Prince George’s County Public Schools

Rockledge Elementary
MSDE ID Number: 1432

School Strategic Plan

2013-2014

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School System Mission
Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) is committed to preparing all students to graduate college or workforce ready. To achieve this goal, the system must accomplish the following: improve the quality of teaching in every classroom; equip teachers with the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities; and ensure that all facets of the system support teachers in this goal.
A. **School Vision and Mission**

Rockledge Elementary School’s vision is to provide a superior education in a safe and nurturing environment that will enable students to achieve academic success. The students at Rockledge Elementary will engage in flexible learning opportunities, compacted curriculum, pre-assessment, tiered instruction and advanced opportunities for critical and higher level thinking designed to allow them to develop the self-determination and intrinsic motivation to become life-long learners. Critical and creative thinking tasks, cooperative and independent studies and project-based learning activities will be incorporated into the work of these students. The program will be responsive to the social/emotional needs of students. All stakeholders - students, parents, teachers, and community members - will work as a team to create an environment that fosters the development of each child’s interests and talents and prepares them to be college and career ready.

B. **Demographics**

**School Location**

Rockledge Elementary School is a comprehensive Pre-K-5 school which achieved the Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education (EGATE) status from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in 2013. It is located at 7701 Laurel Bowie Road in Bowie, Maryland, a city located between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore. Bowie is a suburban community and our boundary area consists of mostly single family homes. Bowie Town Center, Bowie State University, and the Bowie Baysox minor league baseball team are located nearby. Bowie is an incorporated city whose government provides strong support for the local schools.

**Student Enrollment and Subgroup Information**

- As of August 5, 2013 the enrollment was 364 students
- 2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 60% African American, 1% Hawaiian Island/Pacific Islander, 3% Asian, 9% Hispanic, and 23% White
- 16% of students are in Special Education, 9% are English as a Second Language learners (ESOL), and 16% are in the gifted program (TAG)
- 41% of students are in the Free and Reduced Meals (FARM) program
- Males comprise 50% of the student body and females 50%

**Staff Experience and Certification**

- Highly Qualified Teachers – 100%
- Administration – 1 Principal
- Certified Early Childhood Teachers (K-3) – 100%
- Certified Elementary Teachers (1-5) – 100%
- Certified Special Education Teachers – 100%
- Number of Teachers with Advanced Professional Certification – 16 teachers
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- Number of Teachers with Standard Certification – 5 teachers
- 1 – 5 Years of Experience: 2 teachers
  6 – 10 Years of Experience: 4 teachers
  11 – 15 Years of Experience: 5 teachers
  16 or more Years of Experience: 11 teachers

School Improvement Status
Rockledge Elementary is NOT a Title I school.

Feeder Patterns
Our students feed into our school from a variety of settings. Our Pre-Kindergarten services students who come from the Whitehall, Rockledge, Yorktown, Kenilworth, and Tulip Grove boundary areas. Those students who live in our boundary area continue on to Kindergarten here at Rockledge. Some entering Kindergarten students attend preschool at private schools and centers in the community. An increasing number of our entering Kindergarten students have no previous formal school experience and have been cared for at home or in-home daycares. The middle school Rockledge feeds into Samuel Ogle Middle School and Bowie High School.

Schools with Similar Needs
Tulip Grove Elementary School and Heather Hills Elementary School are two schools in the Bowie area with needs similar to ours.

Shared Resources
Rockledge shares a media specialist, guidance counselor, instrumental music teacher, speech pathologist, and Leveled Literacy Intervention teacher with other area schools.

