



ROCKY MOUNTAIN PREP

# Scholar & Family Handbook

School Year 22-23

Education at its **PEAK!**

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# Chapter One: Rocky Mountain Prep

## Mission

Rocky Mountain Preparatory School (RMP) will educate children in grades Pre-Kindergarten - 5 with the rigorous academic preparation, character development, and personalized support necessary to succeed in a 4-year college and life.

## RMP Equity Statement

The concept of meritocracy has long been central to the American Dream; if one works hard enough and tries hard enough, doors open and success is inevitable. However, institutional discrimination and prejudice leads to inequitable opportunities for many people, specifically those of color and those growing up in poverty, leading to a greater divide in access to opportunity inside and outside of the classroom. At Rocky Mountain Prep, we refuse to be complacent in perpetuating an environment in which demographics determine destiny. In turn, deeply understanding lines of differences is crucial to ensuring that, at Rocky Mountain Prep, we are building an educational environment that breaks down systems of oppression and ensures our scholars have increased access to high-quality educational options beyond our classrooms and lives of opportunity.

We believe that to accomplish this work, we must build a diverse collaborative of individuals from all races, ethnicities, gender identities, socioeconomic statuses, abilities, sexual orientations, political views, religions, native languages, and other lines of difference, and ensure that all people are welcomed and supported, and their voices and experiences are reflected and valued. To accomplish this well requires an ongoing commitment that cannot live in a statement alone. This work is not owned by one person or group but instead is shepherded by every single person in our classrooms, meetings, hallways, and offices, as well as in our larger community.

Because Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness are so critical to the realization of our mission, and because we set strategy towards this vision, we, as a community, commit to reflection and action, grounded in our PEAK values.

## School History

Rocky Mountain Prep was founded in 2011 with the belief that all scholars deserve an excellent education that prepares them for success in college and life. Since the first school opened in southeast Denver in August 2012, each child enrolled is part of a class of scholars creating and continuing a tradition of excellence in our community. In August 2015, Rocky Mountain Prep opened its second school in southwest Denver. In August 2016, RMP opened its third school, Fletcher, located in Aurora. In August 2018, RMP opened its fourth school, Berkeley, in Northwest Denver.

As a network, we plan to grow our impact in Denver and the surrounding metro areas by opening more schools. We believe strongly in our mission to provide quality academic experience for all scholars.

## PEAK Values

Our PEAK values set the tone for our school culture and are woven throughout our interactions:

<b>Perseverance</b>	<i>We work hard through challenges</i>
<b>Excellence</b>	<i>We try our best on everything</i>
<b>Adventure</b>	<i>We have the confidence to explore, try new ideas, and take risks</i>
<b>Kindness</b>	<i>We treat ourselves and others with love and respect</i>

## Vision

Rocky Mountain Prep is a place where scholars are held to high expectations and love learning. Scholars receive personalized support, participate in a longer school day and extended school year, wear a uniform and live at their personal PEAK. We offer a rigorous and engaging college preparatory curriculum that is directly aligned to national Common Core Standards.

*We know potential is everywhere, but opportunity is not.* At Rocky Mountain Prep, we believe **all** children, regardless of where they are born, the color of their skin, their socioeconomic status, and other spheres of influence, deserve access to a great public education. We believe that achieving educational equity and increasing access to opportunity is a moral imperative for our organization and country. Therefore, our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness is not simply a priority, but a cornerstone of our mission, vision, and values as an organization.

Our commitment to equity and academic rigor means that we help *every* student achieve. Our culture of love and inclusion means that we welcome, support, and challenge everyone with kindness and respect.

# Chapter Two: Who We Are

## Our School Teams

You can learn more about our school teams on our website, [www.rmp.org](http://www.rmp.org). Each school is led by a Principal and admin team with Assistant Principals of Instruction. In addition, we have Directors of Operations who lead the day-to-day operations of the school and oversee family communications and front office support. At Rocky Mountain Prep we are committed to excellence and providing the absolute best education to our scholars. In order to make this goal a reality, we have hired the best teachers, teaching fellows, and staff from around the country to build a team that will ensure that all scholars who walk through our doors are set for success not only in the classroom, but in life.

## Tricia Noyola, Chief Executive Officer

Tricia is the Chief Executive Officer of Rocky Mountain Prep. Prior to her work at RMP, Tricia was the Executive Director of IDEA-Austin leading the region's growth from 4 schools to 16 schools with strong academic results. In addition, Tricia was an elementary principal - turning around the school to be the highest performing elementary of the Rio Grande Valley - and led IDEA's talent strategy. Tricia is a proud alumna of Teach for America and St. Edward's University.

## Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is a passionate and diverse group of individuals who have dedicated their hard work and professional experience to achieving the core mission of Rocky Mountain Prep. This group has expertise in nonprofit governance, finance, community leadership, curriculum, facilities management, and instruction and assessment. There are always two seats on the board reserved for families. If you are interested in being considered for the board or would like to nominate another family to the board, please contact [boardinfo@rockymountainprep.org](mailto:boardinfo@rockymountainprep.org).

# Chapter Three: Scholar Culture

## Arrival and Dismissal

RMP works diligently to ensure that arrival and dismissal are safe for scholars and families and are as efficient as possible for everyone involved. Attention to policies and procedures in car line, walker line, and buses are critical for scholar safety. Violations of policies may result in the need to drop your scholars off in person in the main office.

## Daily Schedule and Routines

### Attendance

Consistent attendance is key to achievement, and families are expected to ensure their children are in school every day. **Scholars should not miss more than 4 days of school. Please make sure your scholar is present every day except in case of serious illness or extreme circumstances. It is a family's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for the absence by 8:05 every morning by texting the teacher, calling the school's main office, or other school procedures.** We take all absences, tardies, and early pickups very seriously, as they can be detrimental to academic success. The most significant consequence of missing school is that your scholar will fall behind because Rocky Mountain Prep has a rigorous and fast-paced classroom environment.

