[F] ADA	573.13	535.95	567.38	591.39	591.39	462.44	450.62	450.11	483.60	483.60	483.60	483.60	483.60
[G] ADA % <sup>5</sup>	94%	94%	97%	93%	98%	88%	89%	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%

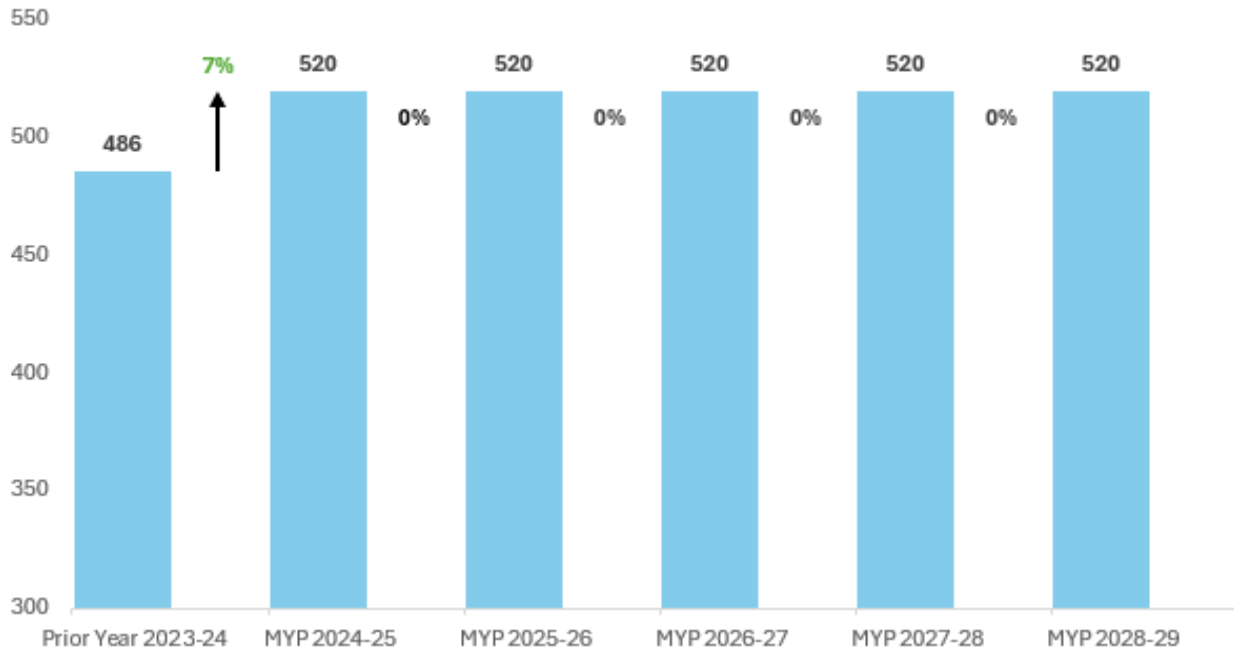
<sup>1</sup> Historical enrollment data is based on Census Day enrollment and historical ADA is based on Annual ADA.  
<sup>2</sup> FY 2023-24 ADA data is based on P-2. FY 2024-25 through FY 2028-29 is based on Petition Renewal Projections.  
<sup>3</sup> Current Year Enrollment minus Prior Year Enrollment  
<sup>4</sup> Row C/Prior Year Enrollment  
<sup>5</sup> Current Year Enrollment % Change - Prior Year Enrollment% Change (Row D)  
<sup>5</sup> Row F/Row A or Row B

Object 33: RBM Historical and Projected Enrollment Change between 4th & 5th Grade													
	Historical Data								Enrollment Projection				
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
[A] Grade 4 Enrollment	104	96	92	107	103	92	93	74	79	79	79	79	79
[B] Grade 5 Enrollment	27	58	51	67	70	56	54	54	53	53	53	53	53
[C] 4th Grade to 5th Grade Enrollment Incr/Decr <sup>1</sup>		(46.00)	(45.00)	(25.00)	(37.00)	(47.00)	(38.00)	(39.00)	(21.00)	(26.00)	(26.00)	(26.00)	(26.00)
[D] 4th Grade to 5th Grade Enrollment Incr/Decr (%) <sup>2</sup>		-44%	-47%	-27%	-35%	-46%	-41%	-42%	-28%	-33%	-33%	-33%	-33%

