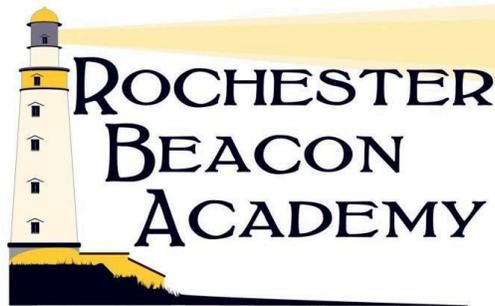


# Rochester Beacon Academy

Minnesota Charter School District #4238-07



974 Skyline Dr. SW  
Rochester, MN 55902  
Phone: 507-258-5351  
Fax: 507-258-5352

Email: [beth.bruns@rochesterbeaconacademy.org](mailto:beth.bruns@rochesterbeaconacademy.org)

Per Minnesota Statute 124E.16 Subd. 2

October 24, 2024

# Table of Contents

Background Information	
History.....	2
Mission.....	2
Vision .....	2
Statement of Purposes .....	2-3
Authorizer	
Mission.....	4
Vision.....	4
Student Enrollment and Attrition	
Yearly Enrollment Trends .....	5
Attrition and Retention .....	5-6
Enrollment by Grade .....	7
Enrollment by Group .....	7-8
Governance and Management	
Board of Directors and Duties.....	9-10
Board Election Process .....	10
Board Member Roster .....	10-11
Board Annual Training .....	11-14
2024-2025 RBA Organization Chart .....	15
Staffing .....	15-17
Staff Retention .....	17
Professional Development .....	17
Professional Credentials of Administration .....	18-19
School Director Evaluation Process .....	20
Administrative Professional Development Plans .....	20
Professional Development Plan for Non-Licensed Administrator .....	20-22
Finances	
Business Operations .....	22
Fiscal Year Ending .....	22
General Fund Balance .....	23
Academic Performance	
Charter Goals for Authorizer .....	24-31
2024-2025 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR).....	32-37
Innovative Practices and Future Plans .....	38-40

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## History

Rochester Beacon Academy (RBA), District #4238-07, proudly celebrated the successful completion of its ninth year of operation in 2024. Since opening its doors, RBA has been dedicated to serving students in grades six through twelve within one building—providing a continuous, supportive, and inclusive educational experience. RBA welcomes all students with open arms, guiding them to become confident, resilient adults who are prepared to lead and contribute meaningfully within their communities.

Over the years, RBA has navigated growth, change, and renewal. From its founding vision to its first graduating class, each chapter has strengthened the school's foundation and commitment to its mission. Through challenges such as relocation, leadership transitions, and the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, RBA's staff and community have demonstrated remarkable perseverance and unity.

Today, RBA stands as a revitalized school with a newly structured administration, clear goals, and a renewed sense of purpose. The leadership team is focused on stability, collaboration, and academic growth—ensuring that every student is supported in both their learning and personal development. Strategic goals emphasize academic excellence, social-emotional well-being, and preparation for post-secondary success.

With its mission as the guiding force, RBA continues to evolve while staying true to its core values:

### **RBA Vision**

*RBA will welcome all students with open arms, transforming them into confident, resilient adults and preparing them to be leaders in their community.*

### **RBA Mission**

RBA equitably meets the unique needs of students by inspiring integrity, cultivating compassion, and practicing perseverance.

### **Purpose**

The primary purpose stated in Rochester Beacon Academy's 5-year (FY20-FY25) Charter School Contract with their authorizer MN GUILD is to provide an educational program for its students in order to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement; and the secondary purpose of the School's educational program is to increase learning opportunities for all pupils. New legislation (124E.01(a)) was passed in 2024 that states, " The

primary purpose of charter schools is changed to: improve the learning, achievement, and success of all students.”

RBA provides an alternative learning environment for students who struggle in larger public school settings. This is achieved through smaller class sizes and increased adult support in each class. With 82% of the student population identified as having special needs, core classes are staffed with a general education teacher, a special education teacher, and a paraprofessional. This staffing model ensures full inclusion with appropriate accommodations within the general education classroom.

In these unique classrooms, a team teaching approach is utilized, allowing both the content and special education teachers to leverage their strengths, thereby enhancing student achievement. A key component of RBA’s success is its focus on a social skills curriculum, implemented throughout the school day to create a safe and welcoming environment for all students. Many students come from backgrounds where they faced challenges such as bullying and exclusion, which affected their ability and willingness to learn. Additionally, many students have diagnoses such as anxiety and depression, impacting their ability to attend a typical public school successfully. Consequently, some students had not been attending school, and some parents opted for homeschooling.

To address the growing need for social skills development, RBA employs a School Counselor, a Master Social Worker, and a Behavior Strategist. Parents and students consistently report that RBA feels like a safe place where students belong. RBA also emphasizes the importance of organizational skills, which are crucial for workforce and career readiness. Students play an active role in the school community, helping to keep the campus clean and orderly, fostering a sense of pride in their community.



# SCHOOL AUTHORIZER

Rochester Beacon Academy has been authorized by the Minnesota Guild of Public Charter Schools since January 1, 2014. The MN GUILD is located at 323 Washington Ave N, Minneapolis, MN 55401.

Executive Director: Jim Zacchini, [jim.zacchini@guildschools.org](mailto:jim.zacchini@guildschools.org)

## **Guild Vision**

The Minnesota *Guild of Public* Charter Schools advances positive educational outcomes for students that lead to success in life.

## **Guild Mission**

The *Guild* advocates for teacher leadership, professional autonomy, and the creation of innovative schools for student engagement and the ownership of learning. The Guild strives to support students, families, and communities most affected by the achievement gap and low graduation rates.



# SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND ATTRITION

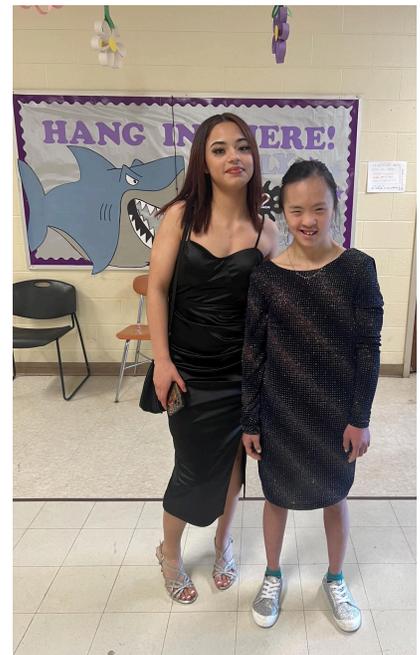
## Process

Rochester Beacon Academy (RBA) capped total enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year at 124 students due to the transition into a smaller building. A lottery system is used for the initial selection process. Any student applying after enrollment is full will be placed on a waiting list on a first come, first served basis. During the 2024-2025 school year, RBA drew students from 5 surrounding school districts.

## History

Following the challenges of the pandemic, RBA has experienced steady and intentional growth in student enrollment. While school tours were once conducted in large groups prior to the pandemic, RBA adapted by offering personalized, one-on-one tours tailored to the needs of each student and family. This individualized approach has strengthened relationships, built trust, and allowed families to experience firsthand the supportive and inclusive environment that defines RBA.

As a result, enrollment has continued to rise year after year, reflecting the community’s confidence in RBA’s mission and approach. This growth has been so significant that the board made the strategic decision to cap grade levels in order to maintain small class sizes.



## Student Attrition Rates

Over the past four years, RBA’s student attrition rates have fluctuated, reflecting the impact of both external factors and evolving student needs. While the rates have not followed a predictable pattern, recent years show improvement and greater stability as the school continues to strengthen its support systems and learning environment.

