In Attendance: Krista Holtzmann (DCSD), Dan Jorgenson (APS), Janice McDonald (CCSD), Kelly Perez (LPS), Anne Rowe (DPS), and Rosann Ward (PEBC)

Staff: Chad Burns, Marci Elder, Julie Stelzer, and Cris Veteto

Guests: Margaret Bieman and Mitzi Leaver

Kelly welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the board meeting to order. Kelly asked for a motion that the board enter into executive session, per C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f) – Evaluation of the Executive Director. Anne made a motion to enter into executive session, and Dan seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

After a brief period of time in executive session, the board returned to the regularly scheduled BOCES meeting.

Approval of Agenda
Kelly asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Anne moved to approve the agenda, and Dan seconded. The agenda was unanimously approved.

Approval of Minutes
Kelly asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Rosann moved to approve the minutes, and Anne seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Executive Director Report
The Executive Director Report was accepted as presented and is included below for the minutes.

Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning
Executive Director Report

May 22, 2018

Executive Director Report Summary
1. End of School Year Celebrations
2. End of School Year Appreciations
3. TLCC Overview
4. 2018-2019 SY Community Fitness Announcement
5. Hiring Update
6. RMSEL Budget Position – Colorado State Finance

End of Year Celebrations
The end of the school year at RMSEL is an especially exciting time of the year as it brings about culmination of high quality student work through the portfolio reading and passage process. Each portfolio is unique as the voice of each learner resonates through each piece created and showcased in their final presentation. Along with this amazing celebration of learning, our 12th grade Senior Learning Expedition students present to the community on Wednesday, May 23rd from 5:30-7:30 pm. Our team partners with the Colorado Film School (CFS) to document each student’s presentation, providing each individual with a professional setting and experience to showcase their expedition to the local community. Our students have engaged in genetic reproductive engineering studies at the University of Colorado, traveled internationally to study marine biology, and had the opportunity to star in a local commercial for Duke’s Smoked Meats.
In addition to these celebrations of learning, we also have the opportunity to recognize students at the Leaders and Achievers Breakfast on Thursday, May 24th at 7:30 am. During this ceremony, we present awards to students who have demonstrated excellence in Achievement, Character, and Attendance for the third trimester of the school year. Each trimester we celebrate approximately 75 students and host breakfast with their families.

In preparation for graduation on Thursday, May 31st at 4:00 pm at Thomas Jefferson High School, the flood of memories and accomplishments of each graduating class always overwhelms me. In the event you are planning to join us for graduation, please be prepared for a ceremony that is approximately two hours in duration as each crew leader shares a three to five minute speech about each student graduating from their crew.

End of Year Appreciations
Winston Churchill stated, “Play for more than you can afford to lose, and you will learn the game.” While our profession is not a game, I am fortunate to be a part of a crew that embodies this mentality in everything that they do.

Our teachers accompany students around the United States supporting them 24 hours a day through homesickness, excitement, and challenge during our crew trips and fieldwork. They document each experience and celebrate in their classroom and with their parent community.

Our adventure team embodies the spirit of crew, spending approximately 100 nights a year in the mountains, on the river, at climbing sites, in the desert, and on the ocean. Their commitment and service to our community does not go unnoticed.

Our educational assistants support the work of the classroom and fieldwork day in and day out. These team members do whatever it takes, oftentimes performing responsibilities that are less than preferred such as indoor lunch duty. Our office staff manages to juggle a copious amount of daily tasks and still provide love, care, and attention to our students at a moment’s notice. They support parents with a smile even when they are less than kind in return. They support teachers and administrators at every turn and embody servant leadership.

Our administrative team takes on all the tasks of a school district and does so with meticulous detail and accountability; a team who is always willing to do whatever it takes, whenever it takes. Not one member of our team says, “no” or “I can’t,” it simply is absent from their vocabulary.

