
HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

Rocky Mount Academy

Rocky Mount, NC

July 2011



www.rmacademy.com

Rocky Mount Academy (RMA) in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, was founded in 1968 and provides a college-preparatory education for PK through 12th grade. RMA is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and is a member of the National Association of Independent schools and the North Carolina Association of Independent Schools. RMA is located in a city of nearly 60,000 approximately one hour east of Raleigh, NC at the crossroads of Interstate 95 and NC 64.

Founded as an independent, secular, college-preparatory, PK-12 school, RMA has stayed true to its roots while expanding its curriculum and broadening the student base through increased financial aid. RMA combines academic excellence with an emphasis on education for character and citizenship. Leadership opportunities are offered in academics, athletics, clubs, and service. The Core Values of Academics, Character, and Community are instilled throughout the curriculum and the extra-curricular offerings of the school. Now into its fifth decade of serving the community well, a new three-year strategic plan will be in place for the 2011-12 school year and will provide a roadmap for the next Head of School.

The RMA campus sits on 44 acres in a residential neighborhood approximately four miles from downtown. Campus facilities include a modern library, cafeteria/auditorium, two computer labs, two playground areas, and a large courtyard area that is the heart of the school grounds. Athletic facilities include a gymnasium, weight room, soccer field, baseball/football field, softball field, and 6 newly constructed tennis courts. The school has 34 classrooms, including 4 science labs.

RMA continues to be a close-knit school. The community takes great pride in the strength of its facilities, the enthusiasm of its parents association, and the learning that takes place both in and out of the classroom. The school has low attrition (in the single digits for grades 1-12), and the pride of students and faculty in their school is apparent to any visitor to campus. A new alumni council as well as a record breaking annual fund suggests a more concerted effort on behalf of the school to prioritize development and school brand.

TO APPLY



**Rocky Mount Academy has selected Southern Teachers Agency
to assist with the search for the next Head of School.
For application instructions, please see page 7 of this profile.**

Application deadline: September 15, 2010

The Mission and Core Values



The **mission** of Rocky Mount Academy is to prepare students for the challenges, opportunities, and responsibilities that they will encounter in life and college.

RMA has identified three **core values** that it hopes to instill in each of its students.

Academics

Rocky Mount Academy believes it is important to provide an academic environment in which students can learn and develop higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills for life and college. Faculty members work with students so that they may progress beyond simply knowing information or memorizing facts to analyzing, synthesizing, and applying their knowledge effectively.

From pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade, teachers strive to have their students become increasingly independent with a growing understanding and appreciation of students' individual styles of learning.

Character

Rocky Mount Academy believes that strong character values—such as respect, responsibility, and integrity—are essential elements for a successful future for each student. Respect for oneself and others is fundamental to all interactions at the school. To act with responsibility—meeting one's obligations and demanding the best from oneself—enhances students' self-esteem and self-confidence. Integrity is the act of knowing oneself and acting in congruence with one's values. Each of these character values is necessary in the life of Rocky Mount Academy.

Community

Rocky Mount Academy believes that it is a part of a broader civic, national, and worldwide community. Students should learn to understand and appreciate the diversity of cultures and beliefs that are represented in an ever-shrinking world. This recognition of differences at every level, from the student on one's right to the citizen halfway around the world, will enhance the academic community and prepare students for life and college. Faculty, students, and parents should interact with care and respect based on the values and goals that they share.

ROCKY MOUNT ACADEMY

Founded: 1968
Grades: PK4-12
Total Enrollment: 421
Lower School (PK-5): 180
Middle School (6-8): 98
Upper School (9-12): 143
Boys: 49%
Girls: 51%
Diversity: 9%
Students Receiving Aid: 24%
Faculty: 50
Female Faculty: 74%
Male Faculty: 26%
Student/Faculty Ratio: 8:1
Average LS & MS class size: 15
Average US class size: 11
Average faculty tenure: 7.5 years
Average faculty experience: 19 years
Faculty with postgrad degrees: 44%
Highest Tuition: \$10,500
09-10 Budget: \$4.2 million
Debt: \$376,000
09-10 Annual Fund: \$109,000
2010 Mean SAT M+R/W: 1171/578
Participation in Sports: 88%
Board of Trustees: 25
Accreditation: SACS (2009)

The Program and the Faculty



Serving over 400 students from seven surrounding counties within a 60 mile radius, RMA offers a challenging **academic program** including ten foreign language classes in French and Spanish as well as ten Advanced Placement classes. In the 2009-10 school year, 92% of upper school students enrolled in at least one Honors or AP course, and 88% of students participated on at least one sports team. Since 1971, approximately 95% of RMA graduates have gone on to attend college, including 100% of the 2010 graduating class. The 2010 graduating class was awarded a total of \$2.1 million in merit scholarships.

