The Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning  
Executive Director Communication  
October 8, 2014  

Dear RMSEL Students and Parent Community,

This week marks the end of a successful fall crew trip season, culminating with the 4th/5th grades crews stretching beyond their comfort zone and participating in outdoor rock climbing for the first time. I had the opportunity to join Alisha’s crew today at the climbing site. It was amazing to see our students working together on belay teams as they safely managed their rope team while their climber took on a new challenge. An adventure leader or teacher supervises each belay team. While working with my belay team, I heard countless words that demonstrated patience, encouragement, and above all, compassion for one another. The bonds built during each crew trip go beyond the wilderness and transfer directly into the classroom. Students remember each experience and build upon their experience as they think critically through complex problems in the classroom. Our crew trips are one of the many aspects that contribute to the success of our students and our school community. Accompanying our students outside of the classroom is one aspect of my position that allows me to observe the growth and development of our students.

On Monday, I conducted our initial design meeting with the DPS planning department and preferred contractor to begin breaking ground our on new auxiliary field. In the next two weeks, we will receive final drawings and project specifications. At that time, we will present this information to our parent community as well as the surrounding homeowners. Once a community meeting takes place, we will begin construction. The project is slated to have a spring 2015 completion date and be available for the spring girls’ soccer and co-ed ultimate frisbee season. Thank you for contributing the fundraising efforts to allow this project to be a success. As I receive additional information during the construction process, I will periodically share with our parent community.

During my monthly “Chat with Chad” this week, a few parents passed along ongoing safety concerns with our drop-off and dismissal at school each day. The parents shared that members of our community are engaging in unsafe and illegal driving practices on Holly St. that may endanger students. Parents are reporting that drivers are making illegal U-turns at the stoplight to avoid entering the parking lot. I ensured the parents that I would pass along their concerns this week during my communication. Please refrain from unsafe driving practices that could endanger students walking to school.

Finally, I have had the opportunity to be in many of our classrooms this week. While observing in our classrooms, I see teachers working with students to build strong, sustainable habits of scholarship tied to increased responsibility for learning. Students at RMSEL grapple with complex texts during class each day as they explore new concepts. One habit I would encourage you to think about as a family is, what structures do you have in place at your home to not only read each day, but to share comprehension of reading? Students retain and develop as readers when they have the opportunity to share what they have read with a sibling or family member. Between now and fall break you might consider what structures you have at home to support your child in their continued development as a reader and lifelong learner. As a community, we value practices both at school and home.

Sincerely,

Chad