Teaching Learning Conditions in Colorado Overview
The crew referenced above is also representative of our success as a school community and responded accordingly in the recent TLCC survey conducted by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). One hundred percent of teachers responded, “I would recommend this school as a good place to work” and “I would recommend this school as a good place for students to learn.” This is truly an astounding accomplishment of our crew; while we are imperfect as human beings, we bond together in service of our school mission and vision.

I want to take this opportunity to share additional celebrations with the BOCES as well as areas for future attention and improvement: (the percentages reported as follows: Expeditionary BOCES / CO State Average)

Celebrations
1. The school is led by an effective team. (96% / 81%)
2. Our work together is guided by a shared vision that is student focused. (97% / 86%)
3. Our school staff show respect for each other. (97% / 88%)
4. Teachers’ professional expertise is valued. (97% / 82%)
5. There is a process in place for collaborative problem solving in this school. (100% / 77%)
6. Teachers have an adequate level of influence on important school decisions. (100% / 70%)
7. Professional learning has a positive impact on teaching and learning in our classrooms. (92% / 76%)
8. The community is supportive of this school. (100% / 85%)
9. The school’s efforts to engage families are effective. (100% / 78%)
10. I would recommend this school as a good place to work. (100% / 87%)

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11. I would recommend this school as a good place for students to learn. (100% / 91%) 

**Areas for Improvement**
1. To what degree do you feel that you have received adequate support as a new teacher. (73% / 71%)
2. Rules for student behavior are enforced in a consistent manner. (70% / 56%)
3. The school provides opportunities for me to learn from other teachers. (79% / 65%)
4. Professional learning opportunities are personalized and aligned to each teacher’s needs and strengths. (77% / 65%)
5. Teachers receive adequate professional development to effectively use student data. (48% / 71%)

**2018-2019 Community Fitness Announcement**

Approximately three months ago, a member of our staff team stumbled across a trailer for a new documentary, titled *The Motivation Factor: PE 50 Years Ago*. Prior to our monthly staff meeting, this team member showed a small group of staff the film, and we were all instantly engaged with the alignment between physical health and fitness to the work we do with students at RMSEL in the field as well as in the classroom. The film is based on a speech made by President John F. Kennedy on December 26, 1960, titled *The Soft American* in which he provided the framework to launch the White House Presidential Fitness Committee. President Kennedy understood the important relationship of physical fitness in relationship to our capacity to perform at an optimal level in our professions and within the classroom. Kennedy begins with the connection between ancient civilizations and their understanding of physical fitness in relationship to the founding principles upon which many western civilizations are based.

“Beginning more than 2,500 years ago, from all quarters of the Greek world men thronged every four years to the sacred grove of Olympia, under the shadow of Mount Cronus, to compete in the most famous athletic contests of history—the Olympian games.

*During the contest, a sacred truce was observed among all the states of Greece as the best athletes of the Western world competed in boxing and foot races, wrestling and chariot races for the wreath of wild olive which was the prize of victory. When the winners returned to their home cities to lay the Olympian crown in the chief temples, they were greeted as heroes and received rich rewards; for the Greeks prized physical excellence and athletic skills among man’s greatest goals and among the prime foundations of a vigorous state.*

*Thus the same civilizations which produced some of our highest achievements of philosophy and drama, government and art, also gave us a belief in the importance of physical soundness which has become a part of Western tradition; from the mens sana in corpore sano of the Romans to the British belief that the playing fields of Eaton brought victory on the battlefields of Europe. This knowledge, the knowledge that the physical well-being of the citizen is an important foundation for the vigor and vitality of all the activities of the nation, is as old as Western civilization itself. But it is a knowledge which today, in America, we are in danger of forgetting.*

While Kennedy’s words were penned over fifty years ago, they could not be more relevant to the overall health and wellbeing of our citizens and, especially, our children. Kennedy further articulates this importance, stating:

*“But the harsh fact of the matter is that there is also an increasingly large number of young Americans who are neglecting their bodies—whose physical fitness is not what it should be—who are getting soft. And such softness on the part of individual citizens can help to strip and destroy the vitality of a nation.*

