



2023-2024 Equity Plan

Parents, administration, and teachers working together to provide equitable and supportive instruction to all students!

Updated August 2023

Rockwood School District Equity Plan 2023-2024

The Rockwood School District's Equity Plan includes the following information:

1. Pennsylvania's definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher.
2. Equity information with school data on the following:
 - a. District/School accountability status.
 - b. District/School poverty percentage.
 - c. District/School minority percentage.
 - d. Teachers' HQT status.
 - e. Teachers' experience percentage.
3. A general summary of results.
4. A general summary of core academic subject teaching areas that are difficult to fill with highly qualified teachers.
5. A description of Rockwood's process to ensure that the poor and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced, unqualified, and/or out-of-the-field teachers.
6. Process of how success is determined.

1. Pennsylvania's Definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher

To satisfy the definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher in the state of Pennsylvania, a teacher must

- a) Hold a least a bachelor's degree:
- b) Hold a valid Pennsylvania Teaching Certificate (i.e. Instructional I, Instructional II, or Intern certificate but **not an emergency permit**; and
- c) Demonstrate subject matter competency for the core content area they teach.

Core content areas include English, Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Foreign Language, Music, Art, Phys. Ed., Library Science, and Social Studies (history, economics, geography, and civics/government).

Districts may apply to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for emergency permits in these areas if a highly qualified teacher cannot be employed to fill the vacancy.

2. Equity Information with School Data

District Information: The first table presents data for the Rockwood Area School District. This data includes the percentage of low-income students (based on free/reduced lunch data), the percentage of minority students, the percentage of HQT, the percentage of teacher experience (< or > three years), and the District's accountability status.

The Rockwood Elementary is a Title I School. The students in this building have met growth requirements on the PSSA tests. The faculty, staff, and administration

RASD	% of Poverty	% of Minority	% of HQT	% > three years	% < three years	AYP Status 2011-2012
Totals	73.2% 429/586	3.4% (20)	100%	95% (53/56)	5% (3/56)	Met AYP 18-19
586 Students enrolled as of July 2023						

Jr./Sr. High School Information: The second table presents data for the Rockwood Area Jr./Sr High School. This data includes the percentage of low-income students (based on free/reduced lunch data), the percentage of minority Sight students, the percentage of HQT, the percentage of teacher experience (< or > three years), and the school's accountability status.

Rockwood Jr./Sr. High	% of Poverty	% of Minority	% of HQT	% > three years	% < three years	AYP Status 2011-2012
Totals	74.3% (224/296)	4.39% (13)	100%	92% (26/28)	8% (2/28)	Warning
296 Students enrolled as of July 2023						

Rockwood Elementary Information: The third table presents data for the Rockwood Area Elementary School. This data includes the percentage of low-income students (based on free/reduced lunch data), the percentage of minority students, the percentage of HQT, the percentage of teacher experience (< or > three years), and the school's accountability status.

RASD	% of Poverty	% of Minority	% of HQT	% > three years	% < three years	AYP Status 2011-2012
Totals	70.6% (205/290)	2.4% (7)	100%	93% (27/28)	7% (1/28)	Met AYP
290 Students enrolled as of July 2023						

The fourth table presents data for the two buildings showing the number and percentage of teachers using an emergency permit, the number of core teachers per building, and the percentage of core teachers experience (< or > three years) in each building.

	Core Teachers	All Teachers	Number of Teachers with Emergency Certificate	Percentage of Teachers with Emergency Certificate	Core Teachers Experience > three years	Core Teachers Experience < three years
Rockwood JR/SR High	29	29	0	0%	92%	8%
Rockwood Elementary	28	28	0	0%	93%	7%

3. General Summary of Findings

- The Rockwood Area School District is a rural district in Somerset County with a total enrollment of just under 600 students in Kindergarten through 12th grade. The District is made up of the following two buildings: Rockwood Elementary which serves students in Kindergarten through 6th grade with an enrollment of slightly less than 300, and the Rockwood Jr./Sr. High School which serves grades 7 through 12 with an enrollment of around 300 students.
- The District’s poverty level is in the low to mid 70% based on free and reduced lunch rates.
- For the 2023-24 school year, there are 0 teachers (0%) that are working with an emergency certificate.
- Over 90% of the District’s teachers have more than 3 year of teaching experience with around 10% having less than 3 years of teaching experience.
- The District has three trained and certified ESL teachers, two in the elementary and one in the Jr./Sr. High.

4. Academic Subject Area Difficult to Fill with Highly Qualified Teachers

For the 2022-23 school year, all core subject teaching positions are filled with Highly qualified teachers or teachers of record. The District has had the greatest difficulty filling secondary-level math, science, foreign languages, and special education positions. This stems from the certification requirements from PDE and the adjustments to certification levels. The RASD uses the website to advertise openings as well as local newspapers for recruiting purposes. The RASD salary scale and starting salary are highly competitive with regional norms.

5. Strategies to Ensure a 100% Highly Qualified Staff and Equal Distribution of Experienced and Inexperienced Teachers among Students Regardless of Economic or Ethnic Background

The District is currently implementing the following strategies to ensure that our staff remains 100% highly qualified and that the economically disadvantaged and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced teachers:

1. Advertising

The Rockwood Area School District currently advertises for vacant teaching positions in the following manner:

- In the Somerset Daily American
- In the Johnstown Tribune-Democrat
- In the Penn Links
- On the District website

2. Professional Development:

- The Rockwood Area School District uses District funds to provide professional development opportunities for its staff.
- The Rockwood Area School District provides training and workshops to strengthen teacher knowledge in content areas and instructional strategies.
- The Rockwood School District has a mentoring program that all new teachers to the District without tenure must complete during their first year of service within the District.
- The Rockwood School District will make provisions to provide a mentor in any core subject area for an untenured teacher where there is an unequal or lower rate of inexperienced teachers until the rates are equal or higher in that grade or subject area. Teacher mentors will be required to keep logs of mentor meetings held.

