

JOHN W. REX CHARTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



...a launch pad for learning & discovery



John Rex Charter Elementary School opened in August 2014. It utilizes the best elements of a public-private educational partnership to provide an exemplary learning environment for students. It offers a one-of-a-kind, quality education to an economically and racially diverse group of students. This unique charter school places students in the heart of the city for daily exposure to the culturally rich amenities that are only available in downtown Oklahoma City.

Expanded opportunities abound within walking distance of the school. Downtown neighbors include: many performing and visual arts organizations, civic and business groups, plus numerous cultural and sports-related resources. Access to these amenities provides a unique, hands-on experience for students. OKC's first downtown public charter school serves a diverse group of families seeking a well-rounded education for their children.

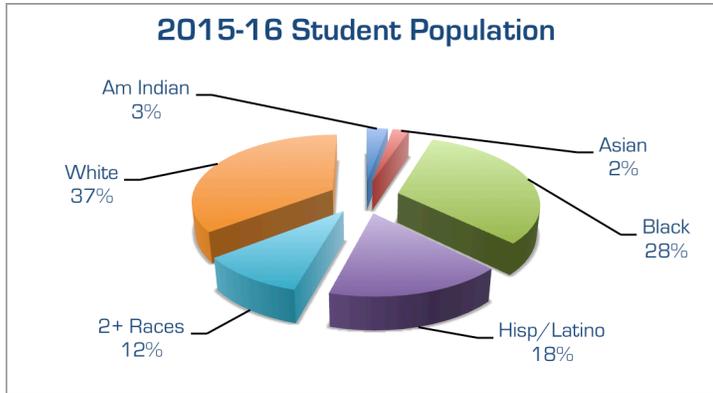
JRCES has a 17-member Board of Directors, including six members appointed by the Oklahoma City Public School District, six appointed by Oklahoma City Quality Schools, three appointed by these 12 directors, and two appointed by The University of Oklahoma, the charter sponsor. The JRCES directors are responsible for all aspects of planning, governance, and operation of the school.



www.johnrexschool.org
#wechoosejohnrex

PURPOSES OF THE CHARTER

- Improve student learning
- Increase learning opportunities for students
- Encourage the use of innovative teaching methods
- Provide additional choices for parents and students
- Create new professional opportunities



STUDENT POPULATION

John Rex School has a designated geographic attendance boundary that functions as an overlay to the OKCPS feeder patterns. Any child residing within the attendance zone is entitled to attend the school, unless the parents opt out by choosing another school for their child.

The JRCES Board of Directors, in cooperation with OKCPS Board of Education, established the attendance zone to encourage families to move to downtown and to create a diverse student population.

The 313 original Rex Rockets in 2014 were a very diverse group. Students came from 44 different schools from around the OKCPS district. Families from 12 of the 14 metropolitan area suburban school districts were represented.

BY THE NUMBERS: 2015-16

- 371 students enrolled in PK-3rd grade
- 95% attendance rate
- 42% qualify for the free/ reduced meals
- 10% on IEPs (Special Education)
- 11% identified Gifted-Talented
- 13% qualify for ESL services
- 70% reside within the OKCPS district
- 18% reside within the John Rex Attendance Zone
- 12% transfers from another school district
- 19 students issued short-term suspensions
- 0 students issued long-term suspensions
- 0 students expelled
- 1 transfer revoked (out-of-district)
- 99% Parent-Teacher conference participation
- 98% re-enroll for the next school year

ENROLLMENT PROCESS

John Rex Charter Elementary School has a four-tiered priority system for enrollment:

- 1) First, any child residing within the attendance boundaries for JRCES (residency verification required) or
- 2) Second, a child who resides outside the JRCES attendance boundaries but within the boundaries of OKC Public Schools. Residency verification is required at time of application;
- 3) Third, a child who resides outside the boundaries of OKC Public Schools and whose parent, guardian, or other person with legal custody is employed within the JRCES attendance boundaries. Employment verification letters must be provided at time of application. An out-of-district transfer form is required upon admission;
- 4) Fourth, a child who resides outside the boundaries of OKC Public Schools and whose parent, guardian, or other person with legal custody is not employed within the JRCES attendance boundaries. An out-of-district transfer form is required upon admission.

After Tier 1, enrollment priority is given to currently enrolled students, a sibling of a child currently enrolled in the school, and children of faculty members. Within Priority Level #2, additional priority is given to applications for admission whose parent, guardian, or other person with legal custody is employed within the JRCES attendance boundaries.