<sup>1</sup> Current Year Grade 5 Enrollment minus Prior Year Grade 4 Enrollment  
<sup>2</sup> Row C/Prior Year Grade 4 Enrollment

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### Object 34: RBM Renewal Petition Enrollment Projections



#### **Revenues & Expenses**

Object 35, below, presents financial projections for RBM over the next five fiscal years (FY 2024-25 through 2028-29). During this period, RBM anticipates generating a positive net income each year, starting with a projected net increase of \$18,484 in 2024-25 and gradually increasing to \$247,936 by 2028-29. This consistent growth will contribute to a steady increase in RBM’s net assets.

RBM projects to maintain an average reserve percentage of 70% throughout its renewal term, this reserve percentage is higher than its historical average of 40%. However, in more recent years, FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24, RBM maintained a fund balance of 58% and 63%, respectively. Additionally, RBM has had a steady series of net income over the past several years, which has also contributed to building and maintaining the reserve balances. During the Charter Renewal focus group meetings, the RPS team emphasized that these reserve projections are intended to serve as a financial buffer against unforeseen expenses or revenue shortfalls. This will also ensure that RBM can meet its financial obligations and comply with bond covenants, which require positive operating net income each year.

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RBM Charter School

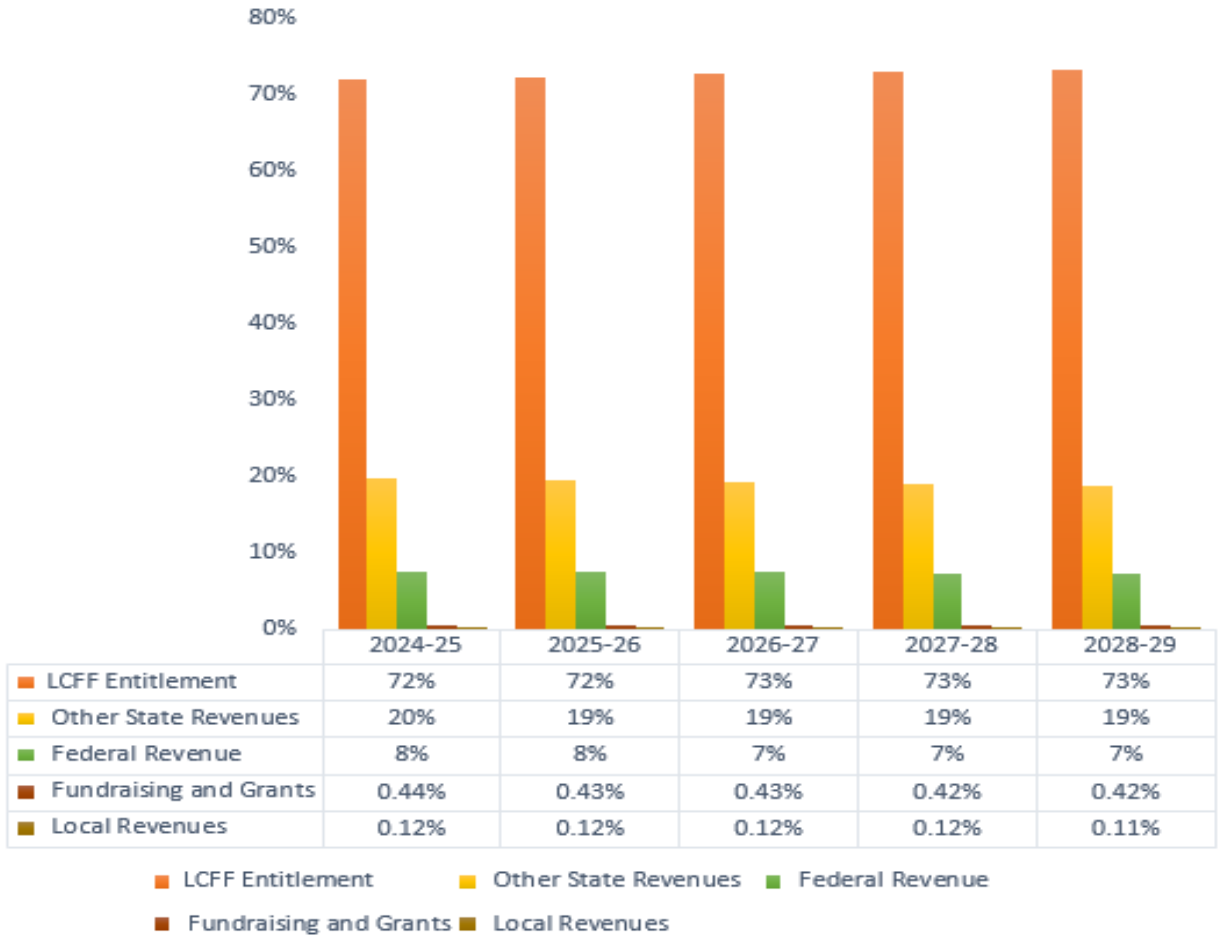
		<b>Object 35: RBM Renewal Petition Multi-Year Projection Summary<sup>1</sup></b>				
		<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>2026-27</b>	<b>2027-28</b>	<b>2028-29</b>
<b>[A]</b>	<b>Total Revenues</b>	10,017,413	10,134,662	10,244,729	10,356,447	10,469,841
<b>[B]</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	9,998,929	10,093,876	10,136,123	10,178,798	10,221,905
<b>[C] = [A - B]</b>	<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	18,484	40,786	108,606	177,650	247,936
<b>[D]</b>	<b>Beginning Fund Balance</b>	6,856,182	6,874,666	6,915,452	7,024,059	7,201,709
<b>[E]</b>	<b>Adj. to Beg. Fund Balance</b>					
<b>[F] = [(D+E) + C]</b>	<b>Total Net Assets, End of Year</b>	<b>\$ 6,874,666</b>	<b>\$ 6,915,452</b>	<b>\$ 7,024,059</b>	<b>\$ 7,201,709</b>	<b>\$ 7,449,645</b>
<b>[G] = [F/B]</b>	<b>Reserve Percentage</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>73%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Source: Renewal Petition Revenue & Expense projections.

