

KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (KSDE)

**APPLICATION FOR SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION SERVICES PROVIDERS
2011-2012**

Instructions: Please review and follow all directions carefully when completing this application. No supplemental material beyond what is specifically requested in the application will be considered. If you have any questions, please contact KSDE Consultant, LaNetra Guess, at 785-296-8965 or email Lguess@ksde.org.

Supplemental Educational Services Provider Contact Information		
Provider/Company Name: Rocket Learning Partners, LLC DBA Rocket Learning		
Contact Person: Reginald Richardson		
Address, City, State: 1000 Park Centre Blvd, #112 Miami, Florida		Zip Code: 33169
Phone: 267-625-4824	Email: reggierichardson@rocketlearning.net	Fax: 215-827-5511

Applications due on **April 8, 2011 by 5:00 p.m. CDT at KSDE Office (this is not a postmark deadline)**

Late or incomplete applications will not be reviewed or considered.

Send **one unbound original** (signed in blue ink) **and three copies** of your completed application to:

**Kansas State Department of Education
Title Programs and Services
120 S.E. 10th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66612-1182
ATTN: LaNetra Guess**

The Kansas State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: KSDE General Counsel, 120 SE 10th Ave, Topeka, KS 66612 785-296-3201.

**Kansas Department of Education
Supplemental Educational Services Provider Application
School Year 2011-2012**

Part I: Contact Information for: **Rocket Learning Partners, LLC**
Name of provider

I. Basic Program Information

1. Program Name and Federal FEIN or Social Security Number	Rocket Learning Partners, LLC DBA Rocket Learning
2. Date Service Provider Formed	<i>List the date (month, year) in which this provider first delivered educational services to students.</i> July 2007
3. Type of Organization	<i>Please check the category that best describes the organization.</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For profit <input type="checkbox"/> Not for Profit <input type="checkbox"/> School <input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Service Center <input type="checkbox"/> Institution of Higher Education <input type="checkbox"/> Faith-based organization <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)

<p>4. Potential districts to serve</p>	<p><i>Below is a list of potential Kansas districts which may be required to provide SES in 2011-2012. Please identify the district(s) in which you would be willing, have the staffing and sufficient resources in which to provide services starting <u>in all</u> checked districts by October 10, 2011.</i></p> <p><i>If approved, you must provide services to all districts checked below or risk removal from the KS Approved SES list.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USD 214 Ulysses <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USD 259 Wichita <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USD 261 Haysville <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USD 308 Hutchinson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USD 430 South Brown County <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USD 453 Leavenworth <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USD 475 Geary County <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USD 480 Liberal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USD 500 Kansas City Kansas <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USD 501 Topeka
<p>5. Place of Service</p>	<p><i>Please check the location(s) that best describes where services are delivered to students.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School <input type="checkbox"/> Business <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Place of religious worship (i.e., church) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community center <input type="checkbox"/> Provider's home <input type="checkbox"/> Student's home <input type="checkbox"/> On-line <p>Accessed from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Public libraries <p>How will transportation be addressed, if needed?</p> <p>Transportation will be provided on an as-needed basis only. When transportation is needed, we acquire contracts with district-approved, certified bus companies.</p>
<p>6. Time of Service</p>	<p><i>Please check the time(s) that best describe when</i></p>

	<p><i>services are delivered to students.</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Before School <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> After School <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weekends <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Summer</p> <p>Hours of operation: Monday – Friday: 7am – 6pm Saturday: 7am – 5pm</p>
<p>7. Subject Areas Covered</p>	<p><i>Check all subjects for which tutoring will be offered.</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reading <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> English as a Second Language</p>
<p>8. Grade Levels Able to Serve</p>	<p><i>List the grade levels in which services are available.</i></p> <p>K – 12</p>
<p>9. Minimum and Maximum Number of Students Able to Serve</p>	<p><i>Please provide an estimate of the minimum and maximum number of students that may be served.</i></p> <p>Individual site minimum 6</p> <p>Individual site maximum 500</p> <p>District minimum 25</p> <p>District maximum 1,000</p> <p><i>Are there a minimum number of students required before services will be provided?</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p>Minimum: 6</p>
<p>10. Specific Student Populations Served</p>	<p><i>Please check the students groups your organization will provide educational services.</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minority students</p>

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migrant students <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Homeless <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Special education students <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 504 student <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English Language Learner <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (describe) Indicate the language(s) other than English in which services are available. Spanish and Haitian Creole
11. Student/ Instructor Ratio	<i>Please list the ratio of instructors to children in the program. Indicate the number of students for every one instructor.</i> 2 – 10 students for every one instructor
12. Mode of Instructional Delivery	<i>Check all that apply:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Individual tutoring <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small group tutoring <input type="checkbox"/> On-line/Web based <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Assisted <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
13. Cost	<i>Please provide an average per pupil cost, per unit of service. (Describe the length of the service, e.g., one hour, one month, one semester etc.)</i> 3-5 hours per week 20-40 total program hours Per Pupil Cost \$75 per hour Explain how the cost per pupil is determined Cost per pupil is determined based on the total program cost for staff, materials, transportation, 504 special needs materials, and snacks. Are there additional costs? (specify) None
14. Staff	<i>Please indicate your hiring practices.</i>

If yes, why you were removed? **N/A**

Are you an approved provider in other state(s)?

If so, which states?

