February 5, 2014

Dear RMSEL Parent Community,

Last week on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, our school calendar for the next two years was approved by the BOCES. The creation of this calendar was a collaborative process over the past four months taking into consideration multiple school stakeholders and community members. We received extensive feedback and have adjusted the calendar where possible taking this feedback into consideration. Each year based on Colorado weather conditions we are required to start school as early as possible in an attempt to ensure that each crew trip goes out as planned. We also include a week for make-ups crew trips during optimal months prior to fall break. This plan provides us with multiple times to ensure students participate in this valuable experience. This year we have adjusted the start date of school by one week and staggered start dates by school level to ensure the high school students depart during the first week on their crew trip. By staggering school level start dates we are able to utilize the same weeks of time for travel while aligning the beginning of school more closely to our partner school districts. By starting the school year one week later we will subsequently end one year later culminating in June instead of May. An additional point of feedback related specifically to the timing of our Staff Professional Learning Retreat and Conferences, was the proximity of this week to winter break. We have adjusted this time to align with the President’s Day Holiday instead of the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. Finally, we received mixed feedback from the community and staff regarding the Professional Development Days in the calendar adjacent to Fall and Spring break. These days are challenging for parents with additional childcare restraints, but vital to planning and preparation as an entire staff.

Calendar Link: [http://www.rmsel.org/Who-We-Are/Calendars/index.html](http://www.rmsel.org/Who-We-Are/Calendars/index.html)

Also, during our most recent BOCES had the opportunity to review the results from our recent Community Survey conducted in December. A few highlights from our survey are summarized below:

- “Please identify the three key reasons you have your child(ren) attend RMSEL.”
  1. Expeditionary Learning Instructional Framework
  2. Fieldwork
  3. Outward Bound Adventure Program

- “Overall, the academic program at this school:”
  Meets / Exceeds my Expectations – 81.45%

- “Teaching at this school:”
  Meets/ Exceeds my Expectations – 85.49%

- “Teachers at RMSEL are accessible:”
  Meets/ Exceeds my Expectations – 84.67%

- “My child enjoys attending RMSEL.”
  Meets/ Exceeds my Expectations – 98.37%

- “The cost of Fieldwork Fees is adequate for the experience received by my child at RMSEL.”
  Meets/ Exceeds my Expectations – 91.74%
• “Overall – how satisfied are you with the Leadership at RMSEL?”
  Meets/ Exceeds my Expectations – 89.66%

• “Do you plan to have your child(ren) attend RMSEL for the 2014 – 2015 School Year?”
  Yes – 92.86%

We are fortunate to work and collaborate in a school with invested students, parents, staff, and leadership. Our success is embedded in our mission, vision, and values. We attempt to embody the statement “we are crew, not passengers,” in our daily work and dedication to students.

Sincerely,

Chad