C. Environmental Scan (Climate for Learning)
We have made great strides with our Talented and Gifted (TAG) in the Regular Classroom program. The structure of this program places clusters of gifted students in general education classrooms which allows for all students and teachers to access TAG best practices including compacting, acceleration, enrichment, independent research opportunities, and critical thinking activities. These practices have been effective in addressing the needs of our gifted learners. Our TAG students are meeting with great success based on Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA), Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), Formative Assessment System Test (FAST), and Maryland School Assessment (MSA) data. On the May 2013 SRI, our TAG students performed at Proficient or Advanced levels at the following percentages: 2nd grade – 88%, 3rd grade – 100%, 4th grade – 100%, and 5th grade – 100%. The overall percentages of students performing at Proficient or Advanced levels were as follows: 2nd grade – 75%, 3rd grade – 85%, 4th grade – 78%, and 5th grade – 90%. Our work with gifted education was recognized by MSDE through the Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education (EGATE) award during the 2012 – 2013 school year.

The staff felt that it was a challenge to operate without a guidance counselor during the 2012 – 2013 school year. This position was not purchased based on the limited funding for the school budget. The staff felt that the guidance counselor position was necessary in order to support
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students who were facing challenges. It was also felt that the loss of guidance lessons (based around character education and social skills development) for the entire student body was a detriment. Based on these observations, the staff felt that it was important to fund this position with our School Based Budget funds for the 2013 – 2014 school year. The guidance counselor will provide monthly lessons in each classroom focusing on the Student Code of Conduct, character education, and social skills development.

Another challenge identified by the staff is the increased need for targeted technology instruction in order to meet the increased demands of the Common Core State Standards and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment. The staff felt that increasing to two full-time paraprofessional positions would allow for an increased focus on technology skills as well as additional intervention work with targeted students in and out of the classroom to increase student achievement.

During school year 2013 all students met the annual measurable objectives for reading and mathematics in grades three through five and in science in grade five. On the MSA, 89.1% of all students in mathematics scored proficient or advanced, which exceeded the expected target of 88.8%. The highest performing subgroup was Hispanic (89.7%) and the lowest performing subgroup was the FARMS subgroup (86.6%). There is a gap between the Hispanic and FARMS subgroups. Therefore, we will address the needs of the FARMS subgroup in mathematics in order to ensure high student achievement. The strategies we will use are flexible grouping, manipulative tools, and technology integration. Our expected goal for school year 2014 is 92%.

On the MSA, 92.5% of all students in reading scored proficient or advanced, which exceeded the expected target of 85.1%. The highest performing subgroup was African American (91.7%) and the lowest performing subgroup was the FARMS subgroup (88.2%). There is a gap between the African American subgroup and the FARMS subgroup. Therefore, we will address the needs of the FARMS subgroup in reading in order to ensure high student achievement. The strategy we will use is differentiated learning opportunities. Our expected goal for school year 2014 is 95%.

For school year 2013, grade five students were administered the MSA in science. On this assessment, 73.2% of all students scored proficient or advanced. The highest performing subgroup was African American (69.6%) and the lowest performing subgroup was the FARMS subgroup (69%). There is a gap between the African American and FARMS subgroups. Therefore, we will address the needs of the FARMS subgroup in science in order to ensure high student achievement. The strategy we will use is implementing project-based learning activities. Our expected goal for school year 2014 is 76%.

Reading performance in the primary grades was gauged by the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). In Kindergarten, 100% of students were Advanced as measured by performance on the May 2013 DRA. In grade one, 76% of students were Advanced as measured by performance on the May 2013 DRA. In grade two, 20% of students scored Advanced on the SRI administered in May 2013.

D. Major Strategies for Increased Student Achievement
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1. In order to significantly improve student proficiency levels in Mathematics for Limited English Proficiency, Special Education, and Free and Reduced Meals students, teachers will differentiate instruction by using flexible grouping, manipulative tools, and technology integration.
   a. Implement the Four Star Math Generals program. The targeted math skills will be differentiated by ability and grade level. The program will be used to challenge and keep students enthused about their basic facts and problem solving skills.
   b. Utilize the IXL online math program for differentiated practice with concepts and basic facts.
   c. Deliver differentiated mathematics instruction in small flexible groups utilizing manipulative tools. The focus will be on: operations and algebraic thinking, number and operations in base ten, fractions, measurement, data, geometry, and basic facts.
   d. Engage in professional development in the following Common Core topics: Standards of Mathematical Practice, Elementary Level Shifts, TAG best practices that support the transition to Common Core, and Understanding By Design unit lessons.
   e. Write and monitor Student Learning Objectives (SLOs).