Puerto Rico, Florida, California, Connecticut,
New York, New Jersey, Maryland, District of
Columbia, Virginia, Georgia, Alabama,
Tennessee, Louisiana, Texas, Arizona, Michigan,
and Illinois

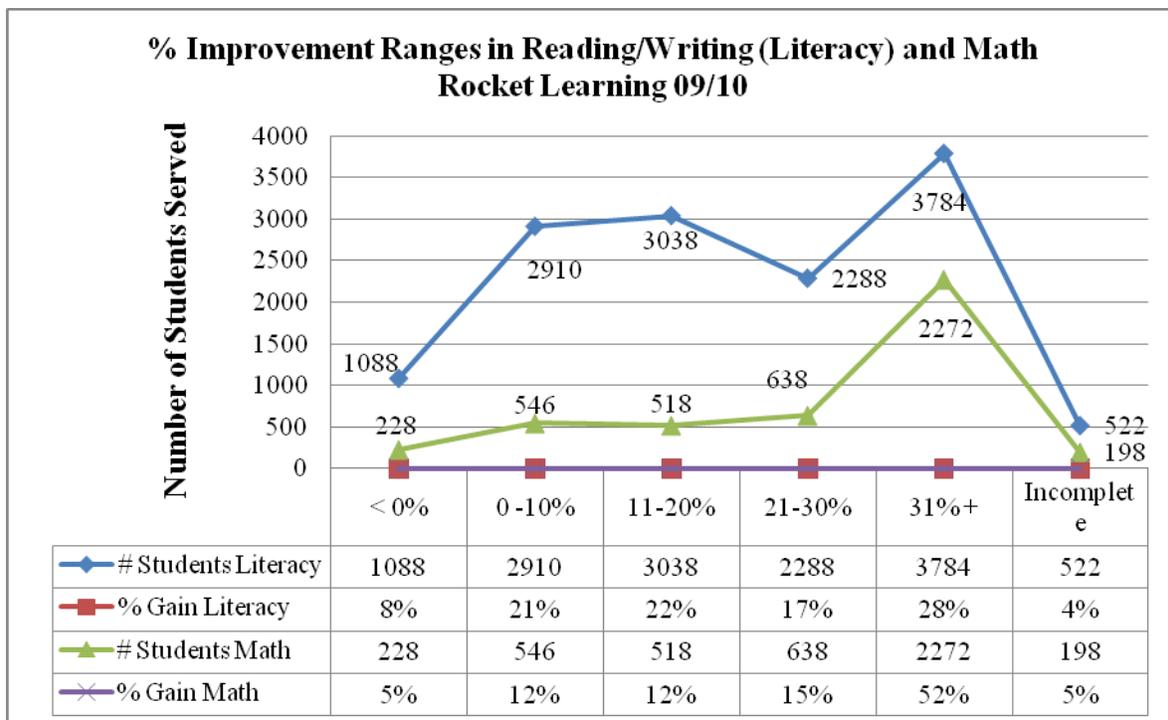
II. Program Overview and Description

Rocket Learning provides **Reading, Writing, and Mathematics** tutoring in small groups, which consist of **one tutor for every 2 to 10 students in grades K–12**. Students are placed in groups according to skill level and needs. Our in-person tutoring services are available statewide. We have the capacity to serve a diversity of student populations including **minority** students, **migrant** students, **homeless** students, **special education** students, **504** students, and **English Language Learners (ELLs)**. For ELLs we provide tutoring in both Spanish and Haitian Creole. Students typically meet with tutors **3 to 5 hours per week for a total of 20 – 40 hours** over the course of the program. Tutoring sessions are scheduled **outside of the regular school day, before school, after school, over the weekend, or during the summer**. Our **per-pupil cost is \$75 per hour for students receiving small group tutoring and \$85 per hour for students receiving one-to-one tutoring**. Our tutors meet with students either at their **school** or at a safe, accessible location, such as a **place of worship, community center, or public library**. We shall provide transportation in specific rare circumstances when needed. The majority of our tutors are state-certified teachers, often working in the schools in which our students are enrolled; at a minimum, our tutors are paraprofessionals who meet Title I education requirements. All Rocket Learning tutors receive thorough training on the use of our curriculum, assessment tools, and best instructional practices to ensure high quality tutoring. We provide all curriculum and other tutoring materials to the students free of charge. Our curricular materials, *Lift-off in Literacy* and *Lift-off in Math*, are **consumable workbooks aligned to the Kansas Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts**. We use commercially available assessments (all published by Pearson) to measure student skill level for the subject in which they receive tutoring: **Limelight Diagnostic Reading** and **Limelight Diagnostic Math** assessments are our primary assessment tools, and the proven valid and reliable **GRADE** and **GMADE** are our supplemental assessment tools. **Student progress is monitored daily and monthly** based on each student's **student learning plan (SLP)**. **Written progress reports are issued on a monthly basis to parents/guardians, school staff, and other appropriate district staff ("stakeholders")**. A **final progress report** is delivered to all stakeholders upon each student's completion of our tutoring program, and this provides information on student academic gains, pre- and post-assessment scores, tutor observations, and interim unit test scores.

III.A. Evidence of Effectiveness

1. Program is of high quality and has been effective in raising students' achievement levels:

Rocket Learning is an established SES provider. Since our inception in 2005, we have tutored over 150,000 students in California, Connecticut, Puerto Rico, Virginia, Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee, Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Texas, and the District of Columbia in both urban and rural areas. This includes 40,000 students during the 2009-2010 academic year alone. Although we have not yet provided SES in Kansas, we have served in districts across the country with similar student and geographic demographics and have achieved high academic gains with these students. Our students' academic gain is gauged based on the difference between our own criterion-referenced pre-tests and post-tests. These assessments are state-standards-based and measure the extent to which our students achieved academic gains in the specific skills covered in each one of our literacy and math programs. On average, more than 80 % of our students complete our tutoring program, and we have assessment data for more than 90% of these students.



