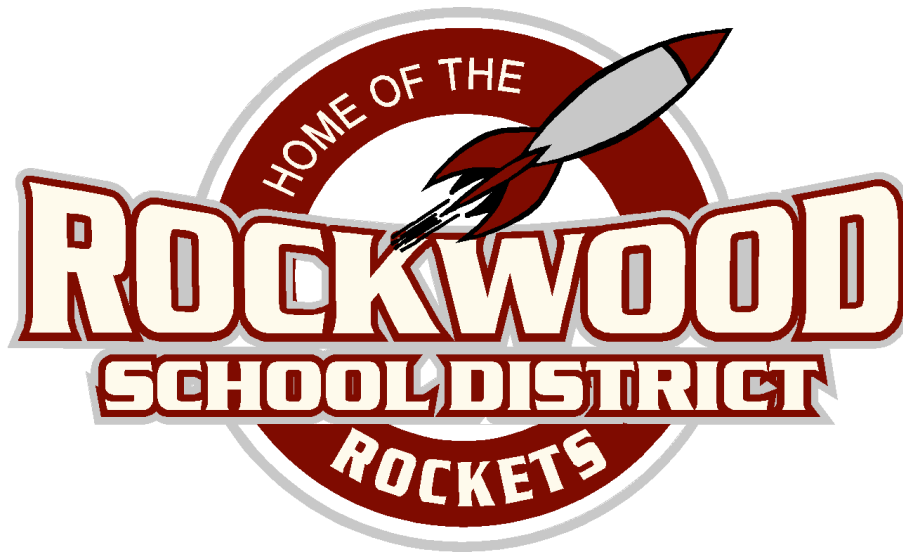


Rockwood Area  
School District



PRE-KINDERGARTEN  
PLAN

2023-24

## *Reasoning and Rationale:*

The Rockwood Area School District is focused on establishing a PreK program to serve all children that reach the age of four by September 1st, 2023. This PreK program will be developed in partnership with Somerset Tableland Services. The classrooms will focus on academic growth, social interactions, positive behavior, and developing routines related to school success. Tableland will offer a classroom through the PA PreK Counts grant with an estimated enrollment of 10 to 15 students. The Rockwood Area School District will offer a District funded classroom with 10 to 20 students. PreK classrooms will be located at the Rockwood Area Elementary School.

Pre-Kindergarten instruction within the Rockwood Area School District is nonexistent at this time. Child care within the 147 square miles of the District is also hard to find for all families. Over the past twenty years, Pre-K has been provided by Ignite Learning Solutions and Tableland Services. This PreK program has been funded by the PA PreK Counts Grant. This funding source only allows for children from low-income families to be enrolled. The Rockwood Area School District Board of Directors, administration, faculty, and staff believe that all families within the District should be afforded the opportunity for their children to attend a PreK program. This program provides another opportunity for the District to serve the taxpaying residents of the District.

## *Mission Statement:*

The Mission of the Rockwood Area School District is to empower students to reach their full potential as well-rounded, lifelong learners and responsible members of society.

## *Goals:*

The goals of PreK education are to have an active partnership between the family and the school to develop the social, intellectual, physical, and emotional skills necessary for the success of children.

## *Objectives:*

- The program will provide activities that foster meaningful interaction between teachers, parents, their children, and others.
- The program and the environment will be structured to develop the individuality, creativity, and thinking skills of each child based on the Early Learning Standards.
- The program will provide the structure, environment, and modeling necessary for preschool children to acquire age-appropriate social skills.
- The program will develop each child's skills that encourage good health habits, personal responsibility, and safety awareness.
- The program will develop each child's skills to encourage independence, self-worth, confidence, and self-control.

## *The School Day:*

The Rockwood Area School District PreK program will operate five days a week and offer learning opportunities from 7:45 am to 2:51 pm each day. PreK will operate on the same schedule as the RASD. Throughout the school day, students will experience activities through active play and lessons focused on literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and social/emotional learning. Lunch, recess, nap time, and fine motor activities will also be part of the daily activities for PreK students.

## *Classroom:*

The Rockwood Area School District PreK classroom will be housed in the Rockwood Area Elementary School building next to the Tableland Services PreK and the District Kindergarten Classrooms. The classroom will be developed to support academic growth while encouraging exploration of content, community, active play, and the development of social skills and positive school behaviors.

The classroom will be staffed by a certified early childhood educator and at minimum one classroom paraprofessional to support up to 20 students enrolled in the program. These staff members will support the goals and objectives of the program with a "student first" focus.

The environment of the classroom will be positive and supportive of all students and families. Active learning and developmentally appropriate learning experiences will be the focus of the staff supporting the students within the Pre-K Program.