If a scholar has more than 10 unexcused absences, they will be at risk of missing out on RMP activities, including but not limited to, field trips, dance performances, field day, and other celebrations. A doctor's note is required for an excused absence. In addition, scholars who miss more than 10 days per year will be considered for retention and may not be promoted to the next grade level. The school may also file for truancy if a scholar has 10 unexcused absences in a year.

<b>Extended Absences</b>	<p>Consistent attendance is key to achievement, and families are expected to ensure their children are in school every day. Extended absences should be avoided whenever possible. All vacations should be planned during RMP breaks and over the summer. Families must notify the school of a planned extended absence to take a vacation, to visit family members abroad, or for other reasons. There will be a required follow-up meeting with school officials to review make-up work.</p> <p>Whether the absences are excused or unexcused will be determined based on the reason for the absence in accordance with RMP's attendance policy (e.g.</p>
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	extended medical illness, religious observance, or bereavement leave). Extended absences will not be excused for other reasons.
<b>Tardies</b>	Regular tardies can hinder success as learning starts as soon as scholars enter the building. A scholar is tardy if they arrive after the school start time. As with absences, we take tardies very seriously. Tardies accompanied by a doctor's note, for religious observances and due to a death in the family will be excused; all other tardies are unexcused.  <b>When your scholar is tardy, you MUST walk your scholar into the front office and sign them in.</b>
<b>Leaving early</b>	It is essential that scholars remain at school for the entirety of the school day to acquire the knowledge, skills, and confidence to meet the rigorous academic standards set at Rocky Mountain Prep. For that reason, early pickups should be avoided whenever possible. Families should make every effort to schedule any appointments after school, on the weekend, or on the consolidated list of days when school is closed. Early pickups after 2:30 p.m aren't allowed except for emergencies. The front office will be closed half an hour before dismissal to prepare for dismissal.
<b>Medical Appointments</b>	Please make every attempt to schedule routine medical appointments outside of normal school hours. If a scholar sees a doctor, please bring a doctor's note so the absence can be designated as a medical absence. Scholars will not be excused for the appointments of other family members.
<b>Suspensions</b>	Out-of-school suspensions are considered to be absences from school.

## Truancy

A habitually truant scholar is defined as a scholar with four unexcused absences or truanies in any month or 10 unexcused absences or truanies during any school year. If a scholar is absent 10 or more times in a year, this scholar is considered a habitual truant and will be considered for retention. If a student has 15 unexcused absences, the school may initiate an Attendance Filing in Juvenile Court. The school will submit an annual report to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) that reports the number of habitual truants.

## Uniforms

All scholars must wear the Rocky Mountain Prep uniform shirts or upper wear to school every single day and on all field trips. These include our gray polo shirts for our ECE scholars and our blue polo shirt for our scholars Kindergarten-5th-grade scholars. Please see school-specific guidance for an overview of Uniforms. School uniforms are important for several reasons:

- **Safety:** Uniforms allow us to identify Rocky Mountain Prep scholars quickly.
- **Community:** Uniforms unite us in our mission to prepare for success in college and remind us that our team is more important than brands or logos.
- **Excellence:** Uniforms unite us in believing that we take our jobs seriously as scholars.

On some days the school may designate non-uniform “free dress” days. Those decisions will be made in advance by the principal.

*\*Please note that families must contribute to the cost associated with their scholar's uniform. If you would like to be considered for assistance with uniform fees, please contact the front office.*

### **Change of Clothes**

All families with scholars in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten must send one change of clothing with your scholar on the first day of school to be kept in the classroom in the case of an accident. The change includes underwear, pants, a plain polo shirt, and socks. If a change of clothing is not provided, families will be called in the case of an accident to come to school with a clean change of clothing for their scholars.

### **Uniform Reminder**

**All scholars who are out of uniforms will receive a loaner uniform for the day and are expected to return the following day in full correct uniform.** If the uniform requirement is causing financial hardship, please reach out to the front office.

### **Student Technology Use**

Rocky Mountain Prep believes that all students should have access to technology when they act in a responsible, efficient, courteous, and legal manner. Our goal in providing these services is to enhance the educational development of our students. All school Internet use is filtered and monitored. Acceptable uses of technology are devoted to activities that support teaching and learning.

Before using RMP technology, all students must sign and return a Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy. Violations of this policy may result in students losing technology use privileges and families will be responsible for paying to replace RMP Technology that is intentionally damaged by students.

### **Chromebooks**

Every student kindergarten through fifth grade will be assigned a Chromebook for use during the school day. This Chromebook will be theirs to take care of during school hours, however, will not be permitted for use at home. If a scholar causes damage to a Chromebook outside of daily wear and tear, RMP may assess financial damages to a family that is commensurate to the cost of repair for the Chromebook up to the full replacement cost of the Chromebook to not exceed \$200.

### **Cell-Phone Policy**

RMP's priorities in crafting a cell-phone policy are both to ensure families can communicate safely with their scholars and to minimize distractions in our classrooms and during our school-led activities. We recognize that some families may want their scholars to have cell phones for safety/communication reasons. However, RMP's policy is that cell phones cannot be seen or heard on campus and/or at RMP events and field trips because they are a distraction to learning. Staff members will remove any cell phones that are seen or heard, and an adult family member can pick them up at the front office at the end of the day or the next morning. The scholar will also receive an appropriate consequence for having a phone out and/or using it on campus or during a school event or field trip. If a scholar's cell phone is stolen, Rocky Mountain Prep is not liable and cannot guarantee its recovery. Please consider leaving all technology at home.