As illustrated in the graph above, our students show a strong pattern of academic gains in reading/writing and math. **On average, our reading/writing students gained 22% from pre- to post-test, and our math students gained 31%.** The largest percentage improvement range

(>31%) is coupled with the largest student population set in both reading/writing and math. More specifically, of the students we served in 09/10, our reading/writing students demonstrated the following academic gains: K – 2nd graders improved 19%, 3rd and 4th graders improved 22%, 5th and 6th graders improved 22%, and 7th and 9th grades improved 21%. Our math students demonstrated the following academic gains: K – 2nd graders improved 28%, 3rd and 4th graders improved 39%, 5th and 6th graders improved 40%, and 7th – 9th graders improved 32%. As demonstrated in the chart below, Rocket Learning students in **grades 9 – 11** show an **average gain of 9.2%**.

2009/2010 Gains for Reading/Writing (R/W) and Math: Grades 9–11					
Grade	Subject	Average Pre-Test Score	Average Post-Test Score	Average % Gain	Number of Students
9	R/W	54%	56%	9.6%	29
10	R/W	61%	68%	9.0%	32
	Math	69%	78%	8.8%	6
11	R/W	71%	74%	9.6%	11
	Math	68%	75%	9.1%	8
Total		64.6%	70.2%	9.2%	86

Although we have not yet served SES students in grade 12, based on our record of effectiveness with students in grades K–11, we are confident we can achieve comparable academic gains.

2. Evidence of impact from the Stanford Diagnostic Test, retention rates, and feedback

from parents/guardians: During the 08/09 school year, select Rocket Learning students were assessed using the **Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test and Stanford Diagnostic Math Test**.

Our K–8 Math students achieved the following percentage gains: 1st grade: 51.1%; 2nd grade: 11.3%; 3rd grade: 13.9%; 4th grade: 4.9%; 5th grade: 7.9%; 6th grade: 22%; 7th grade: 49.4%; 8th grade: 17.9%. **Our K–8 Reading/Writing students** achieved the following percentage gains: 1st grade: 13.1%; 2nd grade: 22.4%; 3rd grade: 21.2%; 4th grade: 14.7%; 5th grade: 15.2%; 6th grade: 24.9%; 7th grade: 7.9%; 8th grade: 22.9%. Our **retention rates** also reflect positive evidence of effectiveness on our students. For example, in 2009, of our 889 students in New Jersey, we had a 90% retention rate, and of our 1300 students in Chicago, we had an 80% retention rate. We also measure the success of our program through the **positive feedback we consistently receive from the parents/guardians of our students**. In surveys conducted amongst our parents/guardians, 93% of parents surveyed stated that they would register their student for Rocket Learning again. On a standard Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), the average parent response was 4.2 to the statement, “My child has benefitted from the Rocket Learning program.” In parent surveys overall, we achieved an average of 4.1 or higher. We have

also received consistently strong feedback from parents/guardians’ letters of support. For example, Lashante Irvin wrote, “The program has strengthen[ed] [my son’s] learning abilities in so many ways, that I would recommend this program to all parents.” Latoya Smith wrote, “My child was reading below her grade level. The program helped my child to catch up with reading. My child learn[ed] how to build words, decode words, blend the sounds and helped build self esteem.” Jason Vinera wrote, “I trust Rocket Learning with the development and safety of my child, and would recommend this company to anyone in need of their tutoring.”

3. Evidence of positive impact on student achievement, particularly low-income, underachieving students, and English Language Learners (ELL): Rocket Learning has

demonstrated that our program design accelerates the academic performance of the low-income, underachieving students we serve. Wherever possible, we work with our partner schools to analyze how the students who participated in our program performed on the state-wide test. For example, in 2008, almost 35% of the K–9 schools that successfully fulfilled their obligations under their school improvement plan in Puerto Rico (based on standardized assessment scores), were schools in which we had provided tutoring services to their Title I students who were predominantly ELLs. Rocket Learning helped one South Florida Title I school with similar demographics to Kansas increase its percentage of proficient students by 31% in Math and by 23% in Reading/Writing in a comparison of 2005 and 2006 FCAT scores. The chart below describes the consistent academic gains that our students made in Reading/Writing in San Bernardino, California, which was primarily comprised of ELLs.

Grade	Number of students	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores	Average Gain
K	123	56%	69%	11%
1	450	43%	52%	8%
2	500	55%	61%	6%
3	503	47%	52%	4%
4	444	29%	36%	4%
5	327	26%	31%	5%
6	162	27%	31%	4%
7	65	29%	30%	1%
8	35	32%	33%	1%
Total	2609	38%	44%	5%

4. Source of Data: The above evidence of effectiveness was gathered from services that our organization provided, based primarily on results from valid and reliable performance tests.

III.B.5 – III.B.8. Evidence of Links Between Research & Program Design

B.5. Key instructional practices and major design elements of reading program are high quality, research based, and specifically designed to increase the achievement of low-income, underachieving students:

Rocket Learning provides in-person, **high quality** reading instruction for students in grades K–12, which incorporates research based strategies that have demonstrated success, particularly for low-income and underachieving students. Our *Lift-off in Literacy* curriculum is aligned to Kansas Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and incorporates recommendations established by the National Reading Panel (NRP) to promote student reading achievement, and our reading/writing tutors employ instructional strategies that have a documented record of increasing student achievement.