## Student Attrition

School Year	Total # of students enrolled on October 1	Total # of students enrolled at the End of Year	Attrition Rate %
-------------	---	---	------------------

2020-2021	110	124	+ 11%
2021-2022	96	116	+ 17%
2022-2023	85	94	+ 10%
2023-2024	95	100	+ 6%
2024-2025	115	113	-2%

**Student Retention**

School Year	Total # of students eligible from the previous year to return for the new year	Total # of students who returned at the beginning of the Year	Retention Rate %
2020-2021	118	110	-7%
2021-2022	124	96	- 23%
2022-2023	116	85	- 17%
2023-2024	94	94	+ 0%
2024-2025	104	95	-9%



RBA supports students who may need extra assistance, resulting in students coming and going throughout the year to participate in residential programs or day treatment. Additionally, RBA acknowledges the decline in retention as 8th graders transition to high school, with the school often serving as a vital stepping stone in their educational journey.

### Enrollment by Grade Level

Grade	21-22 BOY	21-22 EOY	22-23 BOY	22-23 EOY	23-24 BOY	23-24 EOY	24-25 BOY	24-25 EOY
Grade 6	9	10	6	8	4	9	5	5
Grade 7	11	15	10	10	8	9	12	13
Grade 8	24	29	15	16	12	13	16	14
Grade 9	16	19	19	24	16	11	17	19
Grade 10	13	17	14	13	26	26	17	16
Grade 11	10	13	8	10	12	17	27	27
Grade 12	13	13	13	13	17	15	21	19
SOAR	-	-	(5)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(3)	(3)
PSEO	-	-	1	1	1	2	6	4
Total Enrollment	96	116	85	94	95	100	115	113

Beginning of Year (Oct. 1)  
EOY - End of Year

### Student Enrollment by Group

Subgroup	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
American Indian	0%	4%	0	0%	0%
Asian	4%	8%	5%	4%	4%
Black or African American	4%	7%	0%	3%	4%
Hispanic or Latino	0%	0%	7%	10%	10%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

White	74%	70%	80%	69%	68%
Two or More Races	18%	18%	8%	15%	15%
ELL	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
Free & Reduced	39%	41%	51%	52%	49%
SPED	74%	92%	85%	81%	82%



# GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

## **Board of Directors and Duties**

In 1991, the Minnesota Legislature passed a law allowing the creation of charter schools. Each charter school is governed by a publicly elected board of directors, which is legally responsible for the school's operation under Minnesota Statute 124.07. The board is accountable to the school's community and provides oversight by establishing the school's mission, vision, and goals.

The Rochester Beacon Academy Board of Directors is responsible for the overall governance of the school. The Board is the primary decision-making body on matters concerning the development and implementation of school policies. Additionally, the Board provides communication with school staff regarding the direction of the school. This is accomplished through the adoption of policies that the Executive Director, staff, and committees follow on a day-to-day basis.

In 2024–2025, the Board of Directors adopted a Strategic Plan centered on Community, Curriculum, and Culture. This plan established goals related to restorative justice, academic rigor, and enhanced communication, with the intent of strengthening the foundation established by the new administrative team.

RBA's Board has five committees: the Finance Committee, the Personnel Committee, the Policy Committee, the District Advisory Committee (DAC), and the Community Outreach and Recruitment Committee (CORC). Each board member serves on a minimum of one committee. The Finance Committee meets each month one hour prior to the monthly scheduled board meeting. The Personnel Committee meets primarily in the spring of each year to conduct the Executive Director evaluation and run the Board Election. The Policy Committee ensures annual compliance with legislative changes and meets monthly. DAC meets monthly to review school data, curriculum, and teacher mentorship. CORC meets monthly to plan events, review marketing strategies, and raise additional funds for RBA.

The management model provides a balance of efficiency and adequate staffing in all functions of school operations. The Rochester Beacon Academy Board of Directors provides oversight of the Executive Director, who is responsible for hiring and managing staff and faculty. The Executive Director is formally evaluated each year. The annual evaluation is based upon feedback from direct reports, board members, and the Executive

Director’s report. Goals are established based on evaluation results as well as the strategic and operational needs of RBA.

The Executive Director assumes overall responsibility for personnel, facilities, services, and programs of the school. This includes hiring, supervising, and evaluating staff; collaborating with the Board of Directors, parents, and students; implementing policies and procedures; ensuring safety and security; acting as an ex-officio to the Rochester Beacon Academy Board of Directors; and representing Rochester Beacon Academy with MN GUILD, the Minnesota Department of Education, and other outside organizations.

**Election of Rochester Beacon Academy Board Members**

Board elections are run according to the Bylaws of Rochester Beacon Academy and in compliance with laws governing nonprofit charter school boards in the State of Minnesota. Individuals seeking to be a candidate for Board Director shall declare their intention in writing to the President of the Board not less than 30 days prior to the scheduled date of the election.

At least 30 days prior to the deadline for receipt of nominations, the Executive Director shall notify the parents and guardians of RBA students of the upcoming election and invite any interested persons to submit their nominations. Election of Directors shall be held annually during the month of May on a date and at times to be determined by the Board, no later than the June board meeting preceding the election. Staff members employed at the school, including teachers providing instruction under an agreement with the school, members of the Board of Directors, and all parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the school, are eligible to vote on the election of new members of the school’s Board of Directors. Votes shall be tallied and publicized by a group made up of eligible voters. Newly elected Directors shall assume office on the first of July following their election.

**Board Member Roster**

Director Name	Date Seated	Date Term Expires	Officer	Director Contact Information	Affiliation
Bruske, Elisa	6/18/2024	06/30/27	Vice Chair	ebruske@rochesterbeaconacademy.org	Community
Cano, Khristie	6/18/2024	06/30/27	Secretary	kcano@rochesterbeaconacademy.org	Parent
Clobes, Lizzi	6/28/2024	06/30/28		lizzi.clobes@rochesterbeaconacademy.org	Teacher
Frank,	10/28/22	06/30/26	Chair	community.member11@roc	Community

Dean				hesterbeaconacademy.org	
Nelson, Ellen	11/21/24	06/30/27		ellen.nelson@rochesterbeaconacademy.org	Teacher
Pruka, Christina	10/28/22	06/30/26	Treasurer	parent.member2@rochesterbeaconacademy.org	Parent



**Board Annual Training**

According to Minnesota statute 124E.07 BOARD OF DIRECTORS.Subd. 7., every charter school Board Member shall attend annual training throughout the Member’s term. All new Board Members shall attend initial training on the Board’s role and responsibilities, employment policies and practices, and financial management. Included below is a list of the training each Board Member attended during the previous year. Annual training will take place once a year when new board members take their seats. Training topics will be decided upon by the Directors after completing and reviewing an annual Board assessment.