## School Culture

### Vision for a Loving and Rigorous Culture

At Rocky Mountain Prep we have a shared vision of excellence that drives our understanding of what great teaching, scholar relationships, school culture, and family engagement look like every day. Our vision for classrooms at RMP is that they are magical places to be. When adults walk into the building, they think 'I want my child at this school' and when children walk into the building they think 'I want to learn here.' Teachers are engaging and challenging scholars in learning that is joyful, tailored to individual scholars' needs, and aimed at making our scholars think deeply.

### Character Development and Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

At Rocky Mountain Prep we foster a culture of rigor and joy where scholars live at their personal PEAK:

- **Perseverance:** Scholars work hard through challenges
- **Excellence:** Scholars try their best on everything they do
- **Adventure:** Scholars have the confidence to explore, try new ideas, and take risks
- **Kindness:** Scholars treat themselves and others with love and respect

To support this, we proactively teach and coach children in developing social-emotional skills just as we do academic skills. We take the time to create structures, rituals, and routines that support social-emotional development. We recognize emotions and social conflict as an opportunity for growth and talk children through these experiences. Sometimes, as scholars are developing skill sets, they need extra support. When this is the case we work with families and scholars to provide small group or individualized support.

### Response to Behavior

We know scholars need strong boundaries. Part of their development is to test those boundaries. In these situations, it's our job to confirm the boundaries and provide consequences for actions. By proactively teaching and coaching, reactively problem-solving, and giving consequences, we teach our scholars the skills necessary to live at their personal PEAK. We recognize that just as some scholars need extra help learning academic skills, some scholars may need additional support in learning emotional and social skills. If that is the case, School Administration will work closely with teachers, scholars, and families to help all scholars learn and grow and ensure a safe, productive, and joyful learning environment for all scholars.

When appropriate, the teachers and the School Administration have the authority to decide appropriate consequences for scholar behavior. If scholars choose to break rules, they may lose privileges (such as choice time, field trips, etc) if it makes sense to do so.

### PEAK Breaches (PB)

As a community of learners, our actions affect others. Similarly, one scholar's actions may affect a roomful of other scholars' learning. There are certain behaviors that disrupt our school-family's purpose of learning and loving one another; these behaviors are unacceptable. In order to ensure ALL scholars have every opportunity to learn and love, we will handle these behaviors in a way that preserves the dignity of the scholar who is disrupting our school-family as well as protect and preserve the learning time of the rest of the scholars. If a scholar repeatedly engages in behaviors that violate the respect, emotional safety, or physical safety of those, we become concerned and take action as a school-family. While individual plans

for individual scholars may vary, the approach is the same. The first phase of repeated PEAK Breaches is to provide additional support and directly involve families.

**Below are examples of PEAK Breach Behaviors, which include but are not limited to:**

Minor Physical Safety	Emotional Harm	Defiance/Disrespect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pushing/shoving</li> <li>● Hitting, punching, spitting, kicking, etc. (just once - repeated would be a referral)</li> <li>● Retaliation hit/punch</li> <li>● Rough play with intent to harm</li> <li>● Using physical aggression to express feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gossiping</li> <li>● Blaming someone for something</li> <li>● Name-Calling</li> <li>● Mimicking another scholar to the point of discomfort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Talking back (saying NO)</li> <li>● Walking away from the teacher</li> <li>● Covert defiance (saying yes but still doing something anyway)</li> <li>● Mimicking the teacher</li> <li>● Wandering the classroom after several reminders</li> </ul>
Classroom Disruption	Profanity/Vulgarity	Scholastic Dishonesty
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continued behavior that disrupts the learning environment</li> <li>● Tantruming</li> <li>● Repeated Minor Disengagement that Disrupts Learning: Receiving 9+ reminders in one school day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cursing</li> <li>● Inappropriate language for school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cheating</li> <li>● Plagiarizing</li> </ul>

### Incident Behavior

Examples include:

- Physical Harm: incidents that result in minor injuries
- Repeated Commitment Breach behavior
- Weapons
- Drugs/alcohol
- Harassment based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion
- Major theft
- Major destruction of property
- Safety threats
- Physical assault

Incidents are grounds for a referral to administration and means there is a need for admin assistance to support the classroom's safety or learning environment. We want all of our scholars to be successful and have the opportunity to learn. Administration response may be to push in to support, coach the teacher, cover the class so that the teacher can have a restorative conversation, or administration support outside of the classroom. Lost instructional time results in lower achievement for our scholars. Therefore, it is not ideal for scholars to miss out on instructional time due to behavior.

If a student brings a weapon to school, drugs/alcohol to school, engages with another student or staff in a sexual manner, participates in major theft (over \$500), causes major destruction of school property (over \$500), threatens the safety of others or themselves, assaults another student or staff member, or attempts serious physical harm to themselves, administration will be contacted immediately. Administration will follow the discipline ladder. RMP follows guidance for the implementation of BOE Policies JK - Student Discipline and JK-R - Student Conduct and Discipline Procedures for DPS and APS Policies & Regulations for APS\*. Immediate next steps may include: contacting the family, consequences, DPS safety and security response, mental health assessment, or social services, and in some cases in or out of school suspension.

### **Bus Violations**

The bus is a privilege at Rocky Mountain Prep and we want to ensure all scholars make it to and from school safely and on time. If the bus driver reports any behavior challenges to the school, the scholar will receive a bus violation. Three bus violations will result in one week of suspension from the bus. If behavior continues to be an issue it will be grounds for expulsion from the bus for the remainder of the year.