***Lift-off in Literacy's* alignment to the following 5 literacy skills identified by the NRP:**

<u>Phonemic Awareness</u>	Phonemic awareness is an understanding that words are composed of discrete sounds. <i>Lift-off in Literacy</i> utilizes multi-modality exercises to build student awareness for phonemes. Our phonemic awareness instruction includes sound isolation, blending, segmentation, addition, deletion, substitution, categorizing, identifying, and rhyming activities. These exercises help students learn how sounds work in words and in speech, which is a critical step in meta-linguistic understanding.
<u>Phonics Instruction</u>	Phonics helps new as well as experienced readers make connections between letter patterns and the speech sounds for which they stand. <i>Lift-off in Literacy</i> incorporates many key research-based principles that make it effective and engaging for young learners. Our systematic lessons include analogy-based, synthetic, and phonics-through-spelling exercises.
<u>Vocabulary</u>	<i>Lift-off in Literacy</i> assists in the expansion of vocabulary in order to help readers communicate and comprehend effectively. Vocabulary instruction that makes students think about the meaning of a word and demands that they do some meaningful processing of the word is more effective than instruction that does not. We teach students to learn to recognize and derive meaning from word parts and use context clues.
<u>Comprehension</u>	The primary goal of the comprehension strand is to develop various skills, such as comparing and contrasting, prediction and distinguishing fact from opinion. <i>Lift-off in Literacy</i> aids in the explicit instruction of main ideas and details, story elements, sequencing and determining cause and effect. Our curriculum uses strategies such as monitoring comprehension, recognizing story structure, and summarizing what has been read in teaching comprehension.
<u>Fluency</u>	<i>Lift-off in Literacy</i> provides students with repeated oral reading of texts with guidance and feedback. Students follow along as texts are read aloud by fluent readers. Structured practice for building fluency moves students toward independent reading.

Explanation of the theoretical and empirical rationale supporting the major elements of the

program: Using **small group instruction**, we arrange groups of 2 to 10 students. Small group instruction has been shown to be highly effective method used to teach students who are struggling to learn reading (Strickland, D.S. 2002. *The Importance of Early Intervention*. International Reading Association). Our instruction is designed to provide sufficient **time-on-task** to support student achievement. Students in our program receive between 20 and 40 hours of tutoring to provide ample time to master all skill gaps identified in their SLP. A meta-analysis of 47 studies conducted between 1980 and 2000 examined time-on-task, as it relates to reading outcome of general school-aged populations, as well as for students with disabilities and ELLs. Across all populations, time-on-task was significant in increasing reading ability and achievement (Lewis, M., and S.J. Samuels. 2003. *Read more—read better? A meta-analysis of the literature on the relationship between exposure to reading and reading achievement*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Department of Educational Psychology).

B.6. How services offered will help students improve their reading achievement: In addition to time-on-task and small group instruction, our tutors use **differentiated instruction**. This strategy responds to each student's pace, taking into account individual needs and strengths. Research indicates that differentiated instruction raises student achievement (Parsons, J. S. 2004. A comparative study of the effects of a differentiated instruction model on the reading achievement of third-grade students. Diss., Wilmington College, Delaware. *Dissertation Abstracts International* 64(11): 3960). We make every effort to group students according to their needs and abilities. Because of this, our tutors are able to identify and respond to areas of academic deficit, as well as each student's unique learning style.

B.7 Key instructional practices and major design elements of math program are high quality, research based, and specifically designed to increase the achievement of low-income, underachieving students: Rocket Learning provides in-person, high quality, research based math instruction for students in grades K–12. Our *Lift-off in Math* curriculum is aligned to Kansas Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, and our tutors employ research based instructional strategies recommended by the National Research Council (NRC)'s *Adding It Up: Helping Children Learn Mathematics* (2001 and 2000). For students to succeed in math, they must be able to understand math processes, including representation, connections, communication, reasoning and proof, and problem solving (NCTM, 2000), all of which are addressed by *Lift-off in Math*. *Lift-off in Math* supports students in developing math vocabulary,

understanding the structures of math problems, knowing how to make inferences, and integrating math knowledge with comprehension strategies. It is organized around unifying themes and practical projects based upon research which supports that students make connections between key academic skills and practical real world situations (Carnine and Kameenui, *Effective Teaching Strategies That Accommodate Diverse Learners*, 1998, Prentice-Hall Inc.).

Explanation of the theoretical and empirical rationale supporting the major elements of the program: In addition to small group instruction and time-on-task (see above for the research base that supports these elements of our program), our math curricula is also aligned to the following National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) strands of mathematical proficiency to promote student achievement from *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics*:

- **Number and number relations**
- **Operation concepts**
- **Computation and numerical estimation**
- **Measurement**
- **Geometry and spatial sense**
- **Data analysis, statistics, and probability**
- **Patterns, functions and algebra**

Lessons are designed to cover each category of math concepts, reinforce skill acquisition, and fortify conceptual understanding. Students with similar levels of math ability are provided with the opportunity to engage in informal discussions with each other. This type of interaction helps students develop and solidify their understanding of math concepts (Pugalee, D. 2001. Writing, mathematics, and metacognition: Looking for connections through students' work in mathematical problem solving. *School Science and Mathematics* 101(5): 236–46).

B.8. How services offered will help students improve their mathematics achievement:

Rocket Learning also incorporates the use of **manipulatives** into our instructional strategies. Manipulative materials allow students to use objects to represent abstract thinking process. This method helps to solidify conceptual leaning and build practical math skills for students with a wide range of learning styles. Manipulatives have been shown to lead to long term retention of skills, promote academic achievement and maximize time on task (Kim, A., S. Vaughn, J. Wanzek, and Wei, S. 2004. Graphic organizers and their effects on the reading comprehension of students with LD: A synthesis of research. *Journal of Learning Disabilities* 37).