*For the physical vigor of our citizens is one of America’s most precious resources. If we waste and neglect this resource, if we allow it to dwindle and grow soft then we will destroy much of our ability to meet the great and vital challenges which confront our people. We will be unable to realize our full potential as a nation.*

*Throughout our history, we have been challenged to armed conflict by nations which sought to destroy our independence or threatened our freedom. The young men of America have risen to those occasions, giving themselves freely to the rigors and hardships of warfare. But the stamina and strength which the defense of liberty requires are not the product of a few weeks’ basic training or a month’s conditioning. These only come from bodies*
which have been conditioned by a lifetime of participation in sports and interest in physical activity. Our struggles against aggressors throughout our history have been won on the playgrounds and corner lots and fields of America.

Thus, in a very real and immediate sense, our growing softness, our increasing lack of physical fitness, is a menace to our security.”

In 2008, Dr. John J. Ratey wrote a research text titled Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain. Dr. Ratey studied the impact of fitness and brain activity as related to human performance in other contexts such as learning within school. The research results are astounding, but very simplistic, to implement and change within a school setting. Dr. Ratey is also featured as a key research expert in this field and is featured in the film that inspired our work. Every RMSEL staff member will be reading this foundational text over the summer in preparation for Ground School and the launch of our new fitness program for the 2018-2019 school year. I encourage every member of our community to also engage in this with us!

After seeing the film, understanding the context, and reviewing the research, we were left with but one question, “Why aren’t we doing this at RMSEL?” The research is clear and the counter argument is nonexistent; by improving our physical well-being daily before learning, we will engage with content and skills in both a more efficient and productive manner than remaining sedentary. Unfortunately, we have been conditioned in the 21st century to believe that more minutes with content is more important than quality minutes spent in the classroom. We are also conditioned to be fearful that we may get behind our peers if we don’t do things the exact same way as other institutions. RMSEL has never been about conformity to the status quo, as we were designed and constructed from a 1992 grant titled Break the Mold Schools!

On Tuesday, May 1, 2018, we gathered as a staff to view the film together and the energy in the room was invigorating. At the conclusion of the film, I shared the framework which we have constructed to ensure that students will have 40 minutes of daily fitness within the first two hours of the day 4 days a week in grades K-8, and 5 days a week in grades 9-12 for the 2018-2019 school year. Our staff was energized, as we all understand the connection between exercise and operating at our maximum capacity. We believe that this will have a profound impact on increasing student achievement, decreasing student discipline referrals, supporting social emotional learning, and reinforcing our character development.

As we embarked upon this journey, we reached out to Prescott Middle School, a school located in Modesto, CA, that has been doing a school-wide movement and heart rate based fitness program for over 50 years. Prescott is the school featured as a case study in the film. Upon our initial inquiry, we thought we would be instantly dismissed as hundreds of schools around the country had to be interested in seeing this program firsthand; but within one day their Athletic Director shared all their founding documents and programs with our team. As we began digging into their work we realized that we wanted to spend time with their staff and see this firsthand. Last week Middle School Crew Leader, Jessie O’Dell, and High School Crew Leader, Ian Silberman, spent the day with the students and staff at Prescott and their first words shared in our debrief were, “It is real!” The students were bought into the importance of the program, engaged 100% during class, supported and motivated their peers, and demonstrated excellence in character.

Over the summer, a sub-committee will be working to launch our program over the first two months of school. We want to ensure that the foundation is laid correctly for future growth and success. During our weekly Professional Development sessions we will be planning and implementing routines for the program and monitoring student growth and performance. We believe that we will see profound results for our students, both physically and academically. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me directly. I highly encourage you to rent the film on iTunes and pick up a copy of Spark to engage in this work with our crew!

**Hiring Update**
I am excited to announce that Jessica Dworkin will be joining our crew next school year as our new K/1 crew leader. Jessica has most recently worked in the Summit County School District at Silverthorne Elementary. Jessica is currently teaching second grade and is also serving as the team lead for her grade level. Prior to moving to second grade to be the team lead, she taught for three years in the Kindergarten classroom. In addition to her classroom experience,
Jessica has also served as a Ski Instructor for Vail Resorts and is excited to work as a residence camp counselor this summer prior to working at RMSEL. Jessica is familiar with the EL Education Curriculum used on the team. While her departure from her mountain community is bittersweet, she is excited to share her passion with a new crew both in the classroom and in the field.