RMA pre-kindergarten is one of only two in the area to earn a 5-star rating the NC Division of Child Development. That early foundation of excellence threads through the entire program and beyond. Graduates routinely come back after leaving for college to tell their teachers how prepared they were for the challenges they faced at the next level. RMA's program is marked by a civil and productive learning environment and a strong faculty who focus on teaching kids how to succeed rather than on how to reach a destination. As one teacher said so well, "You cannot focus on learning and on making a grade at the same time." Although RMA is very proud of its college acceptance list, it is the learning that happens within its walls that defines the school's success.

The **curriculum** at Rocky Mount Academy is vigorous and takes the best from the traditional and the progressive. Serving average to above average students, the school charges each teacher to both challenge and nurture students. Hard work is valued and rewarded. Academic rigor is balanced by athletic participation, clubs, community service, and the arts. RMA initiated the Learning Skills Program in 2007 to provide individual academic support and enrichment to students in PK-8 utilizing multi-sensory teaching strategies. The Skills teacher collaborates with the classroom teachers and parents of each referred student to achieve the maximum benefit from the program.

The **arts** have long been a source of pride for the RMA community. For many years, this pride was centered on the **visual arts**. All students in grades PK-9 take an art course during at least part of the year. As students move through the upper school, they may participate in advanced art and art history courses, including AP studio art. The arts festival in the spring each year culminates with one student's drawing or painting being chosen as the art show winner, which the school "buys" from the student and frames for permanent display in the media center.

In the last decade, the **performing arts** have grown tremendously at RMA, beginning with the yearly spring musical. The upper school has added a second performance in the fall, "An Evening of One Acts." Additionally, the music program has expanded considerably in recent years and now includes a chorus.

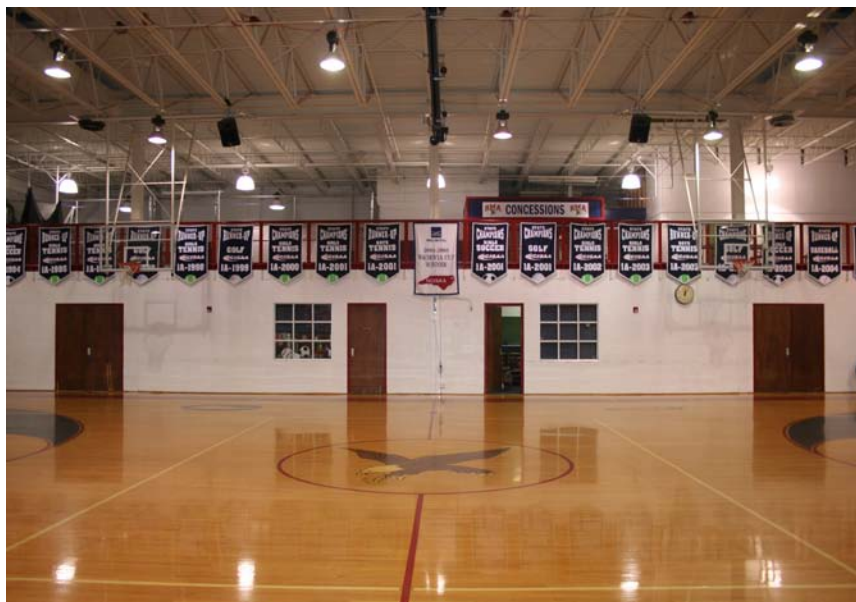
WHAT MAKES RMA UNIQUE

Going to school at Rocky Mount Academy is not just about learning the 3 R's. It is an experience both inside and outside the classroom. The school mission would not be complete if attention was solely on academics.

Teachers and administrators are concerned about developing the whole child and setting the course for him or her to be a well-rounded, responsible adult. RMA recognizes that students get invaluable experience and life lessons from participating in activities on campus and outside the school gates. In a smaller school such as Rocky Mount Academy, opportunities to take a role in student life and leadership are readily available.

A survey once asked students and parents to put the RMA experience into words, and they described it as "challenging, safe, fun, nurturing, and friendly." RMA's success starts with the quality of the education; however it goes much deeper.

Athletics are also an integral component of the school culture beginning with the PK-8 physical education program and continuing through the interscholastic squads. Almost 90% of students in grades 7 through 12 participate in at least one of the 28 teams the school fields each year. The no-cut policy has long been a tradition and so has athletic excellence. A member of the Eastern Plains Independent Conference, RMA won the Wachovia Cup in 2004-05 as the best athletic program in their classification in the state of North Carolina based on points earned by the teams throughout the year. Student athletes each year are honored with all-conference, all-state, and player of the year awards. Parent and school support is excellent, and the Eagles are known throughout the region for their effort and sportsmanship.



