

PUBLIC CHARTER APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Check One: New Public Charter under Existing Local School Board New Public Charter District

Name of Public Charter School - Rocky Mountain Academy

Local school district in which the public charter school will be physically located:
Kalispell Public Schools, School District #5

Contact Information for the Governing Board Chair

Contact Person: Heather Asher, KPS Board Chair

Address: 233 1st Ave East, Kalispell, MT 59901

Telephone Number: 406 751-3400

E-mail Address: asherh@sd5.k12.mt.us

Contact Information for the Person Completing this Application

Contact Person: Name: Tryg Johnson Title: Principal

Contact Address: 205 Northwest Lane, Kalispell, MT 59901

Telephone Number: 406-751-3800

E-mail Address: johnsontryg@sd5.k12.mt.us

Opening Date: Fall 2024 Public Charter Term Length: Next Five Years

Grades to be served: 6th - 8th

Minimum Enrollment Per Year: 60 students first year, 90 students second year

Planned Enrollment Per Year: Adjustable depending on demands and community needs after 2nd year

Maximum Enrollment Per Year: Adjustable depending on demands and community needs after 2nd year

For each year of the public charter term, indicate the number of students the public charter school plans to serve in each grade.

Year 1	Grade 6 - 30 Grade 7 - 30
Year 2	Grade 6 - 30 Grade 7 - 30 Grade 8 - 30
Year 3	Adjustable dependent on demands and community needs after 2nd year
Year 4	Adjustable dependent on demands and community needs after 2nd year
Year 5	Adjustable dependent on demands and community needs after 2nd year

ACADEMIC PROGRAM We recognize that this section does not provide the space to fully and accurately respond to each of the questions below. Attachments and appendices are permitted. Please make sure to clearly state where corresponding responses are located.

1. State the public charter school's mission and vision and describe why this initiative is important to the community it will serve.

Mission: The Rocky Mountain Academy is dedicated to guiding all students on a transformative journey working towards becoming high school ready, exemplary citizens who are not only academically proficient but also deeply connected to and aware of the natural environment surrounding them. We believe that by blending academic excellence with personal empowerment and a profound appreciation for outdoor adventures, we can instill the values and skills necessary for lifelong success. We are fully committed to serving our community by cultivating a vibrant school culture that thrives on extended outdoor classroom experiences.

Vision: Our vision is to be a guiding model of education that integrates the natural beauty of Northwest Montana into every facet of our students' educational experience. We aspire to mold well-rounded individuals who excel academically, appreciate the ruggedness of the wilderness and understand the importance of personal agency. At the Rocky Mountain Academy, our vision extends beyond the classroom, encompassing a community where all are welcomed, valued and included in the connecting high academic achievement with a joy for experiencing the great outdoors.

2. Identify the targeted student population and the community the public charter school proposes to serve.

As a public charter school, we believe there is a social and moral obligation to serve our full community and ensure that every child succeeds. We recognize that the needs of our community are diverse and so are the needs and aspirations of the students and families we serve. Embracing the impact of this reality on our work not only helps us remain relevant, meaningful, and effective but also ensures that we are doing so in a way that thoughtfully engages and includes individuals and communities who have been historically excluded. In order to collectively reach this vision, we must create a culture of equity and build trust within our community. Furthermore, we believe a diverse, inclusive, and equitable school community is critical for preparing students to participate in a complex, pluralistic, and interconnected society. We are committed to confronting our own biases and operationalizing our values. We challenge ourselves to regularly evaluate and refine curricula, policies, and practices and to commit the appropriate resources to ensure we embody these beliefs every day

3. Describe plans and timelines for student recruitment and enrollment, including lottery procedures.

Upon successful notification from the Montana Board of Education we will start the planning and recruitment process. Surveys, advertising and applications for the Rocky Mountain Academy will take place in January. Students will apply during the month of February, screening will take place in March and registering and scheduling will take place during the months of April and May as we build the program and schedule based on student / parent demands and requests.