Director Name	Date Seated	Training and Completion
Bruske, Elisa	06/18/24	Scenario Planning During An Economic Recession 6/30/2025 Legislative Updates 6/30/2025 Conducting an Effective Executive Search 6/30/2025 Succession Planning Lessons Learned 6/30/2025 The Role of the Board in Academic Oversight 6/30/2025 Parliamentary Procedures 6/29/2025 Building and Recruiting a Strong Board 6/29/2025 Board Engagement - A Stanford Study 6/29/2025 You're New Board Chair Elect, Now What? 6/29/2025 Teacher Licensure Update (3.23.21) 6/29/2025 Authorizer Panel: Proactive Steps to Avoid Common Pitfalls 6/29/2025 What School Boards Should Know About Special Education 6/29/2025 Understanding Student Data - NWEA MAP 5/29/2025 Understanding Student Data - MCA 5/29/2025 Annual RBA Board Retreat 8/3/2024 Crisis Management and Communication 6/29/2024 Succession Planning: Why It Matters 6/29/2024 Leadership Performance Review 6/29/2024 Enhanced Data Privacy Practices 6/29/2024 Open Meeting Law Deep Dive 6/29/2024 Understanding Charter School Financial Statements 6/29/2024 Charter School Budget Basics 6/29/2024 Charter School Employment Law 6/29/2024 Top Pitfalls of Open Meeting Law 6/29/2024 Best Practices of High-Performing Boards 6/29/2024 New Board Member Basics 6/29/2024
Cano, Khristie	6/18/2024	Scenario Planning During An Economic Recession 1/20/2025 Understanding Student Data - NWEA MAP 9/3/2024 Understanding Student Data - MCA 8/6/2024 Crisis Management and Communication 8/6/2024 Succession Planning: Why It Matters 8/6/2024 Leadership Performance Review 8/6/2024 What Boards Should Know About Conflicts of Interest, Nepotism & Classification Issues Related to Workers 8/5/2024 Annual RBA Board Retreat 8/3/2024 Overview of Student Expulsion Process in Minnesota 7/30/2024 Charter Funding Obstacles 7/30/2024 Enhanced Data Privacy Practices 7/19/2024 Minnesota Case Study: Eminent Domain 7/16/2024 Managing Grievances Effectively and Efficiently 7/16/2024 Charter School Facilities Part II 7/16/2024 Charter School Facilities Part I 7/16/2024 Open Meeting Law Deep Dive 7/14/2024 Understanding Charter School Financial Statements 7/14/2024

		<p>Charter School Budget Basics 7/13/2024  Charter School Employment Law 7/13/2024  Top Pitfalls of Open Meeting Law 7/11/2024  Best Practices of High-Performing Boards 7/10/2024  New Board Member Basics 7/10/2024  Creating an Affiliated Building Company 7/9/2024  Federal Reserve: Racism and The Economy: Focus on Education 7/5/2024  Cruz-Guzman 7/3/2024  Immigration Education and Equity-Focused Governance 7/2/2024</p>
Clobes, Lizzi	6/28/2024	<p>Best Practices of High-Performing Boards 6/30/2025  New Board Member Basics 6/27/2025  What Boards Should Know About Conflicts of Interest, Nepotism &amp; Classification Issues Related to Workers 6/25/2025  Overview of Student Expulsion Process in Minnesota 6/25/2025  Charter Funding Obstacles 6/24/2025  Enhanced Data Privacy Practices 6/16/2025  Grants 4 Schools Conference 12/5/2024  Annual RBA Board Retreat 8/3/2024  Minnesota Case Study: Eminent Domain 7/30/2024  Managing Grievances Effectively and Efficiently 7/29/2024  Charter School Facilities Part II 7/28/2024  Charter School Facilities Part I 7/28/2024  Creating an Affiliated Building Company 7/15/2024  Federal Reserve: Racism and The Economy: Focus on Education 7/9/2024  Cruz-Guzman 7/7/2024  Immigration Education and Equity-Focused Governance 7/6/2024</p>
Frank, Dean	10/28/22	<p>Annual RBA Board Retreat 8/3/2024</p>

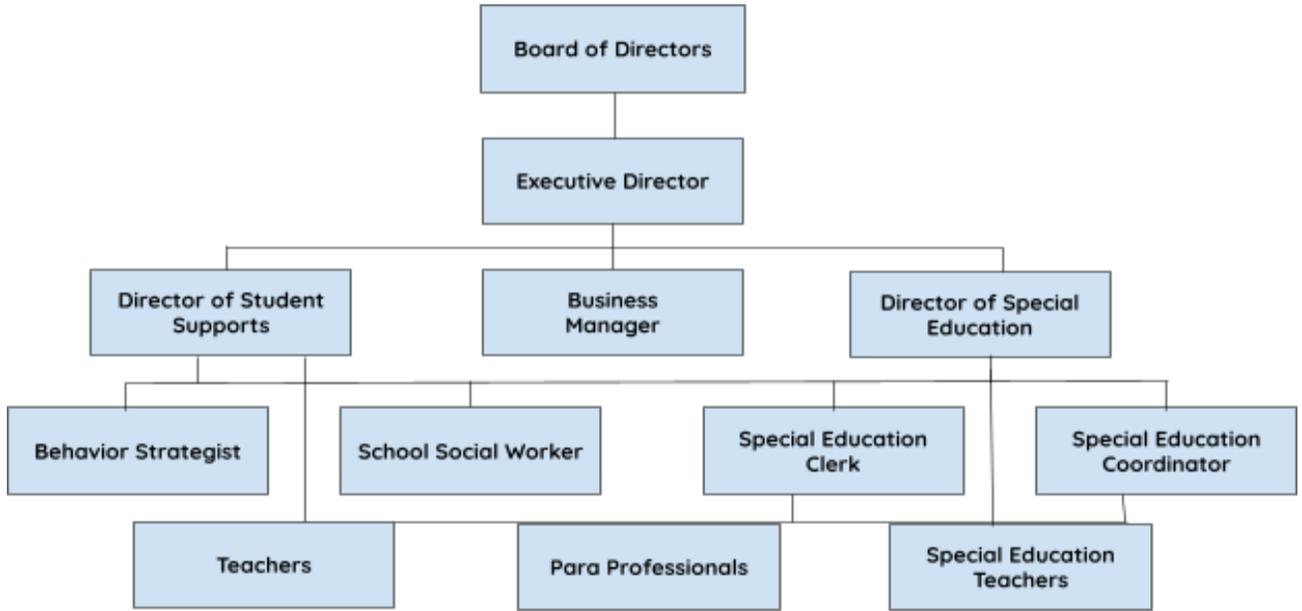
<p>Nelson, Ellen</p>	<p>11/21/24</p>	<p>Federal Reserve: Racism and The Economy: Focus on Education 6/1/2025  Cruz-Guzman 8/31/2025  Immigration Education and Equity-Focused Governance 8/31/2025  What Boards Should Know About Conflicts of Interest, Nepotism &amp; Classification Issues Related to Workers 8/9/2025  Overview of Student Expulsion Process in Minnesota 8/9/2025  Charter Funding Obstacles 8/9/2025  Enhanced Data Privacy Practices 8/9/2025  Minnesota Case Study: Eminent Domain 7/26/2025  Managing Grievances Effectively and Efficiently 7/26/2025  Charter School Facilities Part II 7/26/2025  Charter School Facilities Part I 7/26/2025  Creating an Affiliated Building Company 7/26/2025  What Board Members Need to Know about State Standards 7/26/2025  March 2025 Board Chat 7/25/2025  Legislative Updates 7/23/2025  Succession Planning Lessons Learned 7/23/2025  Conducting an Effective Executive Search 7/23/2025  Succession  Grants 4 Schools Conference 12/5/2024  Annual RBA Board Retreat 8/3/2024</p>
<p>Pruka, Christina</p>	<p>10/28/22</p>	<p>Course 200: Charter School Finances – A Public Trust 10/1/2024  Annual RBA Board Retreat 8/3/2024</p>

All newly elected and seated Board Members will begin training in the following areas within six months of being seated and will complete training within the first 12 months of duty.

- Board roles and responsibilities
- Employment policies and practices
- Financial management



## 2024-2025 Rochester Beacon Academy Organization Chart



### Staffing

Rochester Beacon Academy employed 36 staff members during the 2024-2025 academic year, of which 13 were teachers, 14 were paraprofessionals, three were support staff, and six were administrators.