If, at any time, the number of eligible students in Tiers 2-4 applying for admission exceeds the capacity of the school or grade level, the Head of School will conduct a lottery which shall be held within the priority level and grade level that is oversubscribed to select the student(s) that may be admitted to JRCES. Enrollment and admission decisions are based on school capacity limitations, class size capacity limitations, program availability, and educational needs of the student.

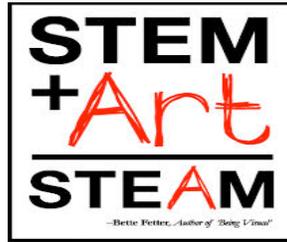


ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

John Rex School participates in the Oklahoma School Testing Program and administers all state-mandated summative assessments, as required by law.

Formative assessments from Renaissance Learning's suite of STAR Math, STAR Reading, & STAR Early Literacy assessments are periodically administered to students during the school year. Additionally, teachers personally assess students using various literacy and math assessments.

Parents want information about their child's achievement and how they can help them at home. John Rex teachers track progress in multiple ways then share progress through periodic Report Cards that focus on: most recent mastery of skills; progress along several learner continuums; stages of development; and skills checklists— rather than assigning a letter grade derived from the averaging of assignments.



CURRICULUM APPROACH

John Rex School engages learners in the Oklahoma Academic Standards using research-based instructional strategies to prepare them to be college/career ready. Students also engage in authentic problem solving & inquiry based critical thinking lessons using project-based learning strategies.

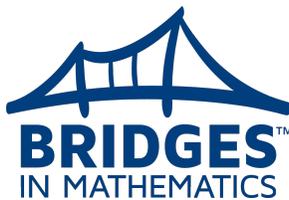
Ultimately, the school plans to develop a program of inquiry composed of a series of thoughtfully aligned transdisciplinary units focused on: foundational knowledge using relevant themes, key concepts, essential skills, opportunities for meaningful action, and presentations of learning.



TECHNOLOGY

John Rex School incorporates technology devices from Apple as tools to improve learning and increase instructional time. Inquiry- & project-based learning methodologies engage students in real-world problems that require acquisition and application of critical thinking skills.

These approaches serve as a meeting point for innovation in teaching and learning—bringing in aspects of experiential learning, multimedia technology, social action, and a willingness to go beyond the walls of the classroom for educational opportunities.



MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM

Bridges in Mathematics is a comprehensive curriculum that is rigorous, coherent, engaging, and accessible to all learners. Bridges focuses on developing deep understandings of math concepts, proficiency with key skills, and problem solving.

Bridges blends direct instruction, structured investigation, and open exploration. It taps into the intelligence and strengths of all students by presenting material that is linguistically, visually, and kinesthetically rich as it is mathematically powerful.

STE[a]M EDUCATION

Our program of inquiry focuses on STE[a]M education—science, technology, engineering and math, *plus* the arts. We have a unique partnership with Project Lead the Way (PLTW) making John Rex School one of the first schools in Oklahoma to implement this program at the elementary level.

Additional partnerships with downtown organizations integrate a variety of arts and other relevant venues into the curriculum.



SPANISH INSTRUCTION

Beginning in Kindergarten, students are offered Spanish instruction by a certified, highly qualified teacher. In addition to vocabulary development, students study many Spanish-speaking countries where the official language is Spanish. Various aspects of cultures, including music and foods, are studied.

The Spanish teacher also instructs English Language Learners that are eligible for ESL services. Approximately 13% of students are currently eligible for ESL services.



BALANCED LITERACY CURRICULUM

Balanced literacy instruction respects and addresses the needs of all learners, views teachers as informed decision-makers, is flexible, and is research-based. This approach provides students with daily opportunities to engage in various reading and writing activities to help them communicate more effectively.

In this framework, students participate in: read aloud; modeled & interactive writing; shared reading/writing; guided reading/writing; independent reading/writing; and word study. During balanced literacy instruction, there is a gradual release of responsibility over time as the student becomes more independent.

DIFFERENTIATION

Differentiated instruction is a focus so that any academic weaknesses are targeted for remediation and academic strengths are extended through extension or application opportunities.

Assessments and grading practices focus on mastery of the Oklahoma Academic Standards. Progress reports and report cards track developmental milestones and mastery of skills. Federal funds allow the services of part-time interventionists to work with struggling learners.