III.C. Connection to State Academic Standards and Districts' Instructional Programs

1. How Rocket Learning has aligned our instructional program to the Kansas State

Standards: At Rocket Learning, we have proprietary instructional materials, *Lift-off in Literacy* (developed based on recommendations of the National Reading Panel) and *Lift-off in Math* (developed based on the recommendations of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics). Our Curriculum Development Team designed this curriculum to align with Kansas Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts and Mathematics. Due to constraints of space, the following will provide a sampling of curriculum alignments; a comprehensive alignment for each grade in each subject is available upon request. For additional information, please see [H.3 Document](#).

Alignment to Kansas CCSS for English Language Arts:

- **Grade 2 Kansas CCSS (RL4):** “Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.” **Alignment:** *Lift-off in Literacy: Yellow* includes the following lessons: **Lesson 22** (students read a poem, resolve ambiguities about word meaning, identify the use of rhyme, rhythm, and alliteration in poetry, and write poetry) and **Lesson 24** (students create rhyming words, read common word families, and write reflective poems).
- **Grade 7 Kansas CCSS (W3):** “Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.” **Alignment:** *Lift-off in Literacy: Red* includes the following lessons: **Lesson 2** (students build background knowledge in order to complete a writing task, write and autobiographical narrative, assess subject-verb agreement and explore values of social consciousness) and **Lesson 18** (Students write an expository essay and assess common and proper nouns).
- **Grade 10 Kansas CCSS (L4):** “Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple meaning words and phrases based on grades 9-10 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.” **Alignment:** *Lift-off in Literacy: Purple* includes the following lessons: **Lesson 33** (students learn to define vocabulary in context and to use prior knowledge in responding to literature) and **Lesson 35** (students study the Latin roots of vocabulary and learn about cause and effect and inferences in literature).

Alignment to Kansas CCSS for Mathematics:

- **Grade 4 Kansas CCSS (4.OA):** “Use the four operations with whole numbers to solve problems.” Alignment: *Lift-off in Math: Orange* includes the following lessons: **Adding Whole Numbers** (students practice adding whole numbers through the activity of planning a budget for a party), **Subtracting Whole Numbers** (students subtract whole numbers while solving law enforcement themed problems), **Let’s Multiply 2-Digit Numbers** (students study multiplication while solving story problems), and **Multiplication and Division** (students study multiplication and division in story problems related to the medical field).
- **Grade 6 Kansas CCSS (6.SP.4):** “Display numerical data in plots on a number line, including dot plots, histograms, and box plots.” Alignment: *Lift-off in Math: Green* includes the following lessons: **Bar Graphs** (students read and analyze data displayed in a variety of forms—charts, pictographs, and stem-and-leaf plots; generate and collect data for analysis) and **Stem and Leaf Plots** (students read and analyze data displayed in a stem-and-leaf plot, and generate and collect data for analysis).
- **Grade 11 (Algebra) Kansas CCSS (A-APR.1):** Understand that polynomials form a system analogous to the integers, namely, they are closed under the operations of addition, subtraction, and multiplication; add, subtract, and multiply polynomials. Alignment: *Lift-off in Math: Red* includes the following lessons: **Adding and Subtracting Polynomials** (students add and subtract polynomials) and **Multiplying Polynomials** (students use the distributive property to multiply polynomials).

2. How Rocket Learning aligns our instructional program to the instructional programs of

the district: Rocket Learning’s Vice Presidents and Program Managers, who are full time employees, work closely with district and school administrators to ensure that our program is consistent with the instructional programs of the district. Our Curriculum Development Team is comprised of an experienced team of education and curriculum experts. This team is responsible for the design of the *Lift-off in Math* and *Lift-off in Literacy* instructional materials we utilize, and is overseen by the Director of Curriculum and Training Development (DCTD), who works closely with the Vice Presidents and Program Managers to ensure that the curricular content is aligned with district and school standards. The DCTD works closely with the Kansas CCSS to ensure that our curriculum maintains alignment to the standards and contacts statewide districts

to request curriculum frameworks. The Curriculum Development Team takes this information and incorporates it into the curriculum design. In order to support the student's regular classroom learning, the Lead Tutor at each site will also contact classroom teachers and request a pacing guide. For more information, please see [H.3 Document](#).

3. How Rocket Learning will approach and design instruction: In order to increase student achievement, we use research based instructional strategies and program design consistent with the districts in which we serve. We provide live tutoring in **small groups** of 2–10 students for each tutor. Tutors work in-person with students, using consumable workbooks, paper, writing utensils, and lesson-specific manipulatives that supplement students' classroom instruction. Tutoring sessions run between 1–5 hours long, and students complete a total of 20–40 hours in either Math or Reading/Writing, which allows students sufficient **time-on-task** to learn and incorporate new skills and improve their levels of competency. Our program structure is designed to accommodate **differentiated learning**. Our consumable workbooks and manipulatives, small group instruction, time-on-task focus, and support for differentiated learning are all successful approaches that we have found to align with districts' approach to instruction in a way that facilitates academic gains with the students we serve.