## *Curriculum:*

The curriculum that will be used in this classroom will be Teaching Strategies, Learning without Tears, and Second Step Social and Emotional Learning resources. Assessments of the program will include Ages and Stages assessments within the first 45 days of enrollment.

### **Teaching Strategies:**

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, Guided Edition is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that features inquiry, exploration, and discovery as the foundation of all learning.

As a content-rich, developmentally appropriate curriculum, it delivers academic rigor alongside social-emotional development and cognitive development. And, it brings meaningful interactions and learning to life in the classroom.

### **Learning without Tears:**

This curriculum program supports students' emergent skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. The curriculum is developmentally and age-appropriate for students in PreK. Learning without Tears supports learning through hands-on activities that motivate students to learn and support teacher assessment of skills development.

### **Second Step Social and Emotional Learning:**

Helps our littlest learners harness their energy and potential by teaching them to:

- Listen
- Pay attention
- Manage their behavior
- Get along with others

This program consists of five units: 1) Skills for Learning, 2) Empathy, 3) Emotional Management, 4) Friendship Skills and Problem Solving, 5) Transitioning to Kindergarten.

Lead teachers will be trained in the use of adopted curriculum resources to assure fidelity and implementation. The curriculum will support learning related to English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, unified arts, and social/emotional learning. The curriculum should connect with standards for early learning and Kindergarten readiness. The Rockwood Elementary instructional techniques include exploration of content through hands-on learning and small group instruction. Learning through play is also an approach that is needed for children of Pre-K age. The instructional time within the classroom will support child lead discovery of concepts. Teachers will facilitate learning opportunities through activities. The use of a variety of instructional strategies, and learning experiences, while providing a minimal amount of teacher-directed learning will be implemented to support the building of academic, social, emotional, and kinesthetic learning. The implementation of authentic learning is also important at this age. Lead teachers and administrators will plan classroom visits by local professionals and other community members to tie curriculum content to real experiences. This may include visits related to careers, academics, and community organizations. Assessments of the program will include participation in any PDE-conducted training related to assessments, Ages and Stages assessments within the first 45 days of enrollment, vision, hearing, and health screenings will be conducted as required. Lead teachers will develop lessons that are based on Early Learning standards.

## *Assessment:*

Assessment within the PreK program takes place through a number of different avenues. Student learning will be assessed through classroom activities, assignments, student performance, and teacher observations. Student learning and social skills will be monitored by the classroom teacher. Assessments of the program will include Ages and Stages assessments within the first 45 days of enrollment.

Assessments of the program will include participation in any PDE-conducted training related to assessments, Ages and Stages assessments within the first 45 days of enrollment, vision, hearing, and health screenings will be conducted as required. Lead teachers will develop lessons that are based on Early Learning standards.

### **Ages and Stages:**

Used to accurately identify children who may be at risk for developmental delays. Designed to encourage parent involvement and education. This assessment supports academic growth, and fine and gross motor skills development. The assessment support parent information related to progress and normed outcomes.

## *Screenings:*

Vision, hearing, and health screenings will be conducted as required. These screenings will be conducted by the RASD nurse.

## *Behavior Philosophy:*

Rockwood Area School District Behavior, Discipline, and Student Conduct Policies will be the foundation of behavior management within the PreK Program.

The Rockwood Area School District understands that expulsion is the complete and permanent removal of a child from an early childhood program because of challenging behavior or non-infectious health condition. Suspension is an action that is administered as a consequence of a child's inappropriate behavior and requires that a child is not present in the classroom or the program for a specified period of time (Morrison & Skiba, 2001).

All of the following actions are included in this definition of suspension:

1. Excluding a child from the classroom, whether by placing him/her in another part of the building, or excluding the child from the building;
2. Sending a child home early or limiting the number of hours per day (s)he can attend; or
3. Un-enrolling a child because (s)he is "not a good fit" with the program. A child engaged in learning supports positive behaviors in the learning environment.

The Rockwood Area School District will implement social and emotional lessons to develop and set behavioral standards within the PA PKC Classrooms. Modeling and supporting positive behaviors will be the focus of the Social and Emotional curriculum. The Guidance Counselor and School Social Worker will be included in supporting student behaviors. The use of behavior management, daily check-ins, behavior plans, and early intervention supports will be used to support students demonstrating behavioral needs.