4. Describe the public charter school's academic program, specifically focusing on why it is innovative in your school district. Include plans to formally assess student achievement on an annual basis.

The Rocky Mountain Academy will work within the framework of School District #5 and its charter program. We will seek to rank among the top five schools in our geographic area on comparable, standardized assessment results AND to pursue programs and initiatives that support a school culture grounded in our mission and vision. Students will participate in yearly state testing. Student academic data will also be collected through yearly AIMSWeb testing (twice a year) and NAEP testing (every two years).

5. Describe any variances to existing standards that the public charter school requires to enhance educational opportunities.

The Rocky Mountain Academy will require some flexibility in designing the core curriculum, teaching methods and class structures to focus on the unique goals of project based learning and cross curricular learning. Students and families will also be given flexibility to take advantage of opportunities to work remotely when it is a benefit to the student.

6. Describe the instructional design, including the type of learning environment, class size and structure, curriculum overview, and teaching methods.

The Rocky Mountain Academy is a school within a school academy model with four guiding principles and four components.

Guiding Principles:

- The Rocky Mountain Academy will prepare students for their high school curriculum, college *and* career exploration: Students should possess the academic and technical abilities to succeed in high school, internships, certification programs and some jobs.
- Rocky Mountain Academy will create an engaging, connected curriculum: Students apply academics to real-world issues along with issues and events at the local and state level. Through project-based learning, extended learning opportunities and job shadowing students will apply what they learn.
- Rocky Mountain Academy will place value on life skills: Teaching students to work collaboratively, think critically, and solve problems is as important as teaching them academic knowledge.
- Rocky Mountain Academy will improve student achievement and provide equal access: Although there may be waiting lists for academies, admission should be open to all students within the district, regardless of their academic ability.

Components:

- The elective career technical curriculum and/or outdoor education curriculums will include at least three courses that are infused into the core academics.
- Project-based learning: This gives students the chance to apply what they've learned to a real-world problem, which helps make school relevant.
- Community partnerships: Academies need the support and participation of local businesses and industries for funding and resources and for opportunities for job shadowing, internships, and mentorships.

- Support: With so many at-risk students, academies must have a strong network of support services to help students master the academic and career content.

7. Describe plans for identifying and successfully serving students with disabilities, students who are English Language Learners, students who are academically challenged, and gifted students, including compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

We currently abide by all laws and regulations concerning the service of students in the above mentioned groups. Special Education services along with Systems of Support are well established in our school community and would be paralleled in the charter school academy.

Students with Disabilities:

Rocky Mountain Academy has a designated case manager for IEPs. Additional support provided via the flexible / block scheduling of the program. There is the potential to co-teach in some core subject areas.

ELL Students:

English Language Learners are supported via partner school Kalispell Middle School.

Gifted Students:

Because every student completes an individualized plan for instruction, enrichment and alteration of course requirements will vary based on course, student ability and interests. We encourage students to take concurrent enrollment, or Running Start courses if eligible. Career exploration will occur through differentiation to meet the needs of gifted learners.

8. Describe student discipline policies, including those for special education students.

As students in a “school-within-a-school” academy, our students follow school rules, but with the nature of their flexible environment, they are not bound to always be in certain places at certain times. Students with high level safety violations, such as illegal substance violations, fighting, etc. receive appropriate consequences and/or referral to CRYJ (Center for Restorative Youth Justice). Students who are not progressing in coursework receive interventions through our SOS program until they can demonstrate they are on pace for learning. Our philosophy is to monitor progress and intervene as necessary to help students be successful. Student discipline will follow the same policies and guidelines as Kalispell Middle School and School District #5. Please see attached student handbook. [STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK](#)

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE We recognize that this section does not provide the space to fully and accurately respond to each of the questions below. Attachments and appendices are permitted. Please make sure to clearly state where corresponding responses are located.