The **faculty** of Rocky Mount Academy makes up the heart and whole of the school. It is an experienced and established group. Faculty members average 19 years of teaching experience, including an average of 7.5 at RMA, and 44% hold advanced degrees. Almost two-thirds of the faculty are either North Carolina natives or earned their bachelor's degree from a North Carolina university. Leveraging small class size and a low teacher/student ratio, school culture encourages relationships between faculty and students so that no child slips between the cracks. Many faculty members have received "Schools Attuned" training from All Kinds of Minds, a leading education organization dedicated to studying the science of learning. The school continues to do this training as needed with new faculty.

The Community



The city of **Rocky Mount** is located at the crossroads of Interstate 95 and NC 64, conveniently situated two hours west of the beaches of Nags Head and less than one hour east of the state capitol, Raleigh. Known for the warmth of its people and home to North Carolina Wesleyan College, Rocky Mount has a population of 60,000 and has twice been named an All-American City.

Despite its mountainous name, **Rocky Mount** is situated in the coastal plain of North Carolina, or, more colloquially, "down east." The name of the town most likely derives from the rocky mound near the falls of the Tar River, site of the Rocky Mount Mills, one of the first cotton mills in the state. Over the years, the **Rocky Mount** economy has developed from one based on tobacco, cotton, and textiles to become a small-business hub complemented by national industries in aerospace, foodservice, and healthcare.

The **Rocky Mount community** benefits from an extensive park system, boasting over 50 parks, recreation centers, and pools. The community recently completed construction of the largest sports complex of its kind on the east coast, as well as a state-of-the-art YMCA. The Tar River and reservoir offer boating and fishing, and the temperate climate (average temperatures range from 42 in winter to 82 in summer) make Rocky Mount a great place to enjoy the outdoors.

Rocky Mount offers considerable opportunities in the arts as well. The Dunn Center for the Performing Arts at North Carolina Wesleyan College welcomes plays as well as performers ranging from folk legend Robert Earl Keen to the Harlem Gospel Choir. The Imperial Center downtown includes an art gallery, children's museum and science center, and a community theater.

The Future

A comprehensive, cohesive, and dynamic three-year **strategic plan** is in process of Board review and approval. The plan will focus on six key areas:

- Student Preparation for College
- Student Preparation for Life
- Fiscal Stewardship of RMA
- Facilities
- Marketing
- Technology

The **Strategic Planning Committee** focused on the goal of continually increasing the Return on Investment for each constituent of RMA. This plan will assist RMA as it continues to send young people into the world who are academically prepared, confident, motivated, wise, and willing to do those things necessary in making positive contributions to their own lives, families, and society.



The **strategic plan** is achievable and includes metrics to measure ongoing accomplishment of the goals set forth. The focus of the plan is not only to improve classroom instruction, but also to strengthen the learning that goes on outside the classrooms. The new Head of School will arrive with a clear roadmap for school improvement in his or her first three years.

2009 SACS REPORT

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement visited RMA in the spring of 2009. The school received a glowing report and was deemed Highly Functional in almost every standard. Commendations included the school's inclusion of stakeholders in developing the strategic plan, the high morale and caring and positive attitude exhibited by school constituents, and the vision of school leadership. The report noted particular strengths in the areas of communication of the mission, the safe and orderly learning environment, the high standards the school has for students, and faculty relationships that characterize a learning community.

The Next Head of School

The next **Head of School** of Rocky Mount Academy will find a faculty and administration excited about empowering leaders and a board that respects the authority of the **Head of School**. In preparation for the search, numerous meetings and surveys with representation from a broad spectrum of the RMA community, including the board, administration, faculty, and parents, helped provide the top priorities for the leadership skill-set necessary to guide RMA into the future.

- The next **Head of Rocky Mount Academy** will vest him/herself in the long term success of Rocky Mount Academy.
- **The Head** will bring energy and dynamism to all endeavors.
- **The Head** will immerse him/herself in the community and nurture school spirit, climate, and values and will effectively communicate the school mission to the general community.
- Curriculum and program innovation with enhanced use of technology will be an immediate focus.
- Experience in faculty recruitment and retention as well as effective evaluation, development, and compensation of faculty and staff will be essential.
- **The new Head** will possess the necessary experience and skill to help the school fulfill its mission and implement its proposed three year strategic plan.

A master's degree is required and experience as an independent-school administrator is desired.

Application Process

Applicants for the Head of School position should submit the following:

- ◆ A Southern Teachers Agency application, available at www.SouthernTeachers.com
- ◆ A cover letter describing their interest in pursuing this position at Rocky Mount Academy
- ◆ A current resume
- ◆ A statement of educational philosophy
- ◆ A list of references from present and most recent administrators

Applications should be sent via email to

Richard Snyder
RMAsearch@SouthernTeachers.com
Southern Teachers Agency

Proposed Search Schedule

Application deadline:	September 15, 2010
Semifinalist notification:	October 2010
Finalist visits:	November 2010
Appointment:	December 2010
Assume Duties:	July 1, 2011

For a video presentation of the school please visit www.southernteachers.com/stadmin/RMA.wmv