Students that receive early intervention services may not be excluded from the program for significant proportions of the program. Early intervention services must be scheduled to support regular attendance and behavioral support. The importance of parent engagement and communication of any social, emotional, or behavioral needs of a child is paramount. Parents/guardians will be included in open communications related to support and or discipline required related to behaviors. Helping families advocate for their child's needs will be part of this process. The Rockwood Area School District's policies and procedures related to discipline will be followed with the PA PKC program. These policies and procedures will be communicated to families of enrolled students. Referrals to outside services such as Children's Behavioral Health, Youth Advocacy Program, and other outside services will be completed for students in need of support. Collaborative relationships with these agencies and

the Early Intervention program through the Appalachian Intermediate Unit 8. The Rockwood Area Elementary Administrative team will manage behaviors of concern and engage families in developing positive support.

## *Parent/Family Engagement:*

The Rockwood Area Elementary School is a Title I school that holds family engagement activities throughout the school year. These events include Parent Teacher Conferences, information-sharing sessions, and events that promote family inclusion. Parent meetings will be held every other month. Child progress reports will be sent home monthly and when assessments are completed. Assessment information will be reviewed with parents by the lead teacher or another staff member.

## *Early Intervention:*

All services related to psychological and guidance support will be offered through the Rockwood Area School District and the Appalachia IU8. The Appalachia IU8 will provide all intervention services within the school day. These services will include speech, OT, PT, and other required services.

The Rockwood Area School District's policies and procedures related to discipline will be followed with the PA PKC program. These policies and procedures will be communicated to families of enrolled students. Referrals to outside services such as Children's Behavioral Health, Youth Advocacy Program, and other outside services will be completed for students in need of support. Collaborative relationships with these agencies and the Early Intervention program through the Appalachian Intermediate Unit 8. The Rockwood Area Elementary Administrative team will manage behaviors of concern and engage families in developing positive support.

## *Safety and Transportation:*

Students will participate in all required safety drills within the Rockwood Area Elementary building. The safety drills will include fire, tornado, safety evacuation, I'm Not Scare, I'm Prepared lessons, bus evacuations, and other appropriate drills. Children enrolled in the PA PKC program will arrive on District transportation between 7:45 am and be dismissed between 2:30 and 2:51 pm to go home.

## *Budget:*

Budget Expenditures	Budget Amount	Description
<b>1. Child Health Dev. Staff Salaries</b>	<b>\$38,364.66</b>  Currently in Budget	The funds identified for this budget item accounts for \$38364.66 of salary for Lead Teachers within the RASD PA program. These funds will be split between two lead teachers supporting blended collaborative classrooms. This salary will aid in the retention of staff as it is regionally competitive.
<b>1a. Child Health &amp; Dev Benefits</b>	<b>\$33,041.00</b>  Currently in Budget	The funds identified for this budget item accounts for \$33041 in benefits for Lead Teachers within the RASD PreK program. Benefits include health care, dental, vision, social security, retirement, and state and local. These benefits are regionally competitive.
<b>8. Contracted Services</b>	<b>\$16,000</b>  Currently in Budget	The funds identified for this budget item accounts for \$14,000 of salary for a Pre K Counts Classroom Aide. These funds will fully fund a Classroom Aides supporting blended collaborative classrooms. This salary will aid in retention of staff as it is regionally competitive. Classroom Aides will spend up to 7.5 hours with students each day supporting learning and social activities. This also includes the administrative fee through Ignite Learning Solutions.



<p><b>5. Supplies for Program Purposes</b></p>	<p><b>Teaching Strategies = (2YRS) \$5,904.60</b></p> <p><b>Learning W/O Tears = \$2,497.49</b></p> <p><b>Second Step SEL = \$700.00</b></p> <p><b>Total = \$9,102.09</b></p>	<p><b>Teaching Strategies, Learning without Tears and Second Step SEL curriculum for Pre-K classroom. These curriculums covers all early learning standards and supports social and emotional learning.</b></p>
<p><b>5. Supplies for Program Purposes</b></p>	<p><b>\$25,725.86</b></p>	<p><b>Funds used to purchase educational supplies for classroom to support active learning, student lead explorative learning, and resources to support requirements by PDE. These funds would also be used to purchase classroom furniture and other hardware to support classroom instruction and needs of children.</b></p>
<p><b>9. Training &amp; Staff Development</b></p>	<p><b>\$12,000.00</b></p>	<p><b>Funds used to purchase training and staff development for PreK staff as required by PDE. Also used for Substitutes to cover the classrooms while the staff is training</b></p>
<p><b>7. Nutritional Services</b></p>	<p><b>\$5,500.00</b></p> <p><b>Estimated Cost of \$7,000 for lunches if PrK not included in CEP - Cafeteria Fund.</b></p>	<p><b>These funds would be used to supply a daily snack to all Pre-K Children enrolled in the RASD Program. The Rockwood Area School District currently qualifies for the CEP meal program. Breakfast and lunch would be provided to students free of cost to families and the District.</b></p>
<p><b>5. Supplies for Program Purposes</b></p>	<p><b>\$1,000.00</b></p>	<p><b>Purchase of Ages and Stages (ASQ-3) and Social Emotional Screener (ASQ:SE-2) for screening purposes for children enrolled within the RASD PA PKC Program. This screening is</b></p>