9. Describe the public charter school’s organizational chart that clearly presents the proposed organizational structure, including lines of authority and reporting between the governing board, staff, related bodies such as advisory bodies or parent and teacher councils, and external organizations that will play a role in managing the public charter school.

Rocky Mountain Academy

Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent

Principal

Community Partnerships

Parent / Teacher Committee

Assistant Principals

Parents

Instructional, Office,
Support Staff

The Kalispell Public Schools Board of Trustees govern the Rocky Mountain Academy. The KPS Superintendent or designee supervises and evaluates the school Principal. The Principal supervises and evaluates the Teachers, Counselors, and support staff.

Community involvement is a critical piece of our school operations. A Parent & Community Advisory Council meets on a trimester basis to provide guidance and input to the Principal and staff.

10. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the governing board, the proposed leadership management team, and other entities shown in the organizational chart.

The governing board of the Academy would be the Kalispell School District #5 School Board. Leadership management team would include the School Superintendent, K-8 Assistant Superintendent, Special Services Director, and the Director of Business at the District Level. Building level administration would provide day to day leadership for the charter academy. Core teachers would provide high quality instruction around the guiding principles of the academy.

Information about the KPS Board of Trustees, its twice monthly meeting agendas and minutes, along with its committee structure can be found at <https://go.boarddocs.com/mt/kalispell/Board.nsf/Public#>. The KPS board follows the Administrative Rules of Montana, including open meeting laws. It has the authority to approve policy, recommendations for hiring and firing staff, and set budgets.

11. Provide a staffing chart for the public charter school's first year and a staffing plan for the term of the public charter school.

First Year

.25 FTE Principal

1 FTE for Science

1 FTE for English Language Arts

1 FTE for Social Studies

.5 FTE Counselor

.5 FTE SPED Teacher

Second Year

Addition of 1 FTE for Math

- Staffing will be adjusted as student numbers increase

Third, Fourth, Fifth Year

- Staffing will be adjusted based on student numbers, student / parent interests

12. Detail the public charter school startup plan, identifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.

December 2023

- Survey parents and possible students regarding middle school charter school
 - Wants
 - Needs

January 2024

- Review of the survey information
- Finalizing of programming based off survey information
- Advertising for the Rocky Mountain Academy will begin
- Create the application process for the Rocky Mountain Academy
- Contact community organizations and businesses soliciting their input and assistance for internship and shadowing opportunities

February 2024

- Open the student application portal / process
- Screening of student applications / Notification of application process
- Course development will begin

March 2024

- Enrolling and registering students for class options
- Developing the schedule - based on student / parent requests

April 2024

- Developing schedule in conjunction with the KMS building schedule

May 2024

- Parent / student orientation meeting 1 with teaching and administrative staff

August 2024

- Student schedules sent out
- Parent / student orientation meeting 2 with teaching and administrative staff

13. Describe the plans for recruiting and developing school leadership and staff.

This will be done through School District #5's human resource department, following hiring guidelines and associated CBA contracts.

14. Describe the proposed leadership and teacher employment policies, including performance evaluation plans.

In the Academies first year, employment policies, including evaluations will follow approved policies of School District #5 and its associated CBA;s with applicable unions.

15. State the proposed governing bylaws.

The proposed governing bylaws will be in alignment with existing bylaws of Kalispell Middle School.

16. Explain any partnerships or contractual relationships central to the operations and mission of the public charter school.