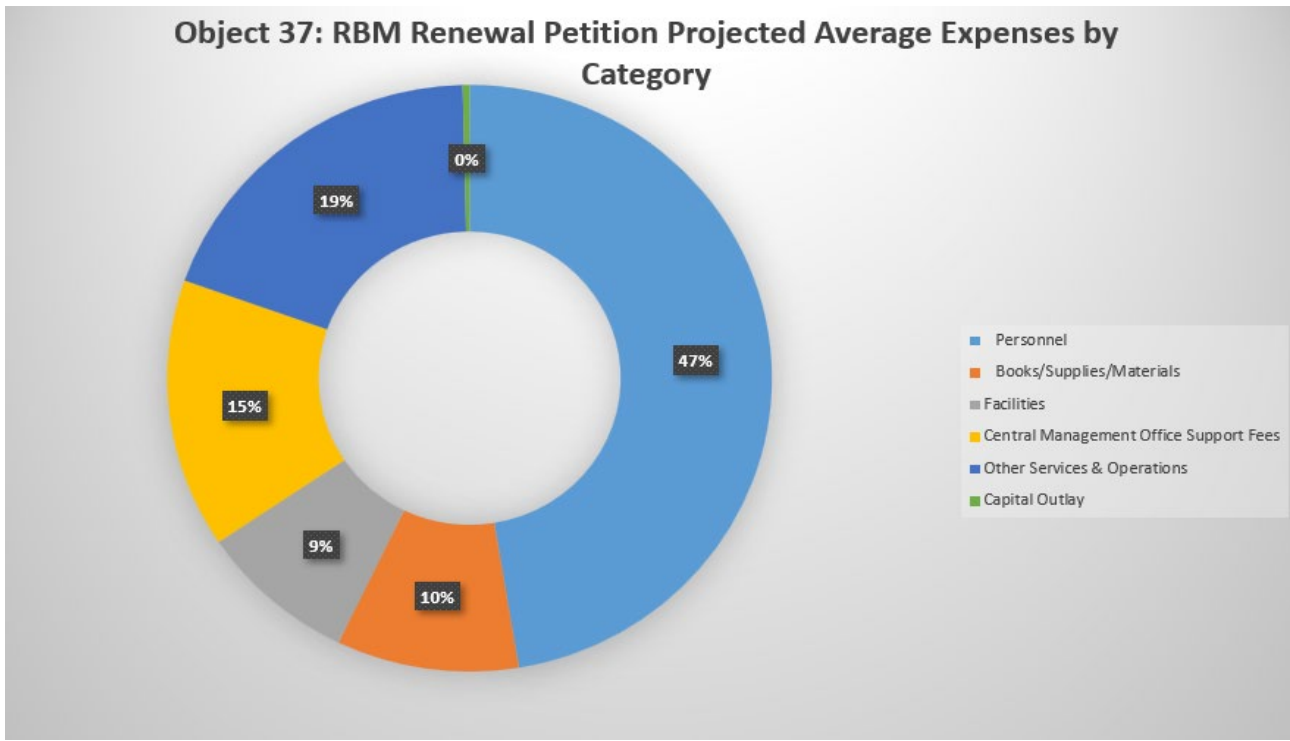
Object 36, below, shows the RBM Renewal Petition projected revenues by category, with primary funding anticipated from state and federal sources. RBM has taken a conservative approach by excluding one-time funding from budget revenues. The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) remains the largest revenue source. RBM projects an average of 72% of total revenue from LCFF entitlement, 19% from other state funding, and approximately 7% from federal revenue sources.