2. In order to significantly improve student proficiency levels in Reading/English Language Arts for Limited English Proficiency, Special Education, and Free and Reduced Meals students teachers will differentiate instructional opportunities.
   a. Guide students in applying the argumentative writing strategies (Consume, Critique, Produce) to independently produce quality responses to prompts and written pieces of work.
   b. Engage students in daily, differentiated, small group guided reading instruction during the Reading/Language Arts block.
   c. Differentiate daily instructions using learning centers, technology, accountable talk, written responses, additional small group instruction, and I Station.
   d. Deliver Reading/Language Arts instruction with specific areas of focus: Writing Process (Personal Narrative, Descriptive Writing and Poetry), use of graphic aids, word work, phonics, reading strategy/skills.
   e. Engage in professional development in the following Common Core areas: Exploration of Text Complexity, Close Reading and Text Dependent Questions, Lesson Alignment, and Argumentative Writing.
   f. Apply strategies learned through the Reading Detectives and Notice & Note: Strategies for Close Reading book study.
   g. Write and monitor Student Learning Objectives (SLOs).

3. In order to significantly improve student proficiency levels in STEM for Limited English Proficiency, Special Education, and Free and Reduced Meals students, teachers will implement project-based learning activities.
   a. Infuse lessons with activities which are inquiry-based and designed to enhance students’ problem-solving skills including at least one STEM activity per quarter
   b. Facilitate student participation in STEM Fair projects
   c. Provide students with feedback before, during and after projects/experiments.
   d. Use Discovery Education to enrich concepts in STEM
   e. Infuse art using the Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) approach in daily instruction
   f. Engage in professional development on topics related to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) including STEM Best Practices.
   g. Write and monitor Student Learning Objectives (SLOs).
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4. In order to significantly improve in Parent Engagement/Community Involvement, the school will provide school-based opportunities for students and families.
   a. Continue to plan community and school-based activities for students and families in the community.
   b. Facilitate PTA Meetings the first Tuesday of every month.
   c. Assist the PTA in continuing to share with parents the benefits of being a member of the PTA to assist in bringing a variety of opportunities and activities to the students.
   d. Implement a parent volunteer program
   e. Hold parent information nights on a variety of topics

5. In order to significantly improve college and career readiness, the school will provide resources and opportunities for the students to explore various careers.
   a. Sponsor a Career Day with an emphasis on careers in science, math, arts, and humanities.
   b. Facilitate student completion of Personal Education Plans for all students in grades one and four.
   c. Provide students with information throughout the school year related to careers in all curriculum areas, inviting guests when possible.
   d. Sponsor a College Week to promote college readiness for students.
   e. Partner with middle schools for articulation activities.

6. In order to significantly improve the performance of TAG students, teachers will differentiate instructional opportunities.
   a. Engage in quarterly independent research projects on topics of personal interest.
   b. Utilize compacting and acceleration to ensure all are working at appropriate levels
   c. Participate in professional development on the Jacob's Ladder curriculum and connections between TAG best practices and the shift to common core
   d. Participate in monthly “TAG Tuesdays” professional development opportunities in order to increase skills in addressing the needs of gifted learners and develop/create materials for use in the classrooms

E. Climate and Culture

The Rockledge staff and students enjoy a positive, creative, and orderly environment. There were twenty suspensions during the 2012 – 2013 school year; eleven students accounted for this total number of suspensions. Our goal is to provide our students with the tools necessary to display appropriate social skills. The staff has developed student guidelines and included them in the Student/Family Handbook. Prevention is our approach. Our staff supports these efforts in their interactions with the children. Parents are important partners in our approach to supporting the children in making good choices. The Code of Student Conduct is introduced in August and reviewed in January. This communication between home and school assists everyone in addressing each student's needs. While suspensions and referrals are infrequent, data is analyzed each quarter and at SBMT.