Erich Ball has been selected to join our crew as the new 6th grade Humanities & English Language Arts Crew Leader. Most recently, Erich has been teaching at Aurora Hills International Baccalaureate Middle School in grades 6 and 7. In addition to his work in the classroom, Erich is also the Head Soccer Coach. Prior to his classroom teaching experience, Erich was a team leader with Boulder County Youth Corps. We are excited for Erich to share his experiences with our returning 5th graders and new 6th graders next year.

**RMSEL Budget Position – Colorado State Finance**

I want to acknowledge and share appreciation for our local legislators who have taken a position in support of public school finance for the 2018-2019 school year. To receive approximately 6.95% increase in school funding for next year (prior to recessions which we are budgeting at up to 2%) in our current climate is certainly a statement of support. Unfortunately, in Colorado this increase is significant but still disproportionate to the needs presented to support facility improvement, teacher development and retention, and salary adjustments.

For the 2019-2020 school year we are slated to have increased expense, both organizationally and at the employee level, to support the continuation of PERA. PERA is a benefit afforded to public professionals that differs from other professional retirement structures. It is important to continue to ensure this fund is available to current and new to the profession educators; our legislators must continue to find solutions beyond the current slate of reforms. A teacher graduating in 2018 and beginning in the profession as a first year teacher directly from an undergraduate program is 22 years old, with the new retirement age to receive benefits at 64 they are required to teach for 42 years. Our profession is not equal to that of others and solutions brigaded from other industry are not applicable. I challenge our state to find solutions applicable to the service of public employees in the future.

For the 2018-2019 school year, we are slated to have an increase in expense for our school based insurance provided by the Colorado School District Insurance Pool (CSDIP) between 20-29%; our rate of increase is 20%. This increase is to support a period of time in which rates did not increase with the rate of inflation and claims, as well as new legislation that requires CSDIP to support school districts with increased exposure to liability.

I use these as two examples that, while our increase in funding is growing, the rate of expenditures continues to be disproportionate. I support our local superintendents who have called for the removal of the budget stabilization factor (negative factor) and reimbursement of rescinded revenue. I also challenge our local legislators to consider funding adjustments in alignment to the cost of living factors present in our local community and equalization to that of other states accordingly.

I appreciate the BOCES and our local districts in supporting staff members who sought to have their voices acknowledged on May 26th and 27th at the state capitol. We are stronger together and understand the importance of education in maintaining the values of our national republic.

**District Accountability Committee (DAC) Report**

There was no DAC report, as the committee has not met since the last BOCES meeting.

**Open Forum**

There was no discussion during open forum.

**Consent Agenda**

- Item #1 – Personnel Matters

Kelly asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Anne moved to approve the consent agenda, and Janice seconded the motion. The consent agenda was passed unanimously.
**Action Items**
There were no action items for the meeting.

**Report Items**

- **Budget Update (Julie Stelzer)**
  The Management Summary was approved as presented. The Management Summary, as presented to the board, is included below for the minutes.

**Revenue**
PPR funding is paid from DPS on a quarterly basis according to the following schedule: 25% is funded on July 15th, October 15th, January 15th and April 15th. PPR funding for 2017-2018 breaks down as follows:

- 25% funded in July 2017 based on 10/1/16 count (382.08 FTE X $7,915.10/FTE) $756,050.35
- 25% funded in October 2017 based on 10/1/16 count (382.08 FTE X $7,915.10/FTE) $756,050.36
- 25% funded in January 2018 based on 10/1/17 count (378.50 FTE X $7,917.66/FTE) $742,366.80
- 25% funded in April 2018 based on 10/1/17 count (378.50 FTE X $7,917.66/FTE) $742,366.80

A supplemental funding payment of PPR of $1,442.08 was received in May 2018, and is not reflected on the 4/30/18 financial statements.