### **Bullying Policy**

At Rocky Mountain Prep, we strive to create safe, predictable, and consistent school and classroom environments so that all students feel loved, safe, and respected. When there is a breach of this safe space in the form of bullying or harassment between students or groups of students, the staff at Rocky Mountain Prep responds urgently and appropriately to address the concern and repair the damaged relationships.

### **Definitions**

As defined by Denver Public Schools (DPS), **BULLYING** is the use of coercion or intimidation to obtain control over another person or to cause physical, mental or emotional harm to another person. Bullying can occur through written, verbal or electronic means, or by a physical act or gesture. **CYBERBULLYING** is any type of harassment or bullying that occurs through any mobile or electronic device, including email, chat room, instant messaging, blogs, text messaging, videos or pictures posted on websites and social media.

Bullying most often occurs as repeated behavior and often is not a single incident between the bullying/cyber-bullying offender(s) and the bullying victim(s). Bullying generally includes the following characteristics: **an imbalance of power, the intent to cause harm, and repetition**. The imbalance of power could be due to social status, age, size, etc. For example, a bully is often someone who is more popular or has more social power, someone who is physically larger or older, or someone whose identity holds more power and privilege than the recipient's (e.g. white, male, straight, cisgender).

In addition, in accordance with DPS policy, bullying is classified as **HARASSMENT** and may constitute a violation of civil rights when it is based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity (including transgender), religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, veteran status or disability.

At RMP, we actively respond to bullying regardless of where or when the event occurs if it causes a material and substantial disruption of the education process or the orderly operation of the school. The incident need not happen on school premises or using school property.

## Who Is at Risk

According to stopbullying.gov, “Generally, children who are bullied have one or more of the following risk factors:

- Are perceived as different from their peers, such as being overweight or underweight, wearing glasses or different clothing, being new to a school, or being unable to afford what kids consider “cool”
- Are perceived as weak or unable to defend themselves
- Are depressed, anxious, or have low self-esteem
- Are less popular than others and have few friends
- Do not get along well with others, seen as annoying or provoking, or antagonize others for attention

There are two types of kids who are more likely to bully others:

- Some are well-connected to their peers, have social power, are overly concerned about their popularity, and like to dominate or be in charge of others.
- Others are more isolated from their peers and may be depressed or anxious, have low self-esteem, be less involved in school, be easily pressured by peers, or not identify with the emotions or feelings of others.”

Research also suggests that children with disabilities, including physical, developmental, intellectual, emotional, and sensory disabilities; children with special health needs; or children who identify or are perceived as LGBTQ+, are at an increased risk of being bullied.

## Protection

If a student is the victim of serious or persistent bullying:

1. We will intervene immediately to provide the student with a safe educational environment, which may include:
  - a. increased distance from the other student
  - b. increased supervision of and plan for change for the other student
  - c. the option of daily check-ins or weekly counseling
2. The intervention for the student who engaged in bullying behavior will be developed, when possible, with the student, their family, and relevant school staff
3. The families of both students will be communicated with about their student on an on-going basis to assess progress

**Possible Outcomes**

As with all student information, families are informed of specific actions taken that impact their own child only.

Possible Consequence	Possible Plans for Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased supervision (<i>going to bathroom with adult monitor, restricted recess area, etc.</i>)</li> <li>● Loss of in-school privileges (<i>assigned seating, restricted lunch area, etc.</i>)</li> <li>● Loss of opportunity to participate in in-school activities (<i>class parties, field trips, PEAK Party, etc.</i>)</li> <li>● Removal from after-school enrichment</li> <li>● Removal from bus</li> <li>● In-school suspension</li> <li>● Out-of-school suspension</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: Any determination of ISS or OSS must be approved by AP <u>and</u> Principal and given in accordance with RMP and DPS discipline policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent/guardian notification</li> <li>● Oral apology</li> <li>● Written apology</li> <li>● Mediated conversation</li> <li>● Friendship contract</li> <li>● Safety plan</li> <li>● Lunch bunch</li> <li>● Small-group instruction using approved curriculum (<i>Second Step Bullying Prevention Unit, Bully-Proofing, Social Detective, or other curriculum that targets root cause of bullying behavior</i>)</li> <li>● Counseling</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: Any determination for counseling as part of a plan for change must be approved by the family as well as the staff providing this support</p>

*Note: In the case of severe and consistent bullying, we may consider transferring a student to a different homeroom.*

## Chapter Four: Family Engagement

Families are essential partners at Rocky Mountain Prep. We recognize that our scholars’ families are their first and longest-lasting teachers and that we must actively partner with them to ensure scholars are successful at RMP and beyond. It is often said that it takes a village to raise a child, and at Rocky Mountain Prep, we all work together to create our village; a school-family.

Our mission to help every elementary-aged scholar reach their full potential requires the collective power and action of schools, teachers, staff, and families. That is why we strongly encourage all families to actively participate in this partnership with their school community by engaging in opportunities to lead or volunteer at our schools. Families’ experience and engagement with us are just as important as that of their scholars!

### Family Opportunities for Partnership at RMP

*Family and Teacher Conferences:* There are two formal family/teacher conferences throughout the year; in the late fall and in the spring. Conferences are mandatory as they are an important time to discuss scholars’ academic goals and progress. They are also important for the school administration to gather formal feedback from families on their satisfaction with the school and their’ intent to return.

*Family Leadership Committee:* The Family Leadership Committees at each campus are essential in increasing family voice in our schools/network, and establishing meaningful lines of communication between the

school and families. Our family leaders support in campus event planning, fundraising, and advocating on behalf of and for the school. Monthly meeting dates and times will be posted for all families to attend.