		preferred
<b>5a. Supplies for Mgmt. Purposes</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>	<b>ECERS-3 will be used to to evaluate the PA PKC Program educational environment. This assessment is recommended by the PA-PKC Regulations and Guidance. The ECERS-3 assessment materials will include workbooks and materials to train administrators in the use of the assessment. The data gathered from this assessment will be used to develop and adjust the RASD PA PKC Continuous Quality Improvement Plan. Materials will be purchased through Teacher's College Press.</b>
<b>91. Student Transportation</b>	<b>\$23,000.00</b>  <b>Already included in Budget</b>	<b>Funds will be used to provide transportation for PA PKC students on District transportation and to learning activities off campus. Transportation for student field trips to local learning activiites connected to curriculum is included in this cost.</b>
<b>7e. Utilities &amp; Telephone</b>	<b>\$5,685.00</b>  <b>Already Included in Budget</b>	<b>The funds listed in this budgetary expense are for the utility and phone costs associated with 20 PA PKC enrolled students. 20 PA PKC students would represent 3% of the student population in the Rockwood Area School District. Utility costs are based off of the 2023-24 budgetary amounts for these expenses. The utilities included are Phone – \$16,000 3% = \$480 Coal – \$35,000 3% = \$1050 Propane – \$13,500 3% = \$405 Electric – \$100,000 3% = \$3000 Water – \$25,000 3% = \$750</b>

<p><b>4. Other Program Salaries</b></p>	<p><b>\$4,602.24</b></p> <p><b>Already included in the budget</b></p>	<p>The funds listed in this budgetary expense are for 3% of the salaries for the School Nurse, K-6 Guidance Counselor, and the School Social Worker supporting 20 PA PKC enrolled students. 20 PA PKC students would represent 3% of the student population in the Rockwood Area School District. Salaries are based off of the 2023-24 Collective Bargaining Agreement for the School Nurse, K-6 Guidance Counselor, and the Act 93 Agreement for the School Social Worker. School Social Worker: Salary – \$60,316.00 3% = \$1809.48 K-6 Guidance Counselor: Salary – \$51,868.00 3% = \$1556.04 School Nurse: Salary – \$41,224.00 3% = \$1236.72</p>
<p><b>4a. Other Program Benefits</b></p>	<p><b>\$4,039.26</b></p> <p><b>Already included in the Budget</b></p>	<p>The funds listed in this budgetary expense are for 3% of benefits for the School Nurse, K-6 Guidance Counselor, and the School Social Worker supporting 20 PA PKC enrolled students. 20 PA PKC students would represent 3% of the student population in the Rockwood Area School District. Benefits are based off of the 2023-24 Collective Bargaining Agreement for the School Nurse, K-6 Guidance Counselor, and the Act 93 Agreement for the School Social Worker. School Social Worker: Benefits - \$48,109 3% = \$1443.27 K-6 Guidance Counselor: Benefits - \$44963 3% = \$1348.89 School Nurse: Benefits - \$41570 3% = \$1247.10</p>
<p><b>7a. Parent Services</b></p>	<p><b>\$3,000.00</b></p>	<p>The funds listed in this budgetary expense category will be used to support school-based and after-school activities that provide services to parents to support their child's development, social-emotional</p>

		<p>learning, and academic progress. These funds will be used to purchase presentations from local organizations or to hold events that support family engagement.</p>
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**\$188,260.11 to establish and run the program in 2023-24**

**\$124,732.16 already budgeted in the 2023-24 school year**

**Recurring cost for the program could be estimated at \$200,000 per year.**

### *Partnership Program with Tableland Services:*

To provide services to all students age 4 as of September 1st each year, the Rockwood Area School District may decide to support District funded seats within the Tableland classroom. The classroom may hold up to 20 students with a Lead Teacher and Classroom paraprofessional in place and actively supporting students. Tableland Services will provide 10 to 15 Pre-K Counts seats in the classroom. The RASD may fund up to 10 seats to fill the classrooms with students and provide more opportunities for students and families within the District. The expected cost per child would be estimated at \$10,000 per student enrolled in this classroom.

The estimated expense for this partnership to enable 5 to 10 more students to attend PreK would be \$100,000 per year.