



# Rockford High School

Paul Menard, Principal

Samantha Bloom, Counselor

Kelly Ann Lockrem, Counselor

Daniel Pratt, Activities Director

Jill Gordee, IB Coordinator

7600 County Road 50 | Rockford, MN 55373

Ph. 763-477-5846 | Fax 763-477-6123

[www.rockford.k12.mn.us](http://www.rockford.k12.mn.us)

Greetings RHS Families,

We are thrilled to be welcoming our new and returning staff in just a few short days for Fall Workshops. In turn, we are eager to start the school year by welcoming your children on Tuesday, September 6th. Just a reminder: **students in grades 10-12 will begin classes at noon on the first day** (any students in grades 10-12 who must take the bus will be accommodated in common spaces such as the Commons and Media Center prior to starting classes at 12pm).

There has been a lot of discussion this summer about how best to approach the coming school year. Whereas the 2021-2022 school year was a year of reintegration to 'full school', I view the 2022-2023 school year as a year of re-calibration. There were a number of habits, rituals, and procedures that students carried into the building post-pandemic, and we worked to understand how to adjust them back to life at school. Now we must re-calibrate in a way that promotes success, elevates our mission and vision, and encourages students to push themselves further, meet goals, and achieve desired results. We can't simply just have another school year; we must use this as an opportunity to thrive, and we need your help and reinforcement as you talk with your children about their return to school. For us and our staff, we will be focusing on the 'why' of teaching—what inspires us, what fills our cup, and what keeps us coming back each fall. Using that as a grounding tool, we will set our goals for the year. I strongly advocate that our students partake in a similar exercise.

As we approach the year there are two of the habits mentioned above that we are going to particularly ask for assistance with: cell phones and personal electronic devices and compulsory and consistent attendance. Please read below for more information:

## **CELL PHONES AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Cell phones are a way of life for many of our students outside of school. As part of their job as learners, and to prepare them for the real world, we will be limiting student cell phone use to certain times they will be deemed as 'acceptable'. Reflected by the fact that we are a 1:1 Chromebook school (the district provided device for learning), the times to use a cell phone are limited to outside instructional time. The rampant use of cell phones by some students becomes a distraction and barrier to learning and, as developing adolescents, they need (and secretly crave) boundaries to learn how to limit such use. Our students need to be better disciplined in this way to ensure their ability to focus and provide them access to education. The following is taken directly from our student handbook:

Rockford Area Schools is committed to developing digital citizens who possess the skills to appropriately and responsibly use personal electronic devices. We encourage students to leave electronic devices at home, but if brought to school, it is strongly encouraged they be turned off and kept in the student's locker during the school day.

Students are prohibited from using cell phones, and other electronic communication devices during the instructional day, unless permission is given by the building principal or teacher. Appropriate use varies by developmental level; therefore, different expectations exist for elementary, middle, and high school level students.

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Electronic devices being used inappropriately during class will be confiscated. If an electronic device is confiscated, the parent will be contacted. Multiple violations will lead to disciplinary action.

At RHS, personal electronic devices are allowed in the hallways and Commons before 8:00 a.m., during passing time, and after 2:50 p.m. in the school building. Occasional use of personal electronic devices is permitted during the school day with approval by a teacher.

All students are also prohibited from using a cell phone or other electronic communication device to engage in conduct prohibited by school district policies including, but not limited to, cheating, bullying, harassment, gang activity, etc. If the school district has a reasonable suspicion that a student has violated a school rule or law by use of a cell phone or other electronic device, the school district may search the device, this includes the search and seizure of district-issued Chromebooks and the files contained on the device and within the associated cloud storage accounts. The search of the device will be reasonably related in scope to the circumstances justifying the search. Students who use an electronic device during the school day and/or in violation of school district policies may be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the school district's discipline policy. In addition, a student's cell phone or electronic device may be confiscated by the school district and, if applicable, provided to law enforcement. Cell phones or other electronic devices that are confiscated and retained by the school district will be returned in accordance with school building procedures. The recording, filming or photography of students, staff members, or school activities on your personal electronic device without the written consent of administration is strictly prohibited. Anyone who engages in the practice of sending, receiving, or possessing sexually explicit photos or messages (sexting) or inappropriate material will be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. The school bears no responsibility if electronic devices are lost, stolen, or damaged anywhere on school property or off-campus at school-related events.

## **COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE, EXCUSED/UNEXCUSED, AND TRUANCY**

Attendance is the number one contributing factor to academic success or difficulty. Last year we saw a rise in parents intending to 'excuse' absences or, worse, students attempting to 'excuse themselves'. We want our students in class and learning as much as possible. Steps will be taken in the building to limit restroom breaks, signing in and out, and intentionally missing class. Please know that steps will be taken out of school to reinforce the compulsory attendance statutes. The letters below, authored by Wright County Attorney Brian Lutes, explain in detail the parameters around what constitutes 'excused absences', 'unexcused absences', and why it is important to develop a united front when discussing attendance with your child. As you can see, the decision to 'excuse' or 'not excuse' an absence does not lie with the parent, guardian, or school. Rather, we are beholden to the rules set forth by the state legislature and as supported by counties. Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

[Letter I](#) [Letter II](#)

It's exciting to see fall activities in full swing. The campus is alive again, the mornings are cooler, and the building is looking beautiful. We are all set to begin another great year. I appreciate your partnership. Go Rockets!

Sincerely,  
Paul Menard  
Principal

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## SCHEDULES

### FIRST WEEK SCHEDULE (9th GRADE ONLY IN THE AM ON 9/6):

As in years past, Rockford High School will run an alternate schedule on the first day of school in order to welcome our incoming 9th grade students. Please see below for first day schedules according to grade. For the first week schedule click [HERE](#).

[Freshman orientation schedule](#)

[10th-12th grade first day schedule](#)

### STUDENT SCHEDULES:

Schedules have been released. You should have already received a separate messenger. Students have until the end of the school day September 8 to make ANY adjustments to their schedule (for fall semester).

## BACK TO SCHOOL

### SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST:

The RHS School Supply List can be found on the RAS website under "Resources" then "Back to School Information" or by clicking [HERE](#).

### LOCKER REGISTRATION:

Students may elect to register for a locker this year. If you feel that your child would benefit greatly by having a locker, feel free to register for one using this link by September 2nd:

Locker Registration link: <https://forms.gle/DrE9n2m3ECbX8S6z6>

### PICTURE DAY:

Dress your best for Picture Day on Wednesday September 20. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

### FREE & REDUCED LUNCH FORMS:

If you haven't already done so, please take a moment to fill out this [FORM](#). Students who qualify may be eligible for **Pandemic-Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT)** to purchase food for days they are not in the school building. Our school also receives state funding for technology based on qualifying families! For more information or a spanish version, click [here](#).

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