*School Accountability Committee:* The School Accountability Committee at each campus serves as the ultimate decision-making body for school accountability and progress monitoring. Family representatives work closely with school leaders and staff each quarter to give input and make decisions to improve their campus. Families who are interested in applying to join their campus's School Accountability Committee should complete an interest form and/or reach out to the front office.

*CEO Advisory Council:* In our network-wide CEO Advisory Council, family representatives from each campus partner directly with the CEO to provide feedback of their experiences and identify strategies to strengthen the network. Families receive additional training to learn how to tell their story at the district and state level to become advocacy champions. Families who are interested in applying to represent their campus on the advisory council should complete an interest form and/or contact the network's Senior Manager of Family Engagement and Advocacy.

*Academic Partnering Nights:* These events will center around academics so that families can learn more about the curriculum, how their scholars' are progressing, and receive resources to support learning at home. During this time, families can connect with their scholar's teacher and other families in our school community on ways to partner together. These events will be advertised in our family newsletter and all families are highly encouraged to participate.

*Coffee Hours or Cafecitos:* The school leaders host a monthly coffee hour for families to learn school updates, share feedback, and ask questions with coffee and a light breakfast. These events will be announced in our monthly school newsletters and calendars.

*Volunteering:* We adhere to an inclusive and welcoming "open door" policy with our families and provide broad and creative range of opportunities for them to engage in their child's education. Families are encouraged to volunteer their time and skills through supporting in the classroom, attending field trips, doing work for the classroom at home, leading in campus-run committees, attending trainings, and more. Opportunities to volunteer will be shared in the school newsletter or families can contact the school's Operation Manager to learn more.

## Chapter Five: Academics

### Components of RMP's Academic Program

#### **Rigor**

Rocky Mountain Prep will offer a rigorous and engaging college preparatory curriculum that is directly aligned to national Common Core Standards. Teachers will use a backwards-planning approach to plan, execute, and assess rigorous, relevant lessons. This approach to curriculum design is used nationwide by high-performing schools and helps teachers establish a clear vision of learning for the year. Teachers supplement this foundation with curricula that reflect the diversity of our scholar body. Our teachers and staff will work diligently to ensure that all scholars are on or above grade level and will provide interventions and support for those who are not.

## Literacy

Proficiency in literacy skills is vital in order to become a successful scholar and college graduate. RMP has a major focus on English Language Development, oral language development, reading, phonics, and writing as part of our curricula as well as assessment plan. During each day scholars will spend at least 3 hours engaged in reading and writing instruction. Throughout the entire school day, staff take every opportunity to lift our scholars' language; building their language as the tool to access learning.

## More Time to Learn

Rocky Mountain Prep has an extended school day and calendar year that differs from most neighborhood schools. This extra time allows for a rigorous curriculum with a focus on literacy and math, inquiry-based science, daily differentiated instruction, and specials, including dance, PE, and/or music.

## Blended (Online) Learning

A crucial piece of our individualized support and academic program is the use of computer-based math and literacy curricula that scholars access online. This piece of our program allows scholars to deepen their skills and knowledge exactly at their level and enjoy focused small-group instruction with the teacher. This instruction happens within the classroom and is connected to scholars' daily learning.

## Personalized Support

We believe every scholar can thrive in a culture of high expectations and accountability. To ensure that each Rocky Mountain Prep scholar is successful, we are committed to frequent use of achievement data and assessments and a robust Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) program, where scholars will receive focused instruction in small-group settings.

## High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten

Research clearly shows that the most important learning happens before a child reaches 3rd grade. We are excited to offer an excellent Pre-Kindergarten program that prepares scholars with the academic, social-emotional, and physical skills necessary to be a great scholar and reach their PEAK. All our Pre-Kindergarten programs are licensed and strive to obtain the highest measures of quality within Colorado Shines.

## Academic Systems

### Policies & Procedures

To ensure that all RMP scholars are prepared for success, we must commit to supporting them in completing the appropriate work both inside and outside of school. Strict adherence to the following policies and procedures is critical to ensure our scholars are prepared for college and life.

<b>Homework Policy</b>	Homework is an essential ingredient in our scholars' education. We use homework to communicate class skills with families and review key concepts. Homework reinforces skills taught daily in class, helps scholars develop deeper understandings of concepts, and promotes excellent habits of responsibility. Failure to complete homework may lead to consequences.
<b>Homework Folders</b>	Every day your child will bring home a daily homework folder, which includes homework, a PEAK behavior log (except in Pre-K) reporting classroom behavior for the

	week, their independent reading log, and a monthly calendar of events. The homework and reading logs must be filled out completely each night with a parent/guardian signature, and all assigned homework must be completed and in the folder. <b>All school-wide and grade-level communication (RMP newsletter, field trip permission slips, etc) will come home once a week. Families must check the homework folder every single day for homework.</b>
<b>Independent Reading</b>	The best way to improve a scholar's reading skills is to READ, READ, READ! Scholars are expected to read independently (or with a family member) for a minimum of <b>20 minutes every night</b> (including weekends and holidays). Reading material may include books from school, from home, comics, newspapers, or magazines.

### Scholar Promotion Policy

Through rigorous data usage and careful progress monitoring, we can closely monitor and support struggling scholars. Rocky Mountain Prep will use the following promotion policy to ensure that every scholar is successful and on track to be successful to and through college.