Staff Member	Position	File Folder	Date Hired	Returned for FY26
Bennett, Tami	Science Teacher	#352814	08/12/2024	N
Blume, Tatum	SpEd Teacher	#199810	08/24/2017	Y
Bonin, Megan	SpEd Teacher	#451690	08/15/2023	Y
Brucki, Dominique	SpEd Paraprofessional		08/12/2024	Y
Bruns, Beth	Director of Student Supports	#511573	08/16/2021	Y
Bruske, Elliana	SpEd Paraprofessional		08/22/2022	N
Bruske, Vicki	Office Manager		06/03/2015	Y
Cable, Erla	SpEd Clerk	#1000191	08/05/2024	Y

<b>Staff Member</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>File Folder</b>	<b>Date Hired</b>	<b>Returned for FY26</b>
Chase, Madison	SpEd Paraprofessional		09/23/2023	N
Clobes, Lizzi	Art Teacher	#1027216	08/14/2017, 08/15/2023	Y
Courtney, Casey	SpEd Teacher	#471493	08/24/2023	Y
Dion, Sara	SpEd Paraprofessional		08/12/2024	Y
Gustafson, Kate	SpEd Teacher	#467478	08/14/2017	Y
Hendrickson, Lauren	SpEd Teacher	#1030486	08/12/2024	N
Kleckley, Jayson	SpEd Paraprofessional		10/02/2023	Y
Kupinski, Karis	SpEd Paraprofessional		08/12/2024	Y
LaFerriere, Traci	Business Manager		07/16/2021	Y
LaFleur, Dawn	SOAR Transition Teacher	#501303	08/15/2023	Y
McGeough, Kaelan	SpEd Paraprofessional		11/01/2022	Y
McHenry, Molly	SpEd Paraprofessional		08/12/2024	Y
Mitchell, CJ	Math Teacher	#1022435	08/22/2022	Y
Nelson, Carrie	Social Studies Teacher	#1012321	08/16/2021	Y
Nelson, Ellen	Language Arts Teacher	#472628	08/16/2021	Y
Pederson, Michelle	SpEd Paraprofessional		03/04/2021	Y
Rogers, Lori	SpEd Math Teacher	#517890	08/22/2023	N
Salfi, Brenna	SpEd Teacher	#454588	08/16/2016	Y
Schlichting, Jamie	School Counselor	#1037912	08/12/2024	Y
Seha, Rita	SpEd Paraprofessional		10/10/2023	Y
Simonson, Payton	SpEd Paraprofessional		11/14/2024	N
Stancomb, Annie	SpEd Paraprofessional Kitchen Manager		08/16/2021	Y
Vargas, Denisse	Behavior Strategist		09/14/2020	Y
Vargas, Tomas	SpEd Paraprofessional		08/12/2024	Y

Staff Member	Position	File Folder	Date Hired	Returned for FY26
Volkart, Erin	Special Education Coordinator	#517643	04/12/2021	Y
Volkart, Samantha	SpEd Paraprofessional		12/16/2022	Y
Welch, Madison	SpEd Paraprofessional		10/03/2022	Y
Wilson, Karissa	School Social Worker	#490528	08/16/2021	Y

For the 2024-2025 academic school year, the student-to-teacher ratio was 7:1. Staff are selected using a three-step process comprised of written material review, staff and supervisor interviews, and Executive Director final review. Staff are formally evaluated three times per year. They are observed at least three times per year by administration.

### Staff Retention

Staff retention has remained stable since the 2022-2023 academic year. Rochester Beacon Academy developed and implemented a competitive compensation package to reflect the local public area school system.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Percentage of Teachers Retained	44%	89%	67%	100%	77%
Percentage of All staff Retained	51%	72%	77%	71%	83%

### Professional Development

RBA believes in professional development training and works diligently to provide meaningful experience to all staff. Below is a list of the training offered before the start of the school year and throughout the year.

Date	Training Topic	Audience
8/12/2024	Handbook/Policies/RBA Structure	All Staff

8/12/2024	Technology Training: JMC	New Staff, Voluntary
8/13/2024	Mandated Reporting	All Staff
8/13/2024	SPED Training (Policies and Procedures)	All Staff
8/19/2024	Curriculum Alignment and Mapping	All Staff
8/22/2024	Behavior Management Systems	All Staff
8/22/2024	School Culture: Clifton Larson Strength Finder	All Staff
9/11/2024	Crisis Planning, Seizure Training, Action Plans	All Staff
9/25/2024	Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI)	Admin, SPED Teachers, Paraprofessionals
10/09/2024	Student Discipline	All Staff
11/5/2024	School Culture: Climate, Learning, and Curriculum	All Staff
11/26/2024	Mental Health and Suicide Prevention	All Staff
1/6/2024	School Culture: Mission and Vision	All Staff
1/24/2024	Academics: Standards, Curriculum, Assessments	Teachers
2/14/2024	School Culture: Strength-based assets	All Staff
4/23/2024	PLC: School Literacy Plan	Teachers

### Professional Credentials of the Administration

**Beth Bruns** joined Rochester Beacon Academy in August 2021 and has served in a variety of roles including Math Teacher, Special Education Case Manager, Director of Student Supports, and now, in her first year as the school's Executive Director. Prior to her time at RBA, she taught math for three years and worked as a special education paraprofessional. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, a Master's degree in Business Administration, and a Charter School Leadership Certificate.

As Executive Director, Beth wears many hats. Her responsibilities include serving as an Ex Officio member of the Board of Directors, overseeing finance and operations management, managing human resources, and providing support to both students and staff.

**Dr. Lakisha Witter** joined RBA in 2024 as the Special Education Director. She holds an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and an Ed.S. in Educational Leadership from Minnesota State University, Mankato, as well as an M.Ed. in Special Education from the University of Florida in Gainesville. Dr. Witter is licensed in Minnesota as both a Director of Special Education and a Special Education Teacher.

In her current role, she provides administrative leadership for the special education program, supports teachers in instructional practice, partners with families, and ensures that students receive the services and accommodations needed for success.

**Kate Gustafson** joined Rochester Beacon Academy in August 2017 and has served in a variety of roles including Language Arts Teacher, Special Education Teacher, Board Member, and currently as the Assistant Special Education Director.

She holds a Bachelor's degree in Literature with a Writing Emphasis (2010) and a Master's degree in Instruction (2011), both from Saint Mary's University in Minnesota. In 2011, she also earned a Reading Specialist degree. Most recently, she completed her Specialist degree in Director of Special Education from Minnesota State University Moorhead (2025).

Kate currently holds a Tier 4 teaching license in Reading, Communication/Language Arts, and as a Director of Special Education. Her diverse educational background and commitment to student support have made her an integral part of the RBA community.



## School Director Evaluation Process

The goals for the Executive Director are established based on the previous year's evaluation. In collaboration with the Personnel Committee, these goals are addressed and monitored throughout the school year.

An annual evaluation of the Executive Director is conducted to assess progress and performance. The most recent evaluation took place in May 2025. Following this review, Ms. Beth Bruns was offered and accepted an agreement to continue as Executive Director for the 2025–2026 academic school year.

## Administrative Professional Development Plans

Date	Training Topic	Audience
8/5/2024	Technology Training: JMC	Office Manager
8/28/2024	Title IX Training	Administration, Social Worker
11/15/2024	MDE Data Practices & Open Meeting Law Training	Administration
1/22/2025	IEP Compliance Training	SPED Administration
1/29/2025	Student Information Systems: JMC	Office Manager
2/3/2025	Student Discipline Bootcamp	Administration
10/11/2024 - 6/6/2025	Special Education Director Forums	SPED Administration
5/2/2025	Special Education Law Conference	SPED Administration

## Professional Development Plan for Non-Licensed Administrator

Per statutory requirements, the Board of Directors and any individual serving in an administrative, supervisory, or instructional leadership role without a valid administrative license must jointly develop a professional development plan. Documentation of the implementation of this plan is included in the school's annual report.