These are “To Be Determined, based off of community surveys and interest

17. Provide the proposed calendar and sample daily schedule.

	Monday	Tuesday (On Campus)	Wednesday	Thursday (On Campus)	Friday
AM Block		6th ELA Small Group		7th SCI Small Group	Optional remote or On
1 hour 30 minutes		6th SS Small Group		7th SS Small Group	Campus Support
	Remote instruction	7th SCI Whole Group	Remote instruction	6th ELA Whole Group	1 hour 30 minute
	based around Tuesday's		based around Thursday's		Elective Block
Mid-day Block	class schedule or flexibility	7th SCI Small Group	class schedule or flexibility	6th SS Small Group	Options/Opportunities
1 hour 30 minutes	for Extended Outdoor Learning	7th ELA Small Group	for Extended Outdoor Learning	6th SCI Small Group	Optional remote or On
	Opportunities	6th SS Whole Group	Opportunities	7th ELA Whole Group	Campus Support
PM Block		6th SCI Whole Group		6th SCI Small Group	
1 hour 30 minutes		7th ELA Small Group		6th ELA Small Group	
		7th SS Small Group		7th SS Whole Group	

[KPS 2023-24 District Calendar - Kalispell Public School District 5](#)

BUSINESS OPERATIONS We recognize that this section does not provide the space to fully and accurately respond to each of the questions below. Attachments and appendices are permitted. Please make sure to clearly state where corresponding responses are located.

18. Describe plans for providing transportation, food service, and all other significant operational or ancillary services.

Rocky Mountain Academy will be following a school within a school model, transportation, food service and other operational ancillary services for the Rocky Mountain Academy will be aligned with School District #5's current model.

19. Describe co curricular and extracurricular programs and how the programs will be funded and delivered.

All students who participate in the Rocky Mountain Academy will have access to all activities and extracurricular programs offered at KMS. Student eligibility in extracurricular activities is defined in the KMS student handbook.

20. Describe the proposed financial plan and policies, including financial controls and audit requirements.

School finances are governed by the Kalispell School District Business Office, which follows Montana law regarding procedures and safeguards.

21. Describe the insurance coverage that will be obtained.

Insurance will be covered already by existing Kalispell Middle School coverage policies.

22. Describe the startup and five-year budgets with clearly stated assumptions.

Please see attached budget spreadsheet.

23. Describe the startup and first year cash flow projections with clearly stated assumptions.

Please see attached budget spreadsheet

24. Describe anticipated fundraising contributions and evidence, if applicable.

There are no plans for anticipated fundraisers.

25. Describe the facilities plan, including backup or contingency plans.

Current facilities at Kalispell Middle School will be used for the Rocky Mountain Charter School.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND NEED We recognize that this section does not provide the space to fully and accurately respond to each of the questions below. Attachments and appendices are permitted. Please make sure to clearly state where corresponding responses are located.

26. Describe the specific evidence of significant community support.

The Flathead Valley has long been known for its connection and heritage to the natural environment. At the 9th grade level, students have an opportunity to participate in vocational agricultural courses within the district and nearly twenty percent of students request those course placements. Adding a more hands on option for 6th and 7th grade students aligns with future high school opportunities. During the 2022/2023 school year, Kalispell Middle School had 13 students transfer to homeschool. Transferring homeschool families have expressed a desire for a school within a school model, more schedule flexibility and outdoor experiences connected to priority learning objectives.

27. Describe the opportunities and expectations for parent involvement.

Parents of students in the Rocky Mountain Academy will be expected to be involved by attending outdoor activities as supervisors and support the instruction of the curriculum when remote attendance is preferred.

Rocky Mountain Academy Annual Operating Budget Worksheet

Description	Assumptions	Amount	Number	Total
General				
Number of students	60 students 2023-24, calculations based on expected enrollment		60	
Facility	Housed in a section of Kalispell Middle School			
Student teacher ratio	Governed by Montana ARM 10.55			
Average teacher salary	KPS average teacher salary is \$55,000	\$55,000.00		