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### Object 36: RBM Renewal Petition Projected Revenues by Category



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Object 37, above, exhibits RBM's projected average expenditure distribution over the next five years. RBM is projecting an average of 47% of the projected average expenditures in personnel costs; the remaining 53% include, but are not limited to, expenses for Central Management Office (CMO) Support fees, facilities fees, materials and supplies, and other services and operations. Specifically, 15% of average expenditures account for CMO support fees, 9% for facilities fees, 19% for other services & operations, and 10% for books, supplies, and other materials of total expenditures. These projections are consistent with RBM's historical expenditure patterns and appear reasonable based on past data.

The SCCOE Staff finds that the multi-year budget projections presented in the Charter Renewal Petition include a reasonably comprehensive description of anticipated revenue and expenses and satisfactorily demonstrate RBM's ability to meet its financial obligations.

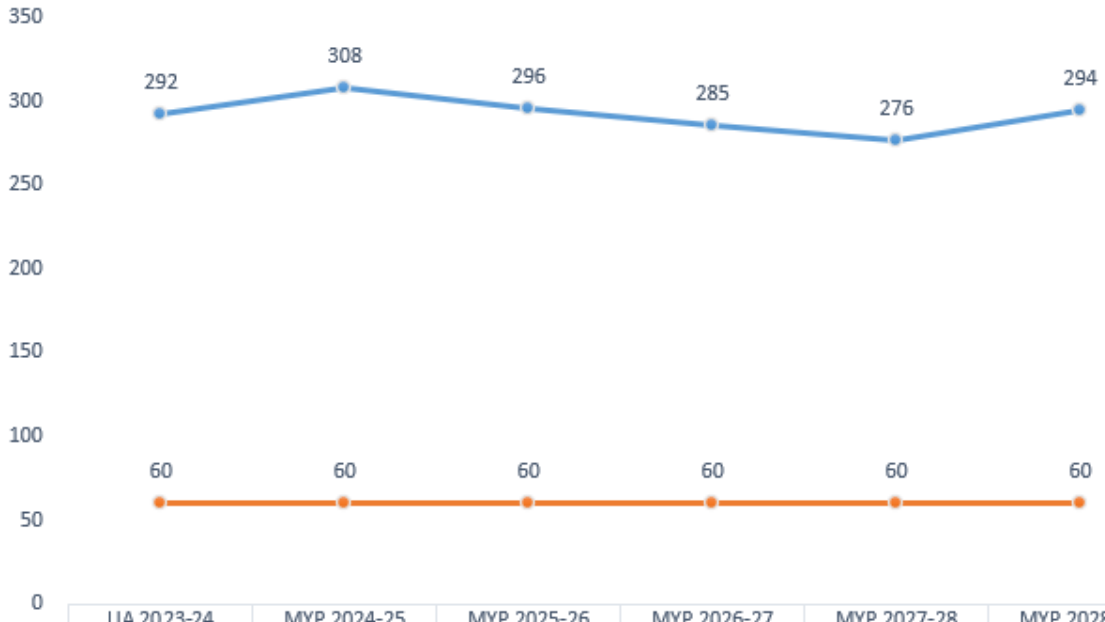
**Cash Flow**

During the staff review and analysis of RBM's Cash Flow Projections in the Multi-Year Projection (MYP) included in the Renewal Petition, it was noted that the beginning cash balance for July 2024, reported as \$8,683,000, was \$1,313,951 higher than the ending cash balance of \$7,369,049 