For the 2025–2026 school year, the Professional Development Plan for Beth Bruns, Executive Director of Rochester Beacon Academy, was developed in collaboration with the RBA Personnel Committee, as charged by the Board of Directors. The plan focuses on professional growth in the following key areas:

- Working Genius and Effective Communication
- Human Resources and Personnel Management
- Charter School Law and Requirements
- Charter Contract and Authorizer Relationships
- Board and Management Relationships
- Innovative Hiring, Teacher Development, Support and Evaluation
- Parent Relationships and Community Partnerships
- Special Education Management
- Financial and Grant Management
- Legal and Compliance Management
- Crisis Prevention and Intervention training through the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI)

This plan is designed to support Ms. Bruns in her leadership role and ensure continued growth, compliance, and effectiveness in meeting the needs of the RBA community.

Date	Training Topic	Host
7/30 - 8/02 2024	Certified CPI Instructor Training	Crisis Prevention Institute
8/6/2024	FY25 Annual Summer Conventing	School Authorizer
8/8/2024	Truancy Planning	Olmsted County
8/28/2024	Title IX Compliance Training	Ratwik Law
9/24/2024	A.I. Training	MACS
10/9/2024	Student Discipline	Ratwik Law
10/17/2024	Social Media and Website Development	rSchoolToday
10/14/2024	Legislative Forum and School Compliance	MACS
11/15/2024	Data Practices & Open Meeting Law Training	MDE
12/3/2024	Co-Teaching and Collaboration Models	MDE
1/7/2025 1/21/2025	Succession Planning: 3-part series	MDE
1/16/2025	SEDRA Training	Business Manager

1/22/2025	Developing Compliant IEPs Training	CASE
1/24/2025	Relicensure Training	PELSB & MACS
2/3/2025	Student Discipline Bootcamp	CASE
6/9 - 6/11 2025	2025 Annual MN Charter School Leadership Conference	Volunteers of America (VOA)
6/2025	Charter Leader Institute Professional Development Series	Charter Leader Institute

# FINANCE

**Business Operations**

Traci LaFerriere has been Rochester Beacon Academy’s Business Manager since January 2019. Traci works closely with the Executive Director, Special Education Director, and Office Manager to ensure all financial transactions are made and recorded in accordance with school policy and to maintain internal controls. A budget is approved by the school board prior to July 1 and a revision is approved in the spring. Financial reports are reviewed by the school board and finance committee monthly to ensure revenues and expenditures are within budgeted guidelines.

**Financial Summary**

Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025

**General Fund**

Revenue \$2,738,967  
 Expenses \$2,519,376  
 Fund Balance \$1,204,251

**Food Service Fund**

Total revenues were \$480 as compared to \$22,532 of expenditures.

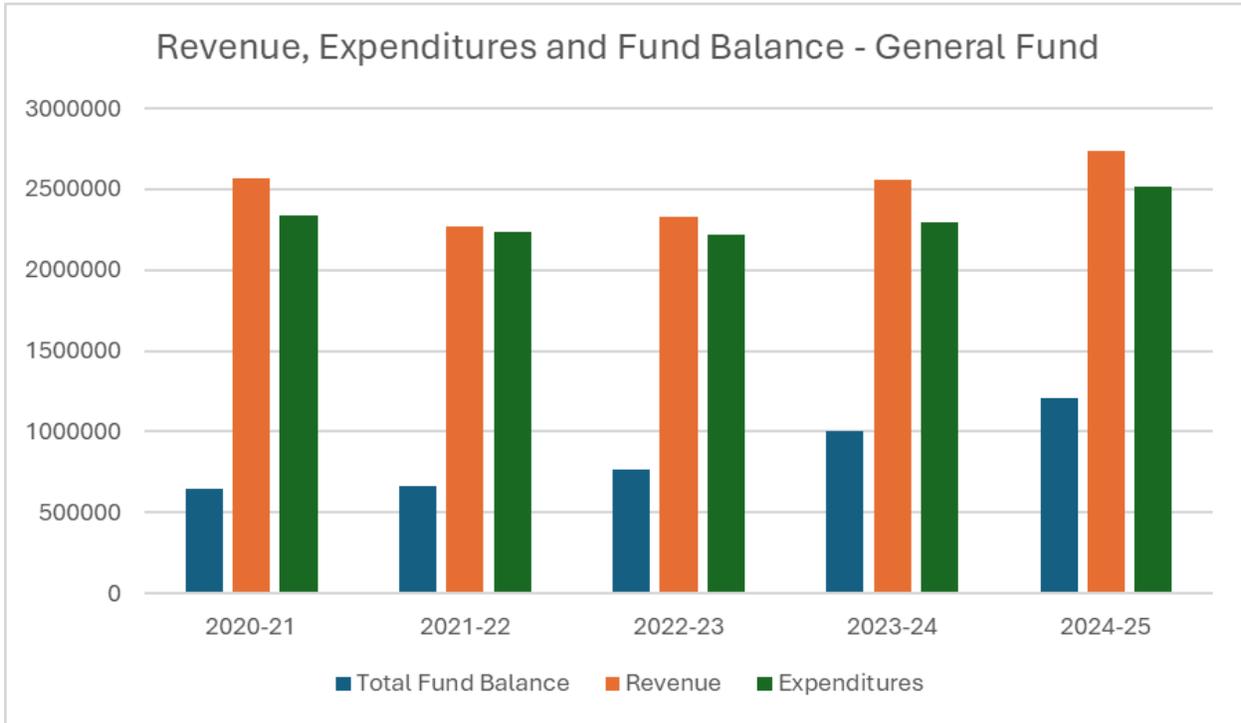
Ended the year with net change in fund balance and ending fund balance of \$0 after a transfer of \$22,052 from the general fund.

**Total Governmental Activities**

Net Position ended at \$48,179  
 Total revenues were \$2,777,364 as compared to \$2,064,619 of expenditures.

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
Fund Balance	45,104 2%	643,816 27.4%	663,881 29.6%	767,479 34.58%	\$1,006,712 43.56%	\$1,204,251 47.8%

The 2024-25 school year ended with the general fund balance at 47.8% of general fund expenditures, representing a strong financial position. The above table represents the combined fund balance, including unassigned, restricted, and nonspendable.



RBA is fiscally responsible. A review of the school’s past five years’ finances, represented in the chart above, shows the school’s commitment to growing and maintaining a strong fund balance. A complete copy of our audit is on file with the Executive Director and is available for review.



# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

RBA uses a variety of assessment tools to drive instructional processes, including but not limited to curriculum-based assessments (CBA), IXL, NWEA MAP testing, ACT testing, teacher observations, IRLA Reading Assessments, Individual Education Plan progress, and standardized state testing (MCA Testing). RBA participated in the Fall NWEAs. The results are below. MCAs were completed, and the results are below. Note that in the spring of 2020, due to COVID-19, no results are reported. for the Spring of 2020. MCAs were administered in 2021; however, due to COVID-19, results were not reported as they historically have been.