4. Instructional materials that will be used: Both Math and Reading/Writing students receive consumable workbooks (either *Lift-off in Math* or *Lift-off in Literacy*, depending on the subject they are being tutored in). These workbooks are divided into color-coded skill levels that correspond to appropriate grade levels. Each level is connected to a theme, and academic content is incorporated into real-life scenarios. Each level includes 27 or more 1-hour lessons and 10 makeup lessons. The lessons begin with an overview, which explains the goals of the lesson. Corresponding Teacher's Guides provide tutors with scope and sequence, as well as specific instructional strategies and materials to be used for each lesson. Tutors also utilize educational tools, manipulatives, and supplementary supplies such as Student Reader Magazines, audio CDs, and hands-on projects. Tutors may also integrate the use of a supplemental handheld device used to deliver interactive audio and video learning activities to students in a digital format. Please see [H.4 Document](#) for the complete curriculum scope and sequence for both content areas of our instructional program. **What will be provided:** Rocket Learning provides all instructional materials for our tutoring sessions. **What the student provides:** Students are not required to provide anything to participate in our tutoring program.

III.D. Monitoring Student Progress

1. Process used to assess/diagnose individual student needs and prescribe an instructional program:

The process that we use to develop a Student Learning Plan (SLP) and individualized instruction is based on identifying measurable, achievable goals. Prior to the onset of our tutoring program, we invite the student's parents/guardians, classroom teacher, and relevant district/school staff ("stakeholders") to a meeting to gather their input and discuss the student's academic needs. We look for information such as past scores on standardized tests, report cards, a copy of the student's IEP (if relevant), and any other available information. At this point, a Rocket Learning tutor, who is trained on the use of our assessment tools, administers a pre-assessment to the student for the subject in which they will be tutored to measure the student's grade-level performance and identify areas of strength and weakness. We use commercially available assessments (all published by Pearson Education, Inc., a nationally recognized publisher of education materials and standardized assessments) to measure student skill level through pre- and post-assessments for the subject in which they receive tutoring. **Limelight Diagnostic Reading** and **Limelight Diagnostic Math** are our primary assessment tools to both pre- and post-test our K–12 students in either Reading or Math, and align with the Kansas State Academic Standards (KSAS) and accurately identify specific skill gaps using benchmarks. As a supplemental pre- and post-assessment tool, we use the commercially available **Group Math Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GMADE)** and **Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE)** assessments, also published by Pearson, and **valid** (based on Content, Criterion-Related, and Construct criteria) and **reliable** (based on Internal, Alternate-Form, Test-Retest, and Standard Errors of Measurement). The GRADE and GMADE assessments are based on scientific research, aligned to state standards, and identify curriculum benchmarks. The paper-and-pencil tests are available for grades K–12, and typically take between 50 and 90 minutes to complete. GRADE and GMADE test results provide thorough diagnostic information. The tests generate a Diagnostic Analysis Summary, which shows criterion-referenced information broken down by number correct, number possible, and percent correct for each subtest and item type. For sample diagnostic instruments for both Reading and Math, please see [H.2 Document](#). The results of the student's pre-assessment scores, as well as input from stakeholders, are incorporated into the student's file. This creates a baseline for future measurements and gives a comprehensive view of the student's areas of challenge. The tutor

creates a draft of the SLP with the established goals and timetables based on the information discussed above; the draft is reviewed by our Program Manager before a copy is given to the student's parents/guardians to sign for final approval, and sent certified mail to ensure they receive it. Districts are also given a copy of the SLP for approval before we implement the SLP in our tutoring sessions with each student. To ensure our program meets the needs of the student, tutors adhere to the SLP for each lesson; each tutoring session is aligned to the Kansas Common Core State Standards, and provides benchmarks and timetables to make certain the student stays on track. Our SLP form includes information on the achievement goals the tutor determines for each student; the instructional services planned to address these goals; the start date of tutoring instruction; information on evaluation, measurement, and the assessment tools used to diagnose skill gaps; a description of the expected change in student performance; and a description of how the student's parents/guardians, classroom teachers, and appropriate district staff will be regularly informed of the student's progress. For our student learning plan template, please see [H.2 Document](#).

2. Process to facilitate consultation with the district and school and set clear individual student goals: During the initial meeting as we develop the individual student instructional program, input and involvement from the district and school (typically the student's classroom teacher and other relevant district staff) is essential to ensure that each student's SLP will effectively and sufficiently supplement the instruction they are receiving in the classroom and meet the student's individual needs. Upon enrollment, our Vice President directly contacts the student's classroom teacher and district staff and invites them to participate in the SLP creation process. We hold this meeting prior to the onset of our tutoring program, to gather their input and discuss the student's academic needs. We maintain open channels of communication through regular reports of student progress and direct communication with school and district staff as needed. **How a timetable for student academic achievement is developed:** To develop a timetable, we compare the student's skill level with the grade-level expectations, and establish short term and long term goals to bring the student to grade-level mastery. A long term goal is grade-level mastery; short term goals are the steps required to bring a student who is performing below grade level to mastery. We set timetables based on the needs of the student, the amount of tutoring hours available, and the pacing calendar of the student's classroom instruction.

3. The instrument and process that will be used to evaluate, monitor, and track student progress on a continuous and regular basis: We continuously and consistently monitor student progress to make certain the student is on track with the goals in his or her SLP. **Informal evaluating, monitoring, and tracking:** Tutors **monitor** student progress on a daily basis by making notes that **evaluate** each student's performance and attitude in the tutoring session. To **track** ongoing student progress, at the conclusion of every other 1-hour lesson, the tutor gives each student a short, 5-question quiz. At the conclusion of every 10 lessons, the tutor gives the student a unit test. If the quizzes and tests show that the student is not meeting goals according to the timetable established in the SLP, our Lead Tutor will discuss with the tutor how to adjust instruction to best support the student's academic progress. Please see [H.5 Document](#) for sample ongoing assessments for each content area delivered. **Formal evaluating, monitoring, and tracking:** A comparison of the student's pre- and post-test scores on Limelight is used to measure the student's overall academic gains during the course of our tutoring program.

