

Rocky Mountain Classical Academy

Rationale and Replacement Plan for Waiver Request – School Readiness Assessments State Statute 22-7-1014(2)(a)

Basic Information:

School Name: Rocky Mountain Classical Academy
School Address: 4620 Antelope Ridge Drive

Prepared by: Mike Wedor, Principal
Preparer's Phone Number: 719-622-8000
Preparer's Email Address: mwedor@rmcacs.org

Charter School Contact: Christianna Fogler, Headmaster
Charter School Contact Email Address: cfogler@rmcacs.org

District Contact: Jim Bonavita
District Contact Email Address: jbonavita@d49.org

Rationale. Rocky Mountain Classical Academy (RMCA) should have the authority to implement relevant curriculum and assessment that ensure student success in higher learning. RMCA already has systems in place for how kindergarten students are assessed and monitored through intervention and individualized learning plans. Support is readily available through numerous avenues based throughout the program.

Replacement Plan.

1. Physical well-being and motor-development:

- Students participate weekly in structured P.E. classes that meet or exceed state standards. Students are assessed on motor development skills acquired through the year.
- Students participate weekly in art education that meets or exceeds state standards. Development of fine motor skills is achieved through drawing, painting, and creating. Students are assessed on motor development skills acquired through the year.
- Students participate weekly in music education that meets or exceeds state standards. Students participate in a variety of movement and rhythm exercises. Students are assessed throughout the year.
- Assessment information is gathered by observation protocols based on appropriate developmental guidelines and State Standards in the area of physical well-being and

motor development. Grade level teachers use consistent observation protocol and fine/gross motor checklists.

2. Social-emotional development: (Based on State Standards)

- Students are instructed in the positive behavior support system implemented by the school. This includes classroom, cafeteria, hallways and recess.
- The school counselor delivers regular classroom lessons that promote social-emotional and character development. Lessons address topics such as, but not limited to, managing emotions, making wise choices, making friends, and solving problems. We are using the second step curriculum.
- Various classroom positive behavior techniques are implemented. This includes, but is not limited to, green/yellow/red charts, clip chart, whole class rewards and individual behavior charts. These are designed to strengthen self-regulation and executive function that support students in paying attention, following directions, and self-managing behavior.
- Students will receive a Character Card (K.N.I.G.H.T.S.), which is a tool designed to help students and adults talk about character skills as well as reward character actions. Character development and character building lessons are aligned to the
- Assessment information is gathered by observation protocols based on appropriate developmental guidelines and State Standards.

3. Language and Comprehension Development: (Based on State Standards)

- Students receive 120 minutes of instruction in their reading and language arts block each day. During this time students are developing their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. They work on mastering letter sounds that are essential for successful and fluent decoding and develop vocabulary and language that is critical for comprehension. Consistent progress monitoring is done to track growth.
- Students have consistent access to digital programming options that support the development of reading, language and comprehension skills. Programs include, but are not limited to Accelerated Reader.
- The DIBELS-Next assessment is administered 3 times per year. Any student who does not meet the grade level benchmark is progress monitored every 2 weeks. Students not meeting benchmark are further assessed to determine the literacy area of greatest need. Diagnostic assessment tools include, but are not limited to, BURST, DIBELS Deep, and Sonday.
- Students falling below benchmark on two consecutive administrations, with supporting progress monitoring data, are placed on a READ Plan and given an additional 30 minutes of small group instruction/intervention daily.

4. Cognition and General Knowledge: (Based on State Standards)

- Students receive 45 minutes of instruction in their math block each day. RMCA utilizes a curriculum that addresses the State and Common Core Standards. Differentiated small group instruction is a component of a daily workshop time where specific student needs are addressed. Math is used in all of our students Encore classes as well which would

bring the time to almost 90 minutes of day. In addition our students are assessed using the AIMSweb math assessment.

- Students receive 60 minutes of instruction in their science block each day. Students are instructed on a variety of topics with a focus on hand-on/exploratory activity.
- Students receive 60 minutes of instruction in their social studies block each day. Students are instructed on a variety of topics with a focus on hand-on/exploratory activity.
- Assessment information is gathered from formal and informal assessments and classroom teacher observations based on appropriate developmental guidelines and State Standards.