<b>Goal 1: MCA Progress on Reading and Math</b>	<b>A. Reading Proficiency. Students in the Achievement Level “Does Not Meet Standard” Category (MDE Academic Progress) will decrease by 3 percent each year during the contract period starting in FY21. Grades 6,7,8 &amp; 10</b>  <b>B. Mathematics Proficiency Students in the Achievement Level “Does Not Meet Standard” Category (MDE Academic Progress) will decrease by 5 percent each year during the contract period starting in FY21.</b>				
<b>Contract Year</b>	FY21  Baseline (FY19)	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Goal Percentage A</b>	69.77%	66.77%	63.77%	60.77%	57.77%
<b>Goal Percentage B</b>	77.27%	74.27%	71.27%	68.27%	65.27%
<b>Actual % A</b>	56.5%	50%	56.1%	40.8%	51.4%
<b>Actual % B</b>	66.7%	70%	80%	73.0%	80.00%
<b>Goal (Met/Met)</b>	Met	Met/ DNM	DNM	Met	Met/DNM
<b>School Comment</b>	Last year, the Language Arts Department focused on developing a comprehensive literacy plan aligned with the school’s Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). As part of this initiative, staff also sought out professional development opportunities, including training in the <i>Cariacell</i>				

	<p>program, to strengthen instructional practices and support student literacy growth across all tiers.</p> <p>In mathematics, RBA focused on strengthening Tier 1 instruction by building on the current Math Teacher’s skills and instructional strategies. Additionally, the Special Education Math Teacher completed their Master’s in Special Education, enhancing instructional capacity and support for students with diverse learning needs.</p>
--	--

<b>Goal 2: NWEA Progress on Reading and Math</b>	<p><b>A. Annually, the percent of students who meet their expected growth projection for Reading on the NWEA test from Winter to Winter will go from 50% in the baseline year to 62% by the end of FY23.</b></p> <p><b>B. Annually, the percent of students who meet their expected growth projection for Math on the NWEA test from Winter to Winter will go from 50% in the baseline year to 62% by the end of FY23.</b></p>						
<b>Contract Year</b>	FY2019 Baseline	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Goal Percentage A</b>	50%	COVID	54%	58%	62%	62%	62%
<b>Goal Percentage B</b>	50%	COVID	54%	58%	62%	62%	62%
<b>Annual % A</b>		COVID	46%	21%	N/A	45%	57%
<b>Annual % B</b>		COVID	49%	50%	N/A	46%	55%
<b>Goal (Met/Met)</b>		-	DNM	DNM	-	DNM	DNM
<b>School Comment</b>	<p>Although Rochester Beacon Academy did not meet its academic performance goals, student growth continues to be observed. To better support data-driven decision-making and targeted instruction, RBA has</p>						

	<p>expanded its district-wide testing schedule from once annually to three times per year.</p> <p>This shift allows for more timely identification of student needs, progress monitoring, and instructional adjustments throughout the school year. While reading outcomes have shown improvement—supported by a strong co-teaching model—math remains an area of focus, with ongoing efforts to enhance instruction and student achievement in the years ahead.</p>
--	--

<b>Goal 3: Closing the Achievement Gap</b>	<b>Closing the Reading Achievement Gap Annually, students taking the MCAs (MDE Academic Achievement Rate) will maintain a 3 point margin between all students and those students identified as special education.</b>					
<b>Contract Year</b>	FY2019 Baseline	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Goal Percentage</b>	5.35%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
<b>Annual %</b>		+3%	+17%	+14%	-24%	-52.5%
<b>Goal (Met/Met)</b>		Met	Met	Met	DNM	DNM
<b>School Comment</b>	<p>Of the 24 students receiving special education services, 16.7% met or exceeded state standards in reading. In comparison, among the 13 general education students, 69.2% met or exceeded those same standards.</p> <p>This data highlights a significant performance gap and underscores the need for targeted literacy interventions and support for students receiving special education services.</p>					

<b>Goal 4: Closing the</b>	<b>Closing the Math Achievement Gap Annually, students taking the MCAs (MDE Academic Achievement Rate) will maintain a 3 point margin</b>					
--------------------------------	---	--	--	--	--	--

<b>Achievement Gap</b>	<b>between all students and those students identified as special education.</b>					
<b>Contract Year</b>	FY2019 Baseline	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Goal Percentage</b>	.07%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
<b>Annual %</b>		+29%	+22%	+15%	+3%	0%
<b>Goal (Met/Met)</b>		Met	Met	Met	Met	Met
<b>School Comment</b>	<p>Recent data indicate low performance across all student groups, with no significant margin between special education and general education achievement.</p> <p>As a result, the school's focus has shifted toward improving outcomes for all students. Efforts will prioritize moving students from "does not meet" to "partially meets," "meets," and ultimately "exceeds" standards through targeted support, instructional strategies, and data-informed interventions.</p>					

<b>Goal 5: High School Graduation</b>	<b>90% of students, enrolled at RBA for at least two consecutive years, will graduate high school in four years, not including students on Individual Education Plans who are eligible to stay in school from ages 18-21 and enter a transition program.</b>						
<b>Contract Year</b>	FY2019 Baseline	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Goal Percentage</b>	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
<b>Annual % (Increase/decrease)</b>	100%	100%	82%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<b>Goal (Met/Met)</b>	Met	Met	DNM	Met	Met	Met	Met
<b>School Comment</b>	Students enrolled at RBA for a consecutive period remain enrolled and graduate on time. Additionally, RBA is in its third year of operation with the SOAR transition program						

<b>Goal 6: Family Satisfaction</b>	<b>Each year via a fall survey, families will respond with “agree” or “strongly agree” to each of the following two questions: (A) My child is welcomed at RBA (B) My child has found a “place” at RBA. From a baseline of 69% “agree/strongly agree”, each year’s survey results will show a 5% increase:</b>						
<b>Contract Year</b>	FY2019 Baseline	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Goal Percentage A</b>	69%	74%	79%	84%	89%	94%	99%
<b>Goal Percentage B</b>	69%	74%	79%	84%	89%	94%	99%
<b>Annual % A</b>	69%	72.45%	76.07%	80%	93%	94%	92.3%
<b>Annual % B</b>	69%	72.45%	76.07%	80%	81%	85%	92.3%
<b>Goal (Met/Met)</b>		DNM	DNM	DNM	Met/ DNM	Met/ DNM	DNM/ DNM
<b>School Comment</b>	<p>Over the past four years, Rochester Beacon Academy has experienced high turnover in administration. Despite this challenge, one of the school’s key internal goals has remained the intentional development of a strong and supportive school culture.</p> <p>RBA has successfully maintained a welcoming environment, with students consistently reporting that they feel a sense of belonging and have found their “place” at the school. This has remained true even as enrollment has fluctuated, in part due to serving students who often require a high level of support.</p>						

<b>Goal 7: Special Education Individual Education Plan (IEP) Progress</b>	<b>On an annual basis, 100% of students on IEPs, who have been at RBA for at least one year, will improve the number of IEP goals from 89% to 93%.</b>						
<b>Contract Year</b>	FY2019 Baseline	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Goal Percentage</b>	89%	89%	90%	91%	92%	93%	93%
<b>Annual % (Increase/ decrease)</b>		90%	91%	92%	93%	91%	90%
<b>Goal (Met/Met)</b>		Met	Met	Met	Met	DNM	DNM
<b>School Comment</b>	Over the years, RBA has had an ebb and flow with student enrollment. For some students, it takes time to feel comfortable and safe within the learning environment. Veteran students have worked hard to reach their yearly goals and show progress. There was a slight decrease in achievement last year; this could be partly due to the shortage of special education teachers						

<b>Goal 8: Finance</b>	<b>Fund Balance RBA's fund balance will be 0% at the end of FY20 and will increase by 3% each fiscal year, as measured by the annual financial audit. RBA will not be in SOD over the term of the contract.</b>						
<b>Contract Year</b>	FY2019 Baseline	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Goal Percentage</b>	0%	0%	3%	6%	9%	12%	15%

<b>Annual % (Increase/decrease)</b>		2%	17.77%	32.95%	34.31%	43.56%	47.8%
<b>Goal (Met/Did Not Met)</b>		Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met
<b>School Comment</b>	RBA has maintained and increased a positive fund balance since the charter contract began. A major accomplishment pre-contract as RBA was in statutory operating debt (SOD).						