ENRICHMENT & EXTENSION

All children have gifts & talents! John Rex developed a Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) that offers periodic short-term interest-based sessions focused on students' specific interests. This offers all children the opportunity to enrich their learning and experiences.

Go Quest (formerly Renzulli Learning) is available to students in first grade and up. Go Quest is a project-based differentiation engine that applies, deepens, and extends learning utilizing students interests, learning styles, and expression styles.



EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES

The substantial amenities in downtown OKC afford us the ability to create programming through authentic extended learning opportunities unique to our downtown location.

We are proud to partner with the Arts Council of Oklahoma City, Myriad Botanical Gardens, the Downtown Metropolitan Library, the Oklahoma City Museum of Art, the Oklahoma City Riversport & OKC Boathouse Foundation & Historic Film Row District. These and other downtown organizations create the context for limitless urban learning opportunities.

CAREERS AT JOHN REX

John Rex School hires highly qualified, state-certified classroom teachers. Beginning teachers with a Bachelor's degree earn a \$40,000 base salary. This is higher than surrounding districts and significantly higher than the state minimum salary requirement.

Faculty and staff benefits include paid health insurance and participation in Oklahoma Teacher Retirement. Employees also receive sick & personal leave benefits, priority enrollment for their children; paid parking, and job-embedded collaboration/professional development.



STAFF APPRAISAL & PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES

A modified version of the TAP System for Teacher and Student Advancement is the instructional framework for the John Rex School model for teacher appraisal. TAP is one of four state approved teacher/leader evaluation tools. The Milken Family Foundation in coordination with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching created TAP.

Teacher salaries are determined by more than just years of teaching experience and professional development credits. JRCES provides additional compensation to teachers that assume additional roles and responsibilities, demonstrate merit (e.g. achievements and reflections on their contributions to achieving school goals). All teachers are eligible for financial awards.

SCHOOL HOURS & CALENDAR

Beginning in 2016-17, school will start at 8:00AM and end at 3:30PM for K-4th grades. Pre-K begins class at 8:00AM and ends at 3:00PM. All students have early dismissal every Wednesday at 2:00PM. John Rex School creates the school calendar based upon hours of instruction not merely days per year. The JRCES school calendar is not identical to the OKCPS calendar. The 2016-17 calendar has nearly 1,220 instructional hours. This exceeds the state's minimum requirement of 1,080 hours.



CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Responsive Classroom methodologies & Great Expectations practices create the foundation of the school's discipline philosophy. If infractions of the school's Code of Conduct occur, the teachers or the dean of students communicate with parents and work closely with students to teach/model the appropriate behaviors and social skills.

Referrals to the office may result in being placed on a 5-step incremental, progressive tracking plan used to ensure equity and fairness. After considering the frequency and severity of infractions, appropriate consequences may be assigned including in- or out-of-school suspensions (or potentially the revocation of a transfer, if applicable). JRCES partners with Calm Waters to provide school-based counseling groups for children referred to and who meet criteria for the program.

CHILD NUTRITION

Food management services are provided through a contract with Keystone Food Services. The current breakfast meal price for students is \$1.50 and lunch is \$3.00. Parents may set up an online account to pay for meals or may apply for the free/reduced meal program. Parents are also welcome to join their child for breakfast or lunch any day!



EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS

All charter schools must comply with state and federal laws related to the education of children with disabilities. In accordance with IDEA, the student's IEP team will determine identification, evaluation, placement, and services. JRCES is committed to evaluating, placing, and providing proper services to students in the least restrictive environment so that each student receives a free appropriate public education. Full inclusion in the general curriculum is the goal at JRCES. If a student's IEP team determines that a placement other than JRCES is necessary, the school will collaborate with OKCPS to determine the appropriate placement and facilitate a transfer to one of the district's other school sites.

JRCES complies with state laws related to the identification and reporting of gifted/talented students. Identified students will be exposed to the general curriculum in addition to many other enrichment programming and possibilities outlined in the school's state approved Gifted & Talented Plan.



BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

JRCES partners with the Downtown YMCA to provide fee-based before and after care programs. The program is held on site at the school and is available from 7AM until school begins and again when school dismisses until 6PM. The YMCA also offers other additional programs during breaks as well as summer camps. Please contact the Downtown YMCA for information.