In July 2017, we received a federal grant award through CDE in the amount of $491.40 for Race to the Top School Readiness Assessment. These funds were used to acquire the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment system for kindergarten students.

In November 2017, we received $1,082.30 for English Language Proficiency from DPS.

Kindergarten financial aid (#42500) has $10,500 remaining, and there remains $13,999.20 in fieldwork financial aid (#67800). Under the RMSEL’s fieldwork fee structure, families with three (3) or more children at RMSEL have the option to take a 10% discount on their fieldwork fees. To date, nine (9) families have opted to take advantage of this discount. Any unused funds in these line items will be used to offset future budget shortfalls.

In January 2018, we received $4,000 from the Schramm Foundation and $1,500 from the Carson-Pfafflin Family Foundation to be used toward purchasing the EL Education literacy curriculum in kindergarten and 1st grade; support for publishing the immigration expedition interview anthologies in 6th grade; support for purchasing the four-stroke engine models used by the 7th and 8th grades in the energy, engines and oil expedition; support for purchasing the fetal pigs for dissection in 7th and 8th grade human body expedition; support for coding and robotics in kindergarten through 3rd grade; and the purchase of microscopes to be used in high school science.

Per the Budget Appropriation resolution approved by the board in June 2017, $150,000 of beginning fund balance is reflected on the budget for Prior Year Budget Carryover (#43503). This is in alignment with the provisions of GASB 54 and the categorization of fund balance assigned for budget carryover.

Per HB 12-1345, $201,694.29 was received in August 2017 to assist the BOCES with meeting state educational priorities determined by CDE. These funds are used to employ key personnel to implement a Response to Intervention (RtI) process for monitoring student achievement with 20% of our school population in grades K-12.

In August 2017, we received $5,697.89 per the READ Act to support reading intervention for students in grades K-3 as identified from state assessment scores.

The amounts reflected in the Fieldwork Carryover-Landmark Trips (#43600) line items include fieldwork fees carried over from 2016-2017 as well as 10% landmark trip allocation from the 2017-2018 fieldwork fees. These amounts are allocated toward funding the landmark 5th grade Sailing trip, 6th grade Yellowstone trip, 8th grade Civil Rights trip, and the 11th grade Outward Bound trip.
The revenue derived from kindergarten tuition (state only funds .58 FTE for kindergarten) remains on target, with 2 months (May-June 2018) remaining to be invoiced.

The net of Student Government (#45201) and the corresponding expense (#55201) line items will be rolled forward to the 2018-2019 school year in alignment with GASB 54.

Athletic Program revenue (#45300) and the corresponding expense (#55300) are greater than originally budgeted, and the net of these line items will be rolled forward to the 2018-2019 school year in alignment with GASB 54.

Classroom revenue (#46400, #46500 and #46550) represents the student contributions and chaperone airfare toward the 5th grade Sailing ($7,067.31), 6th grade Yellowstone ($5,000) and 8th grade Civil Rights ($7,200) landmark trips as well as other various classroom revenue including student reimbursement for airfare and medical costs.

In December 2017, we received a donation of $3,000 to directly benefit Classroom Revenue #46600. Per the donor, these funds were allocated with $2,500 to HS Science and $500 to HS Humanities to be used for additional classroom resources.

**Expenses**

Line items with notable variances or exceptions are explained below.

Lease #60020 – this variance is due to a timing difference related to the lease payments of $75,000 to DPS which are due 11/1 and 5/1. To date, we have not received an invoice for the lease payment from DPS and have followed up accordingly.

Adventure Supplies #66201 – this account is over-budget due to an equipment loss of tents during a wind event which occurred on a 7th grade fieldwork trip to WY. The insurance claim covered the entire loss less the $1,000 deductible.

High School Supplies #66600 – this account grouping is offset against the donations mentioned above in account #46600.

Elementary Fieldwork #67402 & #67403 – these expense accounts are offset against funds in the Fieldwork Carryover-Landmark Trips #43610 and Classroom Revenue #46400 for the 2017-2018 Sailing trip.