4. Process that will be used to encourage and support regular student attendance: Rocket Learning encourages student attendance throughout the program through parent outreach, and with our student encouragement program. Our plan adheres to EIA guidelines regarding appropriate incentives to students. On a daily basis, our tutors support regular student attendance through **verbal encouragement, positive reinforcement, fostering an interactive and stimulating learning environment, and ongoing support.** We also work closely with parents/guardians regarding attendance, and immediately notify parents/guardians if student attendance becomes an issue. If a student does not attend the scheduled tutoring session, we immediately contact the parents/guardians to address the absence. If student attendance becomes an ongoing problem, we call parents/guardians to discuss the problem and to seek a resolution. In addition, Rocket Learning provides **small incentives of nominal value** to students on a weekly or bi-weekly basis based on regular attendance record. Incentives include, but are not limited to, pencils, stress balls, and stickers. If it is in compliance with the district recommendations and the site's rules, Rocket Learning also offers a healthy snack at each session (this snack time is not counted toward our SES instruction time). Please see [H.8 Document](#) for more information on Rocket Learning's incentive policies.

III.E. Communication with Parents/Families, Schools, and Districts

1. How parents and the district (stakeholders) will be involved in the process of setting goals, timetables, monitoring student progress, and evaluating services:

How stakeholders are involved in setting goals, timetables: As soon as a student enrolls in our program, Rocket Learning involves all stakeholders in setting goals and timetables for the student's learning plan. We contact the student's parents/guardians to establish communication, and maintain ongoing communication with them to ensure that the SLP meets the student's needs. During our initial meeting, parents/guardians provide input regarding the student's academic needs, including their observations of the student's strengths and weaknesses. The district and parents/guardians both must approve the SLP before we move forward with tutoring. Please see **III.D.2** for more information on how we involve schools and districts in creating goals and timetables. **How stakeholders are involved in monitoring student progress and evaluating services:** We continuously monitor student progress to make certain the student is on track and adjust each student's programming based on this. If a student is meeting SLP expectations, we maintain instruction as planned. If a student is not meeting goals according to the timetable established in the SLP, we meet with the student's parents/guardians and classroom teacher (if available) to determine if any new challenges have arisen and identify ways to adjust instruction to best support the student's academic progress. Examples of adjustment may include additional time-on-task in targeted skill areas, use of a different instructional strategy, or to place the student in a new tutoring group. All stakeholders are subsequently kept informed through our tutor's monitoring and reporting of the student's progress, and stakeholders are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback on the student's needs. We also invite stakeholders to provide us with ongoing evaluation of our services, as we are always seeking ways to improve our tutoring.

2. Specific procedures used to report student progress to parents, teachers, and other appropriate staff: We report student progress to all stakeholders (school personnel, parents/guardians, and district coordinators) through monthly progress reports.

- **Frequency and method of reporting:** We report student progress through **monthly progress reports** that are distributed to all stakeholders. We also provide interim, **informal**

progress reports in person or via telephone and/or email to all stakeholders, including parents/guardians, classroom teachers and school/district personnel as needed throughout the course of our tutoring program. These informal reports are available as frequently as necessary. At program's end, we generate a **final progress report** that provides a comprehensive view of the student's overall gains during our tutoring program. Our Program Manager reviews all progress reports for accuracy and is responsible for sending a written copy of each report to stakeholders each month. Informal reports are provided via in-person meetings, telephone and/or email during the interim at the frequency at which they are requested. Reports (both formal and informal) are provided to classroom teachers and district staff through U.S. mail, email, or hand delivery, depending on the recipient's preferred method.

- **Content of reports:** Each progress report contains the student's name, grade, subject, school, tutor, and time period for which progress was monitored. The report states goals addressed during that tutoring period, skills mastered toward that goal, and outlines next steps for the student's instruction. It also includes assessment tools used to measure progress, instructional methods, curriculum covered, and any other relevant observations. We also issue a final progress report, which includes a comparison of the student's pre- and post-test scores to show the student's overall academic gains.
- **FERPA compliant:** Rocket Learning complies with all provisions of FERPA and SES requirements. We inform parents/guardians of their rights as set forth in FERPA, and ensure that all student records are handled accordingly. All student records are maintained in a secure, locked file for each tutoring site. Our internal office filing system consists of a secure locked file system where hard copies of student data are stored. Only approved personnel have access to these files. We train all staff on these confidentiality precautions; our Vice President monitors this process and ensures that these policies are strictly enforced.

3. Specific strategies used to work with parents/families and school personnel: In addition to the previously-described strategies we use to communicate with stakeholders and to involve them in our program (such as initial meetings, creation of the SLP, and ongoing involvement

through progress reporting), Rocket Learning also involves stakeholders through our introductory materials, which introduces them to our program, describes our services, and offers ways in which stakeholders can participate in our program. Please see [H.6 Document](#) and [H.7 Document](#) for more information on this introductory material for parents/guardians and classroom teachers.

4. Languages information will be provided to parents: At our initial meeting, we determine if parents/guardians speak a language other than English. If a need is established, these parents/guardians receive all communication written (which consists primarily of introductory information and progress reports) in their preferred language. If a translator is needed, we will provide one. We will translate all written reports and letters into the parent/guardian's native or preferred language.

