



## Case study

# About Rocketship Education

Rocketship Education (RSED) is a non-profit network of public elementary charter schools serving mostly low-income students in neighborhoods where there's limited access to the best schools.

The organization started out in San Jose, CA in 2007. It pioneered blended learning, using adaptive software in an instructional model to help meet students' unique needs and increase their achievement. Blended learning has since become a popular trend across the USA.

There are now ten charter schools in the California Bay Area, one in Milwaukee, WI, and two in Nashville, TN. In 2016, Rocketship Education opened its first school in Washington, DC with a second planned for 2017.

The team at Rocketship Education passionately believes that truly transformative schools do more than educate students. They empower teachers, engage parents and inspire communities.

*"The return on investment of having Fairsail [now Sage People] has been huge for us. It's no longer about transactions; it's more about the people connection."*

Dynasti Hunt, Vice President,  
Human Resources

## Challenge

With over 200 employees across multiple centres, Rocketship Education needed an HR management system to meet their immediate needs and wants, and to support planned growth.

They had complex processes across the organization and constrained reporting capabilities. The way they worked was time-consuming and frustrating for staff. There were so many different processes and methods of communication, from Google Docs and Excel spreadsheets, to post-it notes and verbal communication.

They wanted a new system they could customize to create bespoke reports. It had to be easy to learn and use to encourage high adoption. They needed it to work on mobile phones and tablets, which they used throughout the school network.

Self-service was also key. Rocketship processed employee information and benefits through an external site with no connection to their own systems. So people always needed reminding about the third party site. There was also no way of knowing when changes had been made.

[www.fairsail.com/sage-people](http://www.fairsail.com/sage-people)

The new system would let employees keep their own personal information up to date, while managers could easily see the details they needed.

## Solution

The team at Rocketship Education used a thoughtful and thorough process to find the best HR system for their needs. Sage People stood out for its flexibility and customer service. They felt other systems to seem to have limitations and couldn't meet their long term growing needs.

Sage People's (formerly Fairsail) discovery process and implementation was a great experience. "The system to its credit is so adaptive and flexible," says Dynasti Hunt, vice president of HR. "We were expecting to be told what we can and can't do. Instead we were asked how we wanted it to work based on the way we work, using our workflows with our Rocketship language. We had a Sage People expert consultant as a single point of contact, who as part of the implementation team helped ensure we got what we needed so that the system met our needs.

"Fairsail's [now Sage People] help and support was fantastic, helping us think through what we had to do and then what we subsequently wanted to do. We also elected to have Sage People's training which was excellent, with great training guides and screenshots."



With Sage People, the HR team can focus on more important issues and initiatives like employee engagement and retention. For them, the win is that HR is now no longer about transactional information: it's about the people connection.

Rocketship can now provide immediate and accurate workforce-related reporting to the CFO. No other system they considered had the amount of robust reports and dashboards that Sage People does.

Because Sage People is simple to learn and use, Rocketship Education has achieved 100% adoption of the new system. Self-service functionality has increased productivity across the organization. Employees can keep their records current, change their personal details, view benefits and see training information. Managers can also get a 360 view of their team members.

## Wider thinking

Sage People's mobile capability is very popular. Rocketship's HR people have to travel a lot, so being able to work from anywhere and support the organization more responsively really helps save time for individuals and for the organization overall.

The team is clear about the return on investment from Sage People in productivity terms alone. Most importantly, it has freed their HR team to focus on directly supporting the people in their organization who make the difference to children's future lives through education. It's hard to put a price on that.