Middle School Fieldwork #67500 – these expense accounts are offset against funds in the Fieldwork Carryover-Landmark Trips #43642 for the 2018 MS Capstone Trip to study civil rights in Little Rock, AR; Birmingham, AL; and Memphis, TN.

High School Fieldwork #67600 – these expense accounts are partially offset against funds in the Fieldwork Carryover-Landmark Trips #43670, and the remaining overage of $2,844.07 is due to increased expenses to launch a revised high school experience and will be offset against discretionary expense.

Rosann made a motion to accept the management summary as presented, and Janice seconded. The management summary was accepted unanimously.

**Discussion Items**

- 2018-2019 Budget (proposed) – Julie said that she has budgeted on a conservative PPR figure of $8,300. There are some grants that RMSEL usually receives, but they are not included in the budget until they are actually received; they will show up in the January budget adjustment. The grocery cards that RMSEL offers are not selling as quickly, so that amount has been adjusted down. The budget rollover is increased for this year as compared to last year, and is about $200,000. The auction is being moved to a two-year cycle instead of every year. Of the $130,000 additional funding being received for next year, some funds will be used for increasing Educational Assistant pay, and $93,000 has been set aside as potential employee bonuses. Chad said that RMSEL is looking at ways to incentivize teachers and the intent would be to provide additional resources and support to teachers who go above and beyond, at the discretion of the board. Anne said she thinks it is a tremendous idea, and in a constrained financial world, she
appreciates that RMSEL is searching for ways to provide more support to teachers. Julie said an additional Instructional Coach has been hired for next year. The EL MOU has been decreased by about $25,000; Chad said that is primarily because this year RMSEL has been paying EL for Instructional Coach support, and it will be provided in house by RMSEL’s instructional coaches. Anne asked Julie to address the impact of PERA changes on RMSEL. Julie said the changes go into effect in 2019, and includes an increase of .25%. Twenty percent of RMSEL’s salary costs goes to PERA. Rosann asked Chad about math and where the money for that is coming from. Chad said the curricular resources are in this year’s budget and will be purchased prior to June 30th. He also said that the new Instructional Coach will be targeting teachers in grades K-6, the current instructional coach will target teachers in grades 7-12, and Marci will be targeting new to RMSEL staff. Rosann told Marci to make sure to be aware of PEB’s Math Institutes, and the availability of those to teachers. Marci said those have been highly valued at RMSEL. Kelly asked Margaret what DAC’s plans are in regard to the auction being bi-annual rather than annual. Margaret said plans are being made to alternate between the formal auction and student Art Shows. The parking spots will still be offered, as they raise $750 each. Julie said this budget does not include the DAC recommended fees for supplies and adventure. Chad said that the additional fee that DAC has requested did not come to a resolution by the board, and will be tabled for a year to allow time to fully inform parents ahead of time; unless TABOR is repealed and funding formulas change. The DAC fee will be discussed again in the June meeting. Julie commented that the addition of new fees needs to be communicated to parents prior to the January recommitment date, so that parents will know ahead of time what the total fees are that they will be responsible for before making the commitment to stay enrolled at RMSEL. Julie said the budget will be presented to the board for approval in June. Kelly commented that a quorum will be needed for that vote.

**Items for Future Agenda**

- RMSEL Graduation – Chad said that he hopes to see everyone at graduation at Thomas Jefferson High School on May 31st at 4:00 pm. At this time, there are a couple of students who are “on the bubble” as to whether they will indeed be graduating, but there are 21-22 potential graduates. Marci asked if the board will be presenting the graduating class at the end of the commencement ceremony, as they did last year. Kelly said that, technically, the board are the only ones authorized to present graduates. Janice cannot be at graduation due to another commitment but will try to get another Cherry Creek Board member to attend.

**Adjournment**

Kelly asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rosann made a motion to adjourn, and Anne seconded. The meeting was unanimously adjourned.

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Kelly Perez, President

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Rosann Ward, Vice President

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Janice McDonald, Secretary/Treasurer