5. Dispute resolution process: Rocket Learning has a complaint resolution process that follows the Education Industry Association (EIA)'s recommendations should a dispute or conflict arise within our company or among our staff and parents/guardians. We explain this process during our initial meeting with the student and their parents/guardians; a copy of this process is also described in the student handbook. Should a complaint or conflict arise, parents/guardians fill out an Incident Report, which is provided upon entry into our program. Our Program Manager is responsible for overseeing this process and ensures that the complaint is addressed immediately and that a resolution is reached within a week of notification, although we typically resolve it the same day. First, the Program Manager contacts the parents/guardians and documents the incident/complaint in the Incident Report. Next, the Program Manager takes a prompt and proactive role: they meet with the tutor and parents/guardians either through a telephone meeting or in-person meeting and to seek resolution. Should the situation indicate, the Program Manager informs the district of the complaint and its resolution. If a dispute occurs between Rocket Learning tutors, the Program Manager ensures resolution and oversees the complaint process. If a dispute occurs between Program Managers or a Program Manager and tutor, the Senior Program Manager oversees it. Rocket Learning maintains complete documentation with our HR Department in each office of all disciplinary and attendance issues, and documents all meetings with parents/guardians regarding this. Documentation is made available to all involved parties.

III.F. Qualifications of Instructional Staff

1. Staff qualifications, recruiting, and hiring: Minimum qualifications for tutors: (1) paraprofessionals who meet Title I education requirements; (2) at least 2 years relevant teaching and/or tutoring experience with similar student populations, such as Title I; (3) demonstration of knowledge in the required subject matter; (4) enthusiasm for teaching; and (5) willingness to learn and use new teaching methods and approaches. We prefer to hire tutors who hold a Bachelor's degree in a related field such as education, math, or English, and who are bilingual. **Minimum qualifications for Lead Tutors** are the above qualifications AND state certification in teaching, and we prefer they hold at least 4 years of teaching experience. **Recruiting high-quality staff:** We recruit year-round using a recruitment process developed by our team of education professionals and experienced managers. We receive referrals from school and district staff, recruit from neighboring schools, and advertise through the Internet and local newspapers. Additional outreach strategies are particularly critical in rural areas. If we are unable to find ample state-certified teachers in a rural area, we hire tutors with comparable experience who meet the minimum requirements for a paraprofessional who meet Title I education requirements. **Process for hiring high-quality staff:** Once we have our pool of applicants, our Program Manager reviews resumes and invites the most highly qualified applicants to attend a one-on-one interview with upper management. At this point, we also identify a pool of qualified substitute tutors, who must meet the same minimum qualifications as our permanent tutors. All applicants (tutors and substitute tutors) who successfully pass this interview process must then pass a comprehensive background checks before we offer them a position with Rocket Learning.

2. Qualifications to accommodate the needs of students: Students with disabilities: Minimum qualifications are the same as in **III.F.1**, but we prefer tutors who also have experience working with students with disabilities. **Students with limited English proficiency:** Minimum qualifications are the same as in **III.F.1**, but we prefer bilingual tutors experienced working with ELL students. **Low income, low achieving students:** Most of our students are low income and low achieving, so we require all our tutors to have at least 2 years relevant teaching and/or tutoring experience with this student population.

3. Initial Training and Ongoing Professional Development: Initial training: New tutors attend mandatory training prior to contact with students or student data. This in-person **6–8 hour** training session is typically held at a conference facility, and led by curriculum experts and our

senior management. Topics include: implementing our curriculum materials; effectively using manipulatives; administering pre- and post-assessments; creating SLPs and progress reports; how to observe, monitor, and record student information; research based instructional strategies; working with Title I students, students with special needs, and/or limited English proficiency; federal, state, and local safety and health laws; SES Provider Code of Conduct; and our company policies and procedures. We assign tutors to a particular subject/grade level combination so that the training they receive is specific to tutoring they will provide. **Ongoing training:** Tutors participate in **monthly on-site staff meetings**, during which they receive ongoing support and training. Throughout the program year, tutors attend professional development sessions led by our Lead Tutors and Program Managers on topics such as how to adjust instructional styles for students who learn at a slower rate. **Determining the effect of training:** We constantly monitor our program's effectiveness in improving the math and reading/writing achievement of our students. The Program Manager for each site conducts unscheduled, on-site visits to monitor tutoring sessions to ensure that students are being effectively and properly instructed. Lead Tutors also conduct informal daily monitoring of tutoring sessions. When we encounter operational or academic issues, our management team discusses adjusting or adding training we may need to provide for our staff. All staff members also receive regular performance reviews.

4. Evidence of Adequate Staff and Resources: Rocket Learning has been providing SES tutoring since 2007 and private tutoring since 2005. We have established tutoring programs and tutored more than 150,000 students in California, Connecticut, Puerto Rico, Virginia, Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee, Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Texas, and the District of Columbia in both urban and rural areas. We fully understand the steps required to set up a new program—including hiring and training staff, establishing tutoring locations, marketing our program, and ordering sufficient materials—to be ready to begin tutoring by October 10, 2011. Our organizational resources allow us to serve a minimum of 6 students per site and 25 students per district—even in remote areas—to maintain our high standard of tutoring. When we establish a new tutoring program, we typically hire 1 Tutor for about every 6 students; 1 Lead Tutor for each tutoring site; 1 Enrollment Aide for every 50 students; 1 Program Aide for every 35 students; 1 Program Manager for every 200–300 students; 1 Operations Manager for every 1,000 students; and 1 Vice President/Regional Director per region.