<b>Goal 9: Post-Graduation</b>	<p><b>ALL students enrolled at RBA in grades 9-12 will develop a post-high school (college and career readiness) plan with the support and guidance of the school counselor during the first semester of 9th grade, or as soon as possible when enrolling after semester 1, 9th grade.</b></p> <p>A plan template will be formulated to be used for each student's plan. With the school counselor, each student will complete the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the prescribed template, develop a career and college readiness plan, including goals</li> <li>• Annually discuss progress towards meeting the goals in their college and career readiness plan, and update the plan as needed</li> <li>• As graduation approaches, determine if they have met their college and career readiness goals. Percentage of students who have an annually reviewed post-high school plan in place with the school counselor:</li> </ul>					
<b>Contract Year</b>	FY2019 Baseline	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Goal Percentage</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Annual % (Increase/decrease)</b>	100%	100%	81%	88%	90%	91%
<b>Goal (Met/Met)</b>	Met	Met	DNM	DNM	DNM	DNM

**School Comment**

With access to Mental Health Compensatory Aid in FY25, RBA was able to hire a School Counselor. This role oversees the credit tracking system, which promotes student responsibility and accountability for academic progress.

In addition, RBA has continued to strengthen its high school transition program, expanding opportunities for students in areas such as Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), volunteer work, and other career and college readiness experiences tailored to individual student goals.



# COMPREHENSIVE ACHIEVEMENT AND CIVIC READINESS (CACR)

## Annual Report

The annual report can be found here: [Annual Reports | Rochester Beacon Academy](#)

## Annual Public Meeting

RBA held its annual public meeting on Wednesday, October 1, 2024.

## District Advisory Committee

District Advisory Committee Members	Role in District
Beth Bruns	Executive Director
Carrie Nelson	Teacher, Parent
Ellen Nelson	Teacher
Lizzi Clobes	Teacher, Board Representative
Gabriella Bryne	Student Representative
Kaelan Nelson	Paraprofessional
Stacy Aoudia	Parent
Vicki Bruske	Office Manager

## Equitable Access to Excellent and Diverse Educators

*Describe your process for ensuring students of color, American Indian students and students from low-income families have equitable access to experienced, in-field, and effective teachers.*

As a charter school with a focus on special education, Rochester Beacon Academy continues to support teachers who hold Tier 1 licenses, many of whom are working toward full licensure or teaching outside their initial field.

In the 2024–2025 school year, RBA took several intentional steps to strengthen instructional quality and professional growth:

- **Hired an Instructional Coach** to support teachers in aligning instruction with academic standards and curriculum development.
- **Focused on asset-based development** by using the CliftonStrengths assessment (formerly Clifton Larson Strengthsfinder) to build on the existing strengths and skills of our teaching staff.

- **Encouraged enrollment in teacher preparation and continuing education programs**, promoting professional advancement.

These efforts are part of a broader commitment to professional growth and educational excellence, ensuring that all students receive high-quality, standards-based instruction.

*What strategies has the district initiated to improve student equitable access to experienced, in-field, and effective teachers?*

Rochester Beacon Academy continues to prioritize the recruitment and retention of high-quality, in-field licensed teachers. In the 2024–2025 school year, the school expanded its recruitment efforts by developing targeted strategies in collaboration with local organizations and through increased advertising outreach.

A key development this year is our growing partnership with Winona State University (WSU), a local state university. This relationship aims to create a sustainable pipeline of future educators by connecting experienced RBA teachers with WSU student teachers for mentorship and hands-on classroom experience.

In addition, we continue to support current licensed teachers as they pursue graduate degrees in their areas of expertise, further strengthening our instructional capacity and commitment to in-field teaching excellence.

*Describe your efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of teachers in your district. Which racial and ethnic student groups are present in your district that are not yet represented in your licensed teacher staff? How many additional teachers of color and American Indian teachers would you need in order to reflect your student population?*

Our student body is currently comprised of 69% White, 4% Asian, 3% Black or African American, 10% Hispanic, and 14% multiracial students. This diverse community is a strength of our school, and we are committed to ensuring that our staff reflects the variety of backgrounds and experiences of the students we serve. To achieve this, we recognize the need to actively explore and implement effective strategies for outreach and onboarding that will attract a diverse pool of talented professionals to our team.

While student demographics may naturally fluctuate over time, our dedication to fostering an inclusive environment and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of our school community remains unwavering and at the forefront of our decision-making. We

believe that a staff that mirrors the diversity of our students will enhance our ability to provide culturally responsive education and support, ultimately leading to more equitable outcomes for all.

*What strategies has the district initiated to increase and retain teachers of color and American Indian teachers in the district? What goal(s) are you pursuing?*

Rochester, Minnesota's diverse population, comprising predominantly White non-Hispanics, but also significant Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Mixed-race communities, highlights the necessity for an equally diverse teaching workforce. This is especially true for small charter schools aiming to cater to students' varied cultural backgrounds. Recruiting and retaining teachers of color and American Indian teachers becomes increasingly important in this context.



Community engagement is key to attracting a more diverse teaching pool. This means proactively reaching out to potential teachers within the community and making the profession more accessible and appealing to people of color and American Indians. Fostering connections among teachers of color and providing clear career pathways, including professional development and advancement opportunities, helps retain them once hired. Equally important is training all existing staff, regardless of their background, on cultural competencies and the needs of students of color. This ensures every teacher can better support their students.

We prioritize staff growth and development, leveraging individual strengths to boost school morale and climate. Our mission is to build on our employees' strengths and foster collaboration. RBA's goal remains inclusivity; when staff are diverse, students feel more connected, and we thrive. With few applicants of color, we actively recruit future teachers from our own student and staff body.

The school board's strategic planning committee continually seeks new ways to promote our commitment to diversity. With 82% of students qualifying for special education, we want

them to see themselves in those who work closely with them. We actively strive for a diverse candidate pool to achieve this.

**GOALS AND RESULTS**

**GOAL 1: Close the Achievement Gap(s) Between Student Groups**

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Students in grades 6-11 <sup>th</sup> will take the MCA/MTAS to measure academic progress and to monitor if the achievement gap is closing.	Students in grades 6-11 <sup>th</sup> who took the Math and Science MCAs closed the achievement gap between general education and special education students. In Math, special education students met 9.8% more than general education. In Science, special education students met 18.8% more than general education. In Reading, there is a 27.3% gap.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On track (multi-year goal) <input type="checkbox"/> Not on track (multi-year goal) <input type="checkbox"/> Goal met (one-year goal) <input type="checkbox"/> Met all (multiple goals) <input type="checkbox"/> Met some (multiple goals) <input type="checkbox"/> Met none (multiple goals) <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to report

**Narrative**

At RBA, we’re committed to inclusive education. We track the progress of all general and special education students in grades 6-11 who take the Reading MCAs, aiming for a 3-point margin between the groups. Our structured approach – including team teaching, resource rooms, and paraeducator support – has produced notable results. The achievement gap between special education and general education students has been a fascinating trend. Special education students have scored higher in math and reading for the past few years. In FY2024 the achievement gap in math narrowed to be within 3% proficiency. This same year a significant achievement gap occurred in reading. In part due to 48 students who tested, 6 were in general education and 42 were in special education. Additionally, tools like IXL help us measure progress and maintain our focus on inclusive success

**GOAL 2: All Students Career- and College-Ready by Graduation**

Goal	Result	Goal Status
------	--------	-------------

<p>ALL students enrolled at RBA in grades 9-12 will develop a post-high school (college and career readiness) plan with the support and guidance of the school counselor during the first semester of 9th grade, or as soon as possible when enrolling after semester 1, 9th grade. A plan template will be formulated to be used for each student's plan. With the school counselor, each student will complete the following: Using the prescribed template, develop a career and college readiness plan including goals. Annually discuss progress towards meeting the goals in their college and career readiness plan, and update the plan as needed as graduation approaches, determine if they have met their college and career readiness goals.</p>	<p>Of the 69 students enrolled at RBA in grades 9-12, 90% of students had an annual meeting with the student success team member.</p>	<p>Check one of the following:  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On track (multi-year goal)  <input type="checkbox"/> Not on track (multi-year goal)  <input type="checkbox"/> Goal met (one-year goal)  <input type="checkbox"/> Met all (multiple goals)  <input type="checkbox"/> Met some (multiple goals)  <input type="checkbox"/> Met none (multiple goals)  <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to report</p>
--	---	--

**Narrative**

- **Empowering Students for Success Beyond High School:** At RBA, we believe in preparing students for a bright future. That's why we've implemented a comprehensive college and career counseling program for all students in grades 9-12.
- **A Proactive Approach:** We start by meeting with each student at the beginning of the year to discuss their college and career aspirations. This initial meeting allows us to create a personalized plan tailored to their unique goals. As the year progresses, we check in again to ensure students are on track with their plans and make any necessary adjustments.
- **Supporting Students Every Step of the Way:** Our dedicated counselors are committed to helping students achieve their goals. This support includes guiding students through the college application process and providing resources for those

seeking to enter the workforce directly after graduation. We divide our efforts by graduating class to ensure each student receives the attention they deserve.