Methods and assessments used by RMCA are clear and relevant and have the goal of improving student academic growth, and meet the intent of the quality of the standards established in State Statute 22-7-1014(2)(a)

Replacement Plan for Providing Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), including process formerly identified as Response to Intervention (RtI). Consistent with CDE's recent change from the RtI-focused process set to the broader and deeper MTSS, RMCA analyzes its student data via interdisciplinary teams. Consistent with the CDE MTSS program description, RMCA analyzes, integrates, and applies kindergarten student achievement data from the following sources:

1. DIBELS-Next: Three times per year, including within the first thirty days. Benchmark and progress monitoring measuring the acquisition and application of basic literacy skills.
2. AIMSweb Math: Three times per year, including within the first thirty days. Benchmark and progress monitoring measuring the acquisition of math skills.
3. WIDA ACCESS for English Language Learners. Assesses K-8th graders on progress in acquiring academic English. Our District 49 colleagues initially assess these students at the school year's start, and once again mid-year.
4. Teacher and parent/caregiver input, based upon daily interaction with student and student work.

Note: Deeper diagnostic tools include BURST, DIBELS Deep, and Sonday. RMCA also applies CKLA and Saxon Assessment and Remediation Guides, as well as initial in-school readiness pre-assessments to determine student preparation for kindergarten language, literacy, and math learning.

Description of MTSS Strategies and Approaches. Strategy links ways and means to achieve objectives. In this case, RMCA's objectives are to ensure each student meets or exceeds required state standards and receives the appropriate support means (interventions, accommodations, and/or higher-level services per the three tiers) for the requisite time.

RMCA's in-house resources include literacy, reading, and math interventionists. RMCA does not possess in-house SLP, OT, PT, RN (and assistant), SPED, psychologist, ELL, or audiologist resources. By contract, our chartering agency, Falcon District 49 provides these resources to us, some of them permanently stationed within RMCA. Others are on a scheduled rotation between District schools.

RMCA’s School Assessment Team and Analysts, grade-level Team Leads, Teachers, Counselors and Interventionists meet with our District colleagues to review and interpret the data, ensuring that we provide objectives, ways, and means consistent with the MTSS. This approach applies to all of the TSGold domains that our chartering agency, Falcon District 49, has coordinated with CDE for School Year 2016-17. These include the following: 1) social-emotional; 2) physical; 3) language; 4) cognitive; 5) literacy; and 6) mathematics.

Program Description.

During literacy testing day, held on class day seven, RMCA assesses student readiness data for kindergarten preparation. We assess numerous skills, including the following: knowledge of colors, number recognition, holding a pencil correctly, ability to write his/her name, letter sounds, rhyming words identification, and similar skills. This additional initial assessment provides data helpful to planning instruction consistent with the MTSS.

RMCA initially utilizes the DIBELS-Next benchmarks to assess common letter names and sounds. From this data, RMCA creates Burst groups for those students needing intensive intervention. This permits RMCA to plan small groups to help students focus on letter recognition and first sound fluency. We use AIMSweb to assess number recognition, how high the students can count quantity discrimination, and missing numbers. We apply this data to plan math lessons and small groups, as needed. We utilize our interventionists and District colleagues to provide additional services, as required.

RMCA’s CKLA curriculum provides further pre-assessments in pre-writing and listening skills, letter recognition, letter sounds, blending, and basic early readiness skills needed for kindergarten. Consistent with MTSS, RMCA uses the Assessment and Remediation guides to track developmental progression for skills in the areas of phonological awareness, phonics, fluency and comprehension, and early writing.

Other kindergarten initial assessments are as the table, below, shows.

RMCA Kindergarten Initial Assessments

Note: All domains assessed on initial testing day.

Domain	How Initially Assessed
Social-emotional	Daily student performance across tasks and subject areas, including recess time (3/day) interactions.
Physical	Weekly structured PE, Art, Music classes. Formal observation protocols. Recess interactions (3/day).
Language	CKLA and Saxon assessments and remediations. 120 minutes daily of structured lessons.
Cognitive	Saxon and CKLA assessments and remediations. 90 minutes of daily lessons and AIMSweb.

Domain	How Initially Assessed
Literacy	DIBLES-Next, BURST, DIBELS Deep, Sonday. 120 minutes daily of structured lessons.
Mathematics	Saxon and CKLA assessments and remediations. 45 minutes of specific math lessons per day and 45 minutes of math application in other subjects daily. AIMSweb.

Duration of the Waiver. RMCA requests that the waiver be for the duration of its contract with Falcon 49 School District which is through June 30, 2018.

Financial Impact: RMCA anticipates that the requested waiver will have no financial impact on the Falcon 49 School District or the RMCA budget.

How the Impact of the Waiver will be Evaluated. The impact of this waiver will be measured by the same performance criteria and assessments that apply to the school, as set forth in RMCA’s charter school contract.

Expected Outcome. With this waiver, Rocky Mountain Classical Academy will be able to continue providing quality programming and appropriate assessments and support that ensure high levels of student success.