Revenues

Middle School Basic Entitlement	Minimum 21 students needed	\$117,928.00	1	\$117,928.00
State ANB Earnings (\$7,191.00)	\$8,075 per 7th/8th Grade \$6,307 per 6th grade student, less .50 per student under 80	\$7,191.00	60	\$431,460.00
Quality Educator Payment	Quality educator payment for each certified staff member	\$3,673.00	3	\$11,019.00
Data for Achievement	Per ANB	\$23.58	60	\$1,414.80
At Risk Payment	per student count (not actual enrollment)	\$28.88	60	\$1,732.80
Indian Education for All	per ANB	\$24.63	60	\$1,477.80
American Indian Achievement C	\$242 per Native American Student. This number is currently unknown	\$242.00	0	\$0.00
Applicable State Grants	Received only if we get an equitable share of state grant funding	\$0.00	60	\$0.00
Applicable Federal Grants	Received only if we get an equitable share of federal grant funding	\$0.00	60	\$0.00
Local Tax Revenue	Local levies to bring us to 100% of the max allowed budget	\$0.00	60	\$0.00
Grants and Fundraising	We assume no additional fundraising in year 1	\$0.00	60	\$0.00
	Total Revenue			\$565,032.40

Expenditures

Personnel				
Head of School/Principal	25 % of current administrator	\$25,000.00	1	\$25,000.00
Counselor	.5 school counselor	\$27,500.00	1	\$27,500.00
Teachers	1 FTE Science, 1 FTE English Language Arts, 1 FTE Social Studies	\$55,000.00	3	\$165,000.00
SPED Teacher	.5 FTE	\$30,000.00	1	\$30,000.00
Paraprofessionals	None at this time/TBD			
Clerical	None at this time/TBD			
Nurse	None at this time/TBD			

Custodial	.25 to cover % of facility used for Rocky Mountain Acadmey	\$10,000.00	1	\$10,000.00
Fringe Benefits	17% of salary expenditure amount (\$257,500)	\$43,775.00		\$43,775.00
Health Benefits	\$753.54 per employee x 10 months	\$7,535.40	3.75	\$28,257.75
Other	Assuming cell phones, mileage, travel reimbursement \$1,000 per person	\$1,000.00	3.75	\$3,759.00
	Total Personnel			\$333,291.75
Instruction				
Textbooks/Online Subscriptions	Assume \$250 per student	\$250.00	60	\$15,000.00
Classroom Paper & Supplies	Assume \$30 per student	\$30.00	60	\$1,800.00
Tech Costs (Com, Soft, Service)	1 to 1 Chromebook, \$500 each	\$850.00	60	\$51,000.00
Instructional Equipment	Staff laptops \$800 each	\$800.00	4	\$3,200.00
Library & Media	Included in textbooks & supplies	\$0.00		\$0.00
Student Assessment	Assume \$50 per student	\$50.00	60	\$3,000.00
Classroom Furniture	Collaborative tables & classroom chairs	\$2,000.00	1	\$2,000.00
Athletic Equipment	Assume none needed			
Music Equipment	Assume none needed			
	Total Instruction			\$76,000.00
Services & Supplies				
Office supplies	\$250 per FTE	\$250.00	3.75	\$937.50
Office Furniture	Assume none needed			
Bookeeping & Audit	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below		
Payroll Services	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below		
Banking Fees	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below		
Legal Services	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below		
Liability & Property Insurance	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below		
Staff Development	\$1,000 per teacher	\$1,000.00	3.75	\$3,750.00
Travel	\$150 per teacher	\$150.00	3.75	\$562.50
Internet	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below		
Food Service	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below		

Transportation	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below	
Health Supplies	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below	
Pest Control	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below	
Janitorial Supplies	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below	
Waste Disposal	Included in direct cost rate calculated at 2.67% of our revenue	Indirect cost calculated below	
Indirect Costs	Estimated Revenue Amount (\$687,662.69) x 2.67%	\$18,360.60	\$18,360.60
	Total Services & Supplies		\$23,610.60
Facilities			
Rent/Lease/Mortgage			
Maintenance & Repair			
Gas/Electric			
Phone			
Fire & Security			
	Total Facilities		
	Total Revenue		\$565,032.40
	Total Expenditures		\$432,902.35
	Variance for Enrollment and Staffing Expenditures and other TBD support positions		\$132,130.05