reported in RBM's Unaudited Actuals for FY 2023-24, submitted on September 15, 2024. The \$8,683,000 beginning cash balance used in the Renewal Petition cash flow projections was a preliminary cash balance for June 2024, prior to the fiscal year-end adjustments. Due to the FY 2023-24 (prior year) ending cash adjustment, cash flow projections in the Renewal Petition for all subsequent years were overstated. To present more current data, staff recalculated the cash flow projections for the RBM Renewal Petition by inputting the updated beginning cash balance. Based on the current forecast, it appears that RBM can maintain a positive ending cash balance and sufficient cash reserves to meet all its financial obligations for the renewal term.



Object 38 below reflects RBM’s Days of Cash on Hand (DCOH) after adjustment to the July 2024 beginning balance. RBM’s DCOH is projected to consistently exceed the best practice and SCCOE’s expectation benchmark of 60 days, with DCOH reaching up to 294 days in FY 2028-29. Object 39 demonstrates that, historically, RBM has maintained an average DCOH of 151 days. The Renewal Petition maintains this trend with a projected average DCOH of 292 days throughout the renewal term.

**Object 38: RBM Renewal Petition Days of Cash on Hand (DCOH)<sup>1</sup>**



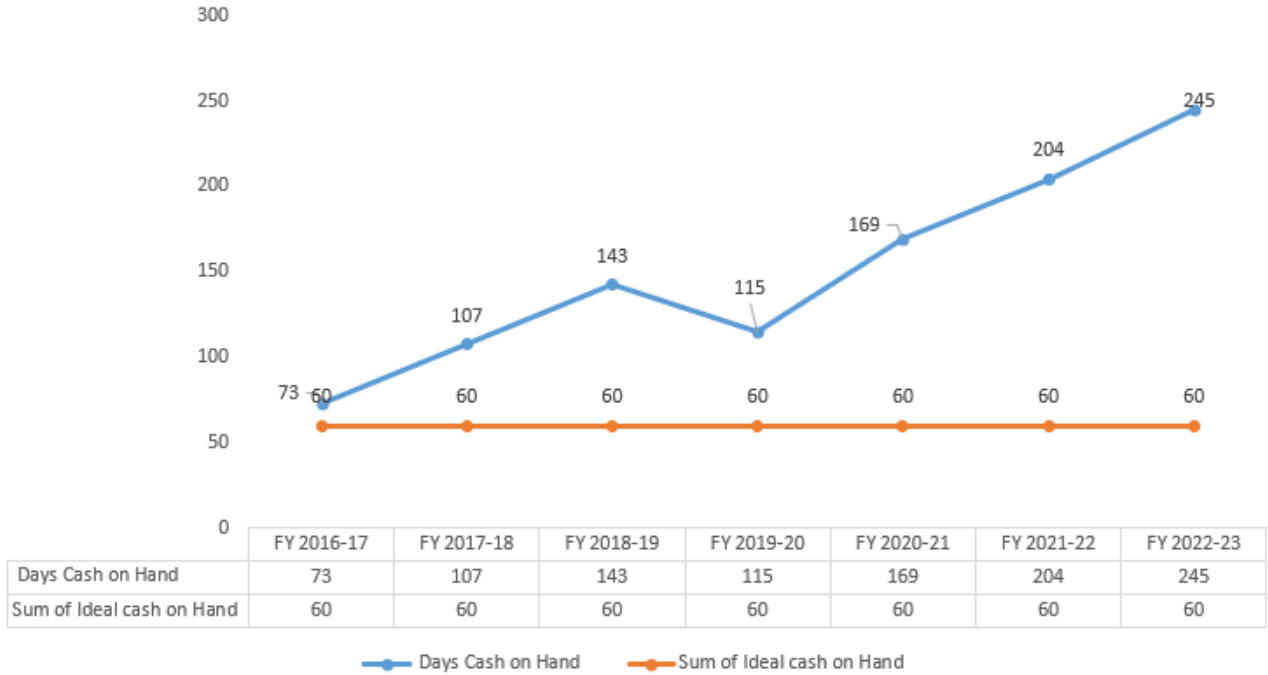
	UA 2023-24	MYP 2024-25	MYP 2025-26	MYP 2026-27	MYP 2027-28	MYP 2028-29
Days Cash on Hand	292	308	296	285	276	294
Ideal Cash on Hand	60	60	60	60	60	60

