February 12, 2014

Dear RMSEL Parent Community,

This week marks one of the most exciting and energizing dates in our annual calendar. Up to this point of the year, we have been hosting open houses for prospective students and families, answering phone calls, and helping parents with the online application system. On Monday, February 10, 2014, we ran the annual lottery welcoming 59 new students to RMSEL next year. I personally call every family to welcome them to RMSEL. As I share this, I am halfway through the list of calls and have contacted all new 6th graders at this point. When families receive a spot, not to sound cliché, but the response is truly like winning the lottery. I hear parents scream and shout with joy, and have actually heard a few parents share that they literally fell out of their chair when they received the call. We are excited to begin the shadow process, and supporting and welcoming new families to our community.

This time of the school year also prompts reflections and decisions as we prepare for the next school year. During the last week of January, we request staff members to complete a Letter of Intent. This Letter of Intent and the time of the year is very intentional on our behalf. The purpose of this process is to assist teachers in making professional decisions regarding their personal intent to return or pursue other endeavors. During this process we check in with staff members regarding their voluntary decisions and offer support to ensure we are fostering a professional community that values growth. We conduct this process in January to ensure we have access to a diverse pool of applicants for each open position. We would like to share the news of two teachers in our community that will be pursuing alternative endeavors for the next school year.

Lucas Mile, 7th/8th grade crew leader, will be taking a one-year general leave of absence to pursue a master’s degree program and spend next year with the new addition to his growing family. Lucas and his wife are excited to have the opportunity to spend time with their daughter, and we support his decision to take this valuable time away from RMSEL next year. Sarah Rosenkranz, DU Intern in Lucas’s class this year, will remain at RMSEL next year with us for one additional year teaching and leading the crew in Lucas’ absence. We are excited to have Sarah join our professional community as she has first-hand knowledge and experience with our middle school students and crew. Lucas will return to the classroom at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year.

Peter Thulson, K-1 crew leader, has resigned his position at RMSEL. I asked Peter to share this information with our parent community and his letter to students, families, and staff, is included below.

Dear RMSEL families,

I wanted you to hear from me the news that I'll leave RMSEL at the end of the school year and return to the Cherry Creek Schools. I want to thank you for your kind support and wise collaboration as we've loved your children together these years. You and your children have drawn out my best and enlarged it. I told my colleagues here this afternoon something that's true about you also: that your company often brings to my mind a line from Psalm 16. David says, “You give marvelous comrades to me.” I say that, too, thanking God for you.

Love from Peter
Peter was a founding crewmember at RMSEL beginning with the school in 1993. During this time, you may have witnessed students learning about birds, not through field guides but fieldwork that includes tracking the homing pigeons and raising chickens in class. These experiences guided by Peter have brought smiles and learning to the faces of your children. Peter has served this community for over twenty years. We value his decision and have shared this with our extended community today. We will be planning celebrations and collaborating with PACK to celebrate Peter’s dedication and time in the RMSEL community.

In the event any additional staff members share professional decisions with us, we will communicate them in a timely manner. We will begin the posting/hiring process to ensure we find highly qualified, talented, and compassionate educators to join our community.

Sincerely,

Chad