- **Discovering Career Interests:** To help students identify potential career paths, we administer career interest assessments. Armed with these insights, students can research their top career choices and explore fields that align with their passions and strengths. Our work-based learning licensed teacher also connects students with opportunities in the community, providing invaluable real-world experience.
- **Data-Driven Approach:** We leverage a range of academic and behavioral data to inform our counseling efforts. Tools like IXL diagnostics, MCA, NWEA, and our own Restore Room data provide a comprehensive view of student progress. By tracking this data closely, we can intervene early and set students up for success beyond graduation.
- **Preparing Students for a Bright Future:** At RBA, we're committed to empowering students with the tools and guidance they need to thrive after high school. Through proactive counseling, career exploration, and data-driven support, we're helping shape the leaders of tomorrow.

**GOAL 3: All Students Graduate**

Goal	Result	Goal Status
90% of students enrolled at RBA for at least two consecutive years, will graduate high school in four years, not including students on Individual Education Plans who are eligible to stay in school from ages 18-21 and enter a transition program.	All students enrolled at RBA for at least two consecutive years graduated. Of those students 29% went on to the 18-22 transition program.	Check one of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> On track (multi-year goal) <input type="checkbox"/> Not on track (multi-year goal) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal met (one-year goal) <input type="checkbox"/> Met all (multiple goals) <input type="checkbox"/> Met some (multiple goals) <input type="checkbox"/> Met none (multiple goals) <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to report

**Narrative**

At RBA, our top priority is empowering every student to graduate and thrive in their community. We diligently support students in following their college and career readiness plans, ensuring they feel confident in their futures. We believe all students deserve the opportunity to earn their diplomas, and we work to address any credit gaps or deficiencies. Through weekly problem-solving team meetings, we keep students on the path to graduation. When students arrive at RBA, our counselors conduct thorough credit audits to set each student up for success. With additional support from our Learning Labs, Graduate

Assistance Program (GAP), and What-I-Need (WIN) time, students have the tools they need to stay on track. We also instill in students the responsibility and accountability to proactively monitor their missing work and grades.

## INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND FUTURE PLANS

Rochester Beacon Academy is committed to providing a supportive, inclusive, and individualized educational environment. Our primary organizational values are rooted in serving students—particularly those with special education needs—through evidence-based practices and a collaborative, student-centered model.

### **Core Values and Instructional Practices**

- Team Teaching Model: Many classes are co-taught by both a general education and a special education teacher, ensuring instructional access and support for all learners.
- Small Class Sizes: Classrooms are intentionally capped at no more than 20 students to allow for individualized attention and a calm learning environment.
- High Staff-to-Student Ratio: The presence of paraeducators ensures an adult-to-student ratio at or below 1:7, allowing for greater academic and behavioral support.
- Differentiated Instruction: Lessons are adapted to meet the diverse needs of students, ensuring equitable access to the curriculum.
- Structured Class Periods: 45-minute class periods provide structure and opportunities for supported transitions between subjects and environments.
- Life Skills Instruction: Students receive explicit instruction in key life skills such as organization, time management, and character development.
- Study Skills Support: Instruction includes strategies for breaking down assignments, preparing for assessments, and developing organizational systems.
- Integrated Social Skills Curriculum: All staff are trained in social-emotional learning and embed social skills instruction into daily lessons.
- Transition Programming: Specialized classes prepare students for life beyond high school, focusing on independence, career readiness, and post-secondary planning.

### **Staff Collaboration and Problem Solving**

RBA fosters a collaborative professional culture. Staff meet multiple times per month in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to plan lessons, develop accommodations and modifications, and discuss strategies for student support.

In addition, a formal Problem-Solving Team (PST) process has been established, allowing staff to collaboratively address complex student needs. This model ensures that individual challenges are approached with thoughtful, team-based solutions.

### **Student Preparation for Life Beyond School**

Our students engage extensively with social-emotional learning and life skills instruction, including resume writing, job interview preparation, and teamwork development. RBA is committed to ensuring students leave high school with the tools they need to successfully integrate into their communities.

### **Future Plans**

Over the past four years, Rochester Beacon Academy faced challenges with administrative consistency. However, the 2024–2025 school year marked a turning point. With a fully functional and collaborative administrative team in place, the Academy has been able to focus on strengthening internal systems—revisiting school policies, updating compliance procedures, and streamlining processes.

Looking ahead, RBA is committed to building on this momentum by establishing clear expectations, strategic goals, and long-range planning to ensure sustained success. This includes rebranding efforts aligned with an updated mission statement, which will involve refreshing the school’s logo, visual identity, and community presence to better reflect who we are—and who we aspire to be—as a learning community.

### **Enrollment Growth and Facility Planning**

Following a dip in enrollment after the school’s relocation, RBA has not only stabilized but is now experiencing steady growth in student numbers. With enrollment continuing to rise, space has become increasingly limited—an encouraging challenge that signals strong demand for RBA’s unique programming.

To address this, the Board of Directors will actively explore options to secure a long-term facility solution, with the goal of finding a permanent home that supports projected growth and preserves the Academy’s commitment to small class sizes. The long-range vision includes accommodating 125+ students across grades 6–12, with the potential to create multiple class sections to better serve student needs.

## Academic Programming and Instructional Improvement

Academically, RBA has begun implementing a comprehensive curriculum review cycle and has already invested in several core content areas. Moving forward, the school will continue to enhance academic rigor and support structures within the MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) model.

To improve instructional quality and student achievement—particularly in reading and math—RBA plans to hire a full-time instructional coach to provide targeted support for licensed teachers and further refine best practices in standards-based instruction.

## Community Partnerships and Leadership Development

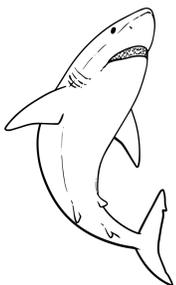
As part of its future vision, RBA will continue strengthening relationships with local organizations and partners in the Rochester area. These partnerships are vital in expanding student opportunities and building a community of bright, resilient young leaders who are equipped with the academic, social, and emotional tools they need to thrive beyond high school.

## Vision for the Next Five Years

The Academy’s next step is to develop a comprehensive five-year strategic plan. This plan will focus on:

- Reaffirming RBA’s foundational values, including small class sizes and inclusive programming
- Expanding and diversifying course offerings
- Enhancing post-secondary and transition programming
- Strategically planning for facility expansion to support full enrollment
- Advancing staff development and licensure pathways

Together, these efforts are designed to position RBA as a leader in personalized, inclusive education while remaining deeply rooted in its mission to serve and empower students.



GO SHARKS!