—●— Days Cash on Hand    —●— Ideal Cash on Hand

<sup>1</sup>Days of Cash On Hand: Cash and Cash Equivalents/ ((Total Expenditures-Depreciation)/365)

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**Object 39: RBM Historical Days of Cash on Hand<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>Days of Cash On Hand: Cash and Cash Equivalents/ (Total Expenditures-Depreciation)/365

**Potential Civil Liability Effects on the School and County Office**

RBM is in compliance with its current MOU, including the insurance and indemnification, defense, and hold harmless provisions. This 2017 MOU will remain in effect unless and until a new MOU or addendum to the MOU replacing it in whole or part is entered into, which will address any new provisions as required by SCCOE’s risk management team. There is no reason to believe RBM will not continue to abide by SCCOE’s requirements and the agreed upon MOU and any addendum thereto. Staff recommends that the County Board require, as it is necessary for the sound operation of RBM as a countywide charter school, that RBM agree to comply with insurance, indemnification, defense, and hold harmless provisions as satisfactory to SCCOE’s risk management team, in its discretion.

**5. Exclusive Public Employer**

As required by the Charter Schools Act, the Charter specifies Rocketship Education doing business as Rocketship Public Schools shall be deemed the exclusive public employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of Educational Employment Relations Act (“EERA”).

**6. Requirements for Grade-Levels Served, Facility Location, and Students Served**

RBM currently serves TK-5. It is located within the boundaries of the ARUSD in a facility built for RBM’s specific needs, and RBM plans to remain at that location throughout the renewal term. RBM is located at 2960 Story Road, San Jose, CA 95127.

## *RBM Charter School*

The Charter Schools Department Staff found RBM is able to meet the requirements for grade levels served, facility location, and students served.

### **7. Any Other Criteria Set Forth in the Statute**

Since RBM's Charter was last renewed, several new laws have gone into effect, including but not limited to *AB 1505*, *AB 1507*, *AB 1219*, *SB 126*, *SB 820*, and *SB 98*, which enacted broad changes to the Charter Schools Act. RBM will need to comply with the changes to the law.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Charter Schools Department Staff reviewed RBM's Renewal Petition, Dashboard performance, and verified data of measurable increases in academic achievement, consistent with RBM being designated as a middle performing school, utilizing the criteria for charter renewal set forth in *EC Sections 47605.6, 47607, and 47607.2*.

The SCCOE Staff recommends the SCCBOE conditionally approve the request for renewal of the Charter for a term of five years (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2030) on the condition and with the requirement imposed pursuant to *EC 47605.6(b)* necessary for the sound operation of RBM as a countywide charter school, that Rocketship Academy for Brilliant Minds Charter School, Rocketship Education doing business as Rocketship Public Schools, and SCCOE enter into an MOU and/or an addendum to an MOU on or before February 18, 2025, or such later deadline as may be agreed to by the County Superintendent or designee, that addresses to SCCOE's satisfaction each of Staff's concerns, including but not limited to those identified and reviewed in this Staff Analysis, whether or not specifically recommended as conditions and requirements for renewal, and as necessary to update and/or replace the terms of the 2017 MOU to be consistent with current law and/or SCCOE best practices and expectations, as well as any additional conditions or requirements identified by the SCCBOE, with the terms of such MOU/addendum to be to SCCOE's satisfaction, as consistent and necessary to RBM's sound operation as a countywide charter school.

Staff also recommends the SCCBOE deny the material revisions to the Renewal Petition seeking to remove the teaching credential requirement for the Principal and Assistant Principal positions.

Staff further recommends that the SCCBOE effectuate these actions by adopting the proposed resolution entitled: Board Resolution Conditionally Approving for a term of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2030, the Charter Renewal for RBM Charter School with the Additional of Requirements Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605.6(b), and, Alternatively, Making Written Factual Findings Supporting Denial & Denying the RBM Charter School Charter Renewal if the Requirements and Conditions Are Not Met, and Separately Denying the Request for Material Revisions and Adopting Written Factual Findings of Denial.

## **Student Impact**

The Charter School Department provides oversight and monitoring for 21 County Board of Education authorized charter schools. RBM was authorized in 2011 and currently serves approximately 490 students.