Grades	Criteria	Metrics
K-2	Reading Level	STAR, Embedded Curriculum Assessments
3-5	Reading Level Math Achievement	STAR, Embedded Curriculum Assessments, Interim Assessments (> 70% average)

Any scholar who is below grade level in the above criteria as determined by multiple metrics, or whose unexcused absences exceed 10 in one year will be a candidate for retention. Our grading policy is found below. Please note that our grades are not the sole metric for promotion; many variables including age, social/emotional needs, English language acquisition, and more will be considered. *\*A scholar's Individual Education Plan may amend this promotion criteria.*

### Grading Policy

While grades aren't the sole indicator of scholar achievement at Rocky Mountain Prep, they are important in family-teacher communication about scholar performance. Our academic demands are critical for preparing scholars for excellence in high school and college; as such, it is important to measure scholar performance, including assessments, homework, in-class work, participation, and other assignments. This work will be graded in relation to scholar mastery of standards, skills, and subskills. The report will be shared quarterly. Report cards will be sent home with scholars twice a year. If teachers or staff have a significant concern, they may hold a conference beyond the normal conference times. If families have questions about a scholar's performance, they can reach out to their teacher to schedule a meeting.

Rubric	Performance Level
4	Exemplary
3	Accomplished (Grade level expectation)
2	Developing
1	Beginning

## Chapter Six: School Policies

### Closed Campus

Rocky Mountain Prep is a closed campus, during which all scholars must remain on the campus as defined by the school unless supervised by a staff member. Visitors must be allowed into the building by the operations staff and where they will sign in. When on campus, scholars must always be in class and under the supervision of an adult.

To ensure scholar safety during arrival and dismissal (high traffic times of the day), no one will be allowed to enter the building half an hour before arrival and half an hour after dismissal. Should families choose to arrive at this time, they will need to remain outside until the doors open. Scholars who must leave campus early must be picked up by a parent/guardian or authorized individual with photo identification before 2:30pm.

### Visitor Policy

Visitors, especially families, are vital to the Rocky Mountain Prep community. We welcome them as volunteers, observers, and partners. In order to assure the safety of our scholars and staff, an individual wishing to volunteer on a regular basis beyond with his/her child, or who will be left alone with scholars, is required to complete a volunteer application and undergo a background check. Once approved, visitors must sign in and out of the front office and wear a visitor's badge for the duration of their visit. Any visitor who does not report to the office, or is found in the building without authorization and a visitor's pass, will be asked to leave immediately.

Visitors may enter classes during the regular transition times and leave anytime. Visitors should only interact with scholars during instructional times if given permission from the teacher. Please keep voices low in the hallways so as not to disturb learning.

Families can come to the school on the first day of school to drop off their scholars and say goodbye. After the first day of school, families will only be allowed in the building after two full weeks of school in order to allow them to adjust to our systems and routines. Pre-Kindergarten families must always come into the building to sign scholars in and out of their classrooms. They are welcome to stay until instruction starts, both at the beginning of the year and ongoing. Separation anxiety is normal in children preschool age, and families are encouraged to work with their child's teacher to find the best solution should a scholar experience separation anxiety. This solution may include a period where the family drops off a child and does not stay, but should be determined on a case-by-case basis for individual scholars.

## Scholar Emergencies and Family Contact Information

In case of an emergency, parents or guardians should contact the front office either by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should parents or guardians contact scholars in their classrooms, including after-school activities, or attempt to withdraw scholars from the building without notifying and receiving permission from staff members in the front office.

If a medical emergency occurs to a scholar at school, first aid will be administered, and that scholar's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted immediately. If parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached, a person listed on the scholar's health form (or emergency contact card) or the family physician will be contacted. The school will call Emergency Medical Services (911) if the situation warrants it. If there is a serious accident at school, the affected scholars' parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified immediately. In the event that the parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached, the family physician or persons indicated on health forms will be contacted. First Aid will be administered as needed. **PLEASE KEEP YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION UPDATED with the front office so we are able to reach you.**

## Emergency Procedures

At RMP, the safety of our scholars is our number one priority. We have detailed emergency plans in place and have trained our staff on how to respond to a variety of potential situations, including but not limited to fire, tornados, medical emergencies, terrorism, utility malfunctions, threats to security outside our school building, and potential intruders.

For safety reasons, RMP does not release our detailed emergency procedures. Below is a high-level overview of emergency situations our staff is trained to respond to.

Situation	Overview	Communication protocol
<b>Fire</b>	When signs of a fire are detected, evacuation procedures are immediately followed to ensure all scholars quickly and safely exit our building. Drills are practiced monthly.	Once all scholars and staff are safely evacuated, families will be immediately contacted through text blast, followed by a letter home as appropriate.
<b>Shelter in place</b>	In the case of inclement weather/tornados, procedures are followed to move scholars to protected locations until the weather has cleared. Drills are practiced every semester.	When the weather has cleared, families will be contacted as needed.
<b>Lockout</b>	If there is perceived danger outside of the school, all scholars and staff are moved inside, the building is secured, and the proper authorities are notified. Drills are practiced every semester.	After contacting authorities, school leaders will send a text blast home immediately, followed by a more detailed letter home.
<b>Lockdown</b>	If there is a potential intruder inside the building, scholars and staff are moved to secured, locked locations inside the school building while the proper	After contacting authorities, school leaders will send a text blast home immediately, followed by a more detailed letter home.

	authorities are notified. Drills are practiced every semester.	
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## Mandatory Reporting

All school personnel are mandatory reporters and are required by law to report child abuse or neglect if they reasonably suspect abuse or neglect is occurring. A report is not a conclusion about anyone's behavior. It initiates an inquiry to determine if concerning behavior has, in fact, occurred. All RMP staff are required to complete Mandatory Reporter training every year. To report child abuse or neglect, contact the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 844-264-5437.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of Rocky Mountain Prep to recruit, hire, train, educate, promote, and administer all personnel and instructional actions without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual preference, age, national origin, disability, need for special education services, marital status, use of public assistance, or any other status protected by law. We will not tolerate any discrimination, and any such conduct is prohibited. The school also prohibits any form of discipline or retaliation for reporting incidents.