The low District minority rate, slightly high poverty rate, and the fact that the District has only one elementary and one Jr./Sr. high school limits what can be done regarding the distribution of our inexperienced teachers.

6. Individual Professional Development Plan

In the event the District is in a position in which a non-highly qualified teacher would be hired, an Individual Professional Development Plan (Appendix A) would be initiated.

7. Measuring Success

Success will be measured by maintaining the Rockwood Area School District’s highly qualified teacher percentage at/or as close to 100% as possible. The Rockwood School District will also monitor the distribution of the teaching staff with experience equally among all grade levels as well as work to limit the use of emergency certificates.

8. Future Strategies

- Expand the advertising for available teaching positions to include the Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and other large newspapers.
- Expand involvement with the student-teacher programs at the local colleges and universities.
- Identify/track local high school students who have an interest in a teaching career.
- Attend job fairs or other recruiting fairs.
- Work to continue to align District hiring, induction, supervision, and professional development plans.

Rockwood Jr./Sr. High Teaching Staff 2022-2023

Name	Area	Years teaching in the RASD	Years Teaching	Highly Qualified
1. Juliann Picklo	Art/Yearbook	1	3	100%
2. Amber Walker	Business Education/Computer	21	21	100%
3. Doug Spiri	Chorus	18	18	100%
4. Jill Morgan	English	20	20	100%
5. Open	Foreign Language/French			100%
6. Andrea Minor	Foreign Language/Spanish	20	20	100%
7. Carlee Glessner	Health/Physical Education	5	5	100%
8. Chandler Enos	Health/Physical Education	2	2	100%
9. Kristi Brant	Home Economics	11	11	100%
10. Joseph Kush	Technology and Engineering	15	20	100%
11. Kari Hostetter	Instrumental Music	5	5	100%
12. Cassie Wright	Learning Support	11	12	100%

13. Roni Langley-Burkardt	Learning Support	9	12	100%
14. Christy Hay	Librarian	16	19	100%
15. Megan Berkebile	Life Skills	3	3	100%
16. Gregory King	Mathematics/Computers	37	37	100%
17. Alana Letizia	Mathematics	15	15	100%
18. Sarah Pletcher	Mathematics	20	22	100%
19. Kathleen Lambert	Mathematics	4	5	100%
20. Misty Thompson	Science	16	16	100%
21. Leanna Weimer	Science	10	16	100%
22. Kurt Woolslayer	Science	17	33	100%
23. Connor Pielmeier	Social Studies	1	1	100%
24. James Wagner	Social Studies	20	24	100%
25. Jeremy Romesberg	English/Reading	4	6	100%
26. Nathan Formica	Social Studies	3	3	100%
27. Alison Schultz	English	2	3	100%
28. Brooke Kroon	Special Education	5	10	100%

Rockwood Elementary Teaching Staff 2022-2023

Name	Area	Years teaching in the RASD	Years Teaching	Highly Qualified
Olivia Latuch	Pre-K	3	3	100%
New Pre-K	Pre-K			
Kelsey Pletcher	Kindergarten	6	6	100%
Josh Bowlin	Kindergarten	15	15	100%
Sue Slope	First Grade	16	17	100%
Jaime Gross	First Grade	25	25	100%
Sarah Hay	Second Grade	6	7	100%
Cassandra Kemp	Second Grade	2	5	100%

Valerie Friedline	Third Grade	6	6	100%
Beth Mapes	Third Grade	12	22	100%
Carter Bower	Fourth Grade	15	15	100%
Shanna Wilson	Fourth Grade	10	20	100%
Mindy Sarver	Fourth Grade	35	35	100%
Jenna Sembower	Fifth Grade	21	21	100%
Melissa Gindlesperger	Fifth Grade	10	10	100%
Elyse Cordaro	Sixth Grade	12	14	100%
Kristen Mumau	Sixth Grade	10	13	100%
Jenna Wintersteen	Life Skills	12	12	100%
Samantha Smith	Learning Support			100%
Hanna Goller	Learning Support	1	1	100%
Beth Miller	Title I/Reading Specialist	34	34	100%
Jessica Miller	Title I/Reading Specialist	7	8	100%
Faith Hemminger	Intervention/Behavior Management	10	10	100%
Ben Baker	STEM/Intervention	15	15	100%
Jane Holt	Art	35	36	100%
Doug Spiri	Music	18	18	100%
Kari Hostetter	Music	5	6	100%
Chandler Enos	Physical Education	2	2	100%
Christy Hay	Library Science	16	19	100%
Brandi Wedge	Guidance Counselor	6	6	100%
Susan Clark	School Social Worker	2	7	100%

Currently, all teaching positions are filled with 100% HQT staff. Our District prides itself on hiring the best candidates for teaching positions when they come open. Also, the Rockwood Elementary teachers are distributed by experience within the grade levels. The administration adjusts staff so that there is an even distribution of expertise within all grade levels. The Rockwood Elementary staff is also assigned to content/subjects which meet their multiple certifications. In grades 5 and 6 most teachers have certifications in content areas for middle-level instruction.