Attendance
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Attendance is monitored daily. We continue to exceed the state standards in attendance. Each day during the afternoon announcements, classes with 100% attendance are recognized. The importance of attendance and being on time are stressed in our bi-weekly newsletter and on the morning television show, WROC. Phone calls using the School Communication System are made daily to the parents of absent and tardy students. The Attendance Committee also provides letters with dates when a student has been absent or tardy when these rates reach 20% of the school days in month. Letters requesting conferences are sent to the parents of students who have poor attendance in order to lend support in any way possible.

F. Parent Involvement/Community Engagement

The staff of Rockledge Elementary strives to develop and maintain effective partnerships with parents and community members. A number of approaches to creating this engagement are taken. The staff facilitates PTA meetings the first Tuesday of every month. They assist the PTA in continuing to share with parents the benefits of being a member of the PTA to assist in bringing a variety of opportunities and activities to the students. Parents and community members are encouraged to volunteer to assist at school, including both special events and routine classroom activities. The Rockledge staff plans community and school-based activities for students and families in the community. The events specifically aimed towards parents include parent information nights on topics such as TAG, math/reading strategies, and STEM Fair as well as opportunities for families and community members to share their opinions (Chat and Chew) and learn more about how to support students and the school (Men Make a Difference Day).

G. School Governance/Management System

How decisions are made:

At the end of the 2012-2013 school year, a survey was sent out to staff members to get their feedback on various systems put in place for the school year such as the school wide discipline plan, collaborative planning, arrival/dismissal procedures, master schedule, Perfect Attendance Incentive, professional development needs, and AM/PM duties. This data will be used to improve the overall climate, academic program, and standard operating procedures specifically pertaining to the master schedule and best practices. Grade Level Chairs were asked to create a “Wish List” of items needed for classroom instruction. Staff members were given an end of year feedback form where they were able to indicate their top three choices of grade levels they would like to teach, committees of which they would like to be a part, and professional development needed. In addition, PTA and SBMT meetings will continue to be the avenues by which parent and community partners have input into the decision making process.

How information is shared:

We have an “open door” policy for teachers to discuss issues. A Google calendar shared with all staff members serves as a master calendar of school events. There is also a large master calendar found in the conference room. Information is disseminated to Community Stakeholders through emails, bi-weekly newsletters, and the School Communication System. In addition, staff members are informed of events occurring in the building through the Friday updates email, school wide calendar, and the weekly updates email (generally sent on Mondays). A Friday “TGIF” email is sent to recognize extra efforts made by staff members.
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H. Specific meeting dates for SBMT:

The Rockledge School Budget and Management Team (SBMT) uses the School Strategic Plan to guide instructional discussions and decisions. The principal will be the plan manager for this year with assistance from the persons designated as responsible and the chairperson(s) of the SBMT. A copy of the SSP for 2013-2014 will be distributed for review to all staff members in September. At the October 2013 meeting, team members will review the Quarterly Benchmark Targets for the first quarter, record data used to determine activity effectiveness, address any barriers or obstacles found to inhibit activity implementation, and changes made to the SIP based on collected data. Modifications to existing activities will be based on feedback from SBMT. At the monthly SBMT meeting, team representatives will report on pacing, assessment results, and intervention plans. Feedback will go to all stakeholders through representatives' reports and minutes from the meetings. This process will continue each quarter. The SBMT will meet on the following dates in the 2013-2014 school year: September 18, October 16, November 20, December 18, January 15, February 19, March 19, April 16, and May 21. The means by which all stakeholders, parents and community members will receive information discussed at SBMT meetings are as follows: email, Google sites, staff meetings, bi-weekly e-newsletter, PTA meetings and school website.