## Harassment

Rocky Mountain Prep is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, scholars, vendors and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is strictly prohibited. Rocky Mountain Prep requires all employees and scholars to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, scholars and all members of the school community.

In general, harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct that offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. What one person may consider acceptable behavior, may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of education.
2. The individual's response to such conduct is used as a basis for educational, disciplinary, or other decisions affecting a scholar.
3. Such conduct interferes with an individual's education or participation in extracurricular activities.
4. The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, scholars, vendors and other individuals in school or at school-related events. Retaliation against any individual who brings harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by Rocky Mountain Prep. Persons who

engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or Board of Directors.

## **Grievance Policy**

The Rocky Mountain Prep Board has defined a clear process for any complaint, grievance, or concern by a parent or guardian of an enrolled RMP student. The following is a summary of the grievance policy. Please request a copy of the board bylaws for the full policy and process.

**Step 1 - Raise the concern:** Any parent/guardian of an enrolled RMP student should first raise and attempt to resolve the issue with the person who is the subject or source of the dispute.

- Disputes about classroom or related practices should first be raised with teacher(s)/ staff,
- Disputes about general practices or administrative actions at the school level should first be raised with the Assistant Principal, the Principal, and then the principal's manager
- Disputes about network central office practices should first be raised with the staff involved
- Disputes related to general practices of the central office should go to the CEO

**Step 2 - Initiate a grievance:** If an issue or dispute is not resolved at Step 1, the parent/guardian may put such grievance in writing, submitting it to the next highest level in the RMP administrative chain of command. For example, a dispute first raised with a teacher must be filed at Step 2 with the Assistant Principal or Principal, and a dispute first raised with central office staff must be filed at Step 2 with the CEO. The written grievance must address the following questions:

1. What is the issue and what steps have been taken to resolve it?
2. Is there a person your grievance is against? If so, who?
3. Are there any relevant witnesses? If so, who?
4. What would you like to see changed as a result of raising the grievance?

**Step 3 - CEO Review:** In the event the parent/guardian who wrote a building-level grievance is not satisfied with the resolution presented by the Principal and thereafter wishes to initiate a further review, he or she must, within 14 business days of the Principal's decision, ask for a review by the CEO.

**Step 4 - Board Review:** The Board may undertake to review a dispute under the following circumstances, at its sole discretion:

1. If the CEO has made recommendations for Board action; or
2. If the parent/guardian who escalated appropriately to the CEO is not satisfied with the resolution presented by the CEO and wishes to initiate a further review, he or she must, within 14 business days of the CEO's decision, ask for a review by the Board
3. If the Board decides, due to extraordinary circumstances, overall sensitivity or importance of the issue, that a matter should be removed from review by the CEO and resolved instead by the Board

If you are complaining of discriminatory harassment (such as sexual harassment) and this policy would require reporting the grievance to the alleged harasser, you may, at your option, skip that step and go to the next step.

## School-to-Family Communication Methods

<b>Phone Calls</b>	At times throughout the year, you will receive phone calls or notes from a teacher or other staff member. If the message requires a response, please contact the school either by phone or in writing (text) within 24 business hours.
<b>Talking Points Texts</b>	The school will send messages and reminders in families' home language through a two-way texting platform called Talking Points. Please download the app for free from your app store and ensure that you give permission for notifications!
<b>Newsletter</b>	The school will send home newsletters detailing upcoming events, reminders, etc.
<b>Email</b>	If you have access to email at home or on your cell phone, and would like to use email for school contact, please let the front office know.
<b>Meetings</b>	If the school requests a meeting with you and your child, an important issue must be discussed. Families are free to schedule meetings with teachers or administrators whenever needed. Please contact them directly or the front office to schedule.

## Release of Photos and Other Information

Rocky Mountain Prep will periodically highlight scholar achievement, school life, and school events on the school website, social media outlets, and various publications, for enrollment outreach, public relations, and other uses to promote the school. The school may also get media requests to highlight the school and its scholars. During the orientation process, each parent/guardian will be provided with the scholar Photo/Information Release form. The school will honor these forms, such that scholar photographs will be included in publications only if the parent/guardian has granted permission.

## School Calendar & Closings

Rocky Mountain Prep follows Denver Public Schools (DPS) and Aurora Public Schools (APS) for all weather-related closures. However, the Rocky Mountain Prep calendar does not always align with the Denver or Aurora Public Schools calendar. Scholars are still expected to be in school even when Denver Public Schools or Aurora Public Schools are not in session.

## Transportation

Although most charter schools in Denver do not offer bus services, Rocky Mountain Prep strives to provide transportation to those families who have no other way of getting their scholar to and from school. All interested parents must complete the transportation application at new family orientation based on one of our-designated bus stops. Space on the bus is extremely limited and if there is more interest than the capacity available, eligible scholars will be determined through a lottery. Families who have scholars riding the bus must arrive at the bus stop five minutes before the designated pick-up or drop-off time. There will be no bus services on federal holidays even if RMP is in session. ECE-3 scholars are not eligible to ride the bus unless they have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and qualify through DPS Special Education Services. ECE-4 scholars are not eligible to ride the bus unless, in specific circumstances, they have an older sibling who attends Rocky Mountain Prep who also rides the bus.

## Medication & Allergies

We hope to keep our scholars healthy in order to learn most effectively. If your scholar requires medication during school hours, you must deliver it directly to the nurse with the proper doctor's order - **do not send medication in your scholar's backpack**. All medication must be in its original prescription container. All medicines are kept in a locked cabinet and may not be given without the proper form. If your scholar has allergies, dietary restrictions, or food preferences, please indicate on registration forms and alert the appropriate school staff during new family orientation.

