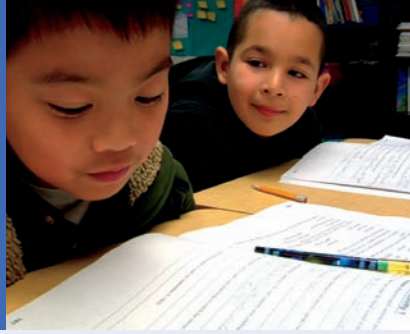
Serving English Language Learners *at* Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary / San Jose, CA



Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary

Principal: Maricela Guerrero

School schedule: 8:00am–4:00pm

Early release: 8:00am–2:00pm (Fri.)

Additional time compared to surrounding district: 90 min/day

Student Population

Grades served: K–5

Number of students: 500

Qualify for free/reduced lunch: 91%

Students Scoring At or Above Proficient on the California State Test in 2010 *(difference compared to surrounding district)*

ELA: 78% (+17%)

Math: 92% (+25%)

Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary (RMS), in San Jose, California, is one of five schools founded by Rocketship Education, a charter management organization that has been recognized across the country for effectively integrating technology into its longer school day. At RMS and the other Rocketship schools, adaptive software is used to supplement traditional classroom instruction, making it possible for students to receive truly individualized instruction.

Rocketship Mateo Sheedy's hybrid school platform combines traditional classroom teaching with tutors and technology to meet the needs of each student. This platform enables teachers to maximize classroom time for instruction, guided practice, and critical thinking exercises, while tutors and technology provide additional independent practice, assessment, and remediation/ acceleration. Moreover, the hybrid school model creates significant cost savings, which are then reinvested in programs and people.

At RMS, students receive instruction throughout four learning blocks, each lasting 1 hour and 40 minutes. The time allocations include two blocks of ELA, one block of math, and one block of Learning Lab. Such a schedule creates ample opportunities for teachers to differentiate instruction and ensure that each student is receiving the targeted support he/she needs. What's more, the longer learning blocks of an hour and 40 minutes each allow teachers to spend more time on guided practice and small group instruction—grouping students according to specific needs and spending more time with struggling students. Meanwhile, the Learning Lab utilizes technology to provide individualized ELA and math content to students and daily assessment data to teachers, allowing them to further target instruction to students' needs.

Led by non-certificated staff members, who split their time between coaching students using online learning programs and tutoring students in small groups, the Learning Lab period is broken up into three components: 30 minutes for PE/Health/Music/Art, which takes place in the lunch room or playground; 40 minutes of Reading Lab; and 30 minutes of Math Lab. (Both Reading and Math Labs take place in the computer lab, and up to four classes of students can occupy this space each period.) Students rotate between the three blocks. When in Reading Lab, students read short books and complete a five to ten question quiz to assess comprehension using an online program; students also spend time using an adaptive ELA program, such as Compass Learning Reading Odyssey. The books and assessments are all aligned to a Development Reading Assessment (DRA) score, providing teachers with daily updates on each student's reading performance. When in Math Lab, students use online content from various educational software providers (including DreamBox Learning, TenMarks, ST Math, and others) for independent math practice. Since many of these programs are adaptive in real-time, each student can progress at a pace that matches his or her specific learning needs. School-wide assessments are administered every eight weeks in both ELA and Math, enabling teachers to track student progress and provide targeted supports early on, before students fall behind. RMS also uses these assessments to identify the bottom 20 percent of students for in-lab tutoring in both subject areas. New to the learning lab in 2011-12 is the development of RISE—Rocketship's Individualized Scheduling Engine—which integrates all academic data into a single system and allows Rocketship to focus students' Learning Lab time on specific skills that align with the units being taught in the classrooms.