## Healthy Bodies, Healthy Brains

At Rocky Mountain Prep we are committed to healthy food choices for our bodies. Balanced meals help scholars get the nutrients they need to focus and be at their personal PEAK. If you prefer to pack lunch, please send nutritious food and do not allow your scholar to have unhealthy drinks or snacks. Items such as chips, sweets, and sugary drinks are not allowed. If brought to school, they will be sent back home. If you would like to celebrate your scholar's birthday, please make plans with at least one week's notice with your scholar's teacher.

Rocky Mountain Prep partners with SLA to provide our scholars healthy breakfast, lunch, and snack options. In order to determine if families are eligible for free and reduced lunch, all families regardless of status in previous years must fill out a new application. Families **MUST** either fill out a Free & Reduced Lunch application for SY22-23 or let the school know that you decline to complete the application. Breakfast and snack will continue to be free for all scholars. However, if you do not qualify for free or reduced lunch, the lunch price will be \$3.25. Please visit your school's main office for more information on how to fill it out.

**Link to Complete Free and Reduced Meal Application online:** [charterchoice.strataapps.com](https://charterchoice.strataapps.com)

The application is now open for this year.

## School-Related Fees

Though RMP education is free, the following is a list of potential costs associated with RMP programming

- Uniform Polos/Tops
- Before or After Care Program Participation
- Field Trip/Special Events Programming
- Lunch Balances
- Chromebook damage fee

Staff will provide notice in advance of fees so that families are given adequate planning time. If the school-related costs are causing concern, please reach out to the front office to discuss support options.

## Scholar Records and Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

Scholar education records are official and confidential documents protected by one of the nation's strongest privacy protection laws, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). FERPA applies to all schools that receive federal education funds, including RMP. Non-compliance can result in the loss of those funds. Confidential educational records include scholar registration forms, contact information, graded work, academic records, discipline files, social security numbers linked to names, and scholar information displayed on a computer screen. All school employees and volunteers are required to keep scholar information secure and confidential, to protect the rights of scholars.

The essence of this act is that:

- Parents/guardians have the right to inspect and review their own child’s educational records (any records from which the scholar can be individually identified), to the exclusion of third parties. Scholars also have this right when they reach age 18. Rocky Mountain Prep responds to parental requests for scholar information only when they have been put in writing within 72 hours.
- Parents/guardians and eligible scholars have the right to request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading.
- Parents/guardians have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Rocky Mountain Prep to comply with the act's requirements.

Institutions and their employees may not disclose information about scholars, nor permit inspection of their records, without the parent or scholar’s written permission, unless such action is covered by certain exceptions as stipulated in the Act. FERPA prohibits all employees from discussing confidential scholar information with third parties, including parents and guardians. For instance, should two scholars engage in a disciplinary act together, the school is prohibited from naming or discussing the other involved scholar in conversations with parents/guardians. Similarly, should a parent request an explanation of a discipline or academic event that did not involve his/her child, but which transpired in his/her child’s classroom, the school is not permitted to disclose any names or details of events, nor disclose the resultant consequences.

Please understand that school officials—teachers, administrators and Board members—must all comply with the expectations of FERPA and therefore may not discuss any scholar other than your own with you at any time or for any reason. One exception the law allows is “directory information.” Directory information is information contained in a student’s education record that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The parent or eligible student has the right to refuse to permit the designation of directory information if that refusal is received in writing in the office of the school's principal no later than September 15th, or the following Monday if September 15th is a Saturday or Sunday. If the scholar enrolled after September 15th, families have 2 weeks after enrollment to opt out in writing. At Rocky Mountain Prep, directory information does not include place of birth, home address, parent/guardian names, or telephone numbers.

## COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols

The following safety protocols are mostly based on the DPS Safety Protocols, which are based on guidance from county health authorities. RMP reserves the right to deviate from APS or DPS policy based on local health data. This policy statement is based on current conditions. COVID-19 remains a changeable and changing public health challenge and RMP will adapt its policies and practices as needed to changes in the public health environment.

**The most important health and safety protocol is to stay home if you feel sick. Though COVID vaccinations are not required to attend school, RMP strongly encourages that all members of the RMP community are up to date on all vaccines including COVID vaccines.**

**Please do not come to school if your child has the following symptoms or conditions:**

1. Temperature of 100.4 or greater
2. Loss of Taste or Smell

3. New or unaccounted for symptoms
  - a. Persistent cough
  - b. Sore Throat
  - c. Difficult or painful breathing
  - d. Congestion
  - e. Diarrhea/Vomiting/Nausea

RMP's Health & Safety protocols include the following protocols which we believe are most important for our families to understand. RMP expects the conditions to change according to health data:

1. **Masks:** Families can choose whether they want their scholars to wear a mask at school. Families must provide their own masks and teach the safety expectations to their scholars. A good time to wear masks is if scholars have symptoms from allergies or a minor illness.
2. **Testing for COVID:** If you suspect your child has COVID, particularly if your child has been exposed to COVID and is not vaccinated and has symptoms, we recommend keeping your child home and testing for COVID as soon as possible.
3. **Quarantines and Isolation:** Should your child have COVID, please keep them home for at least 5 days from the start of symptoms or from a positive test. If the symptoms have improved after 5 days, your child is allowed back in school. Contact the school for make-up work. These absences will be considered excused.

### **If Your Child Starts Feeling Sick at School**

If your child starts to feel sick at school with major COVID symptoms, we will immediately call you to have your child picked up from school and brought home. Please understand that this is for community safety, and we need you to pick your child up as quickly as possible. We will share with you more information about when your child can return to school, but at a minimum, they need to be symptom-free for at least 24 hours and may need a note from a doctor in order to return.



# ROCKY MOUNTAIN PREP