Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning  
Executive Director Communication  

August 17, 2015  

Dear RMSEL Parent Community,  

Welcome back to another amazing school year! We are very excited to have students join us after a week of adventure and professional learning. Last week our staff embarked on a mountain bike trip to begin our annual week of collaboration in the Buffalo Creek Wilderness Area. As a staff, we engage in challenges that stretch us beyond our individual comfort zones as we attempt to replicate this with students during crew trips and fieldwork. Each year our staff Instructional Leadership Team writes an annual plan for our professional work together during Professional Development. This year, “RMSEL staff will revise the portfolio process to align with our core beliefs about the purpose of the portfolio.” Portfolios are an essential element of the learning experience at RMSEL and our staff felt it was the optimal time to come together as a group of K-12 teachers and leaders to revise and enhance this amazing aspect of our school. We look forward to growing this year as professionals in service of fulfilling our mission and vision.  

Our 6th grade teachers led a unique and exceptional program at RMSEL. The transition from elementary school to middle school is an opportune time to ensure students remain on track as citizens and scholars. We are intentional in providing a transitional “stand alone” 6th grade program to assist students in making the transition between elementary and middle school. Our teachers created a “sneak peek” program for our students to get an introduction to middle school over the summer and to their new RMSEL crewmates. This program was an amazing way for students to transition into middle school with minimal anxiety as they begin the school year. It was great to see so many new 6th grade students at the Back to School Social on August 6th with new friends and strong bonds before the school year even began. Thank you to Anne and Erin for their dedication to our transitional middle school program that has been incredibly successful at RMSEL.  

Our contractors have been hard at work this summer and will be running right up to the first day of school. I want to share an update on completed and pending projects. We strive to make as much improvement as possible to the physical space of our school to support student learning on campus.  

**Completed Projects**  
Roof Replacement  
HVAC Digital Thermostat and Control System  
Faculty Lounge – Paint, Countertop, Sink, Garbage Disposal, and Furniture  
Office – Paint and Modular Furniture Installation  
RMSEL Garden Drip Irrigation System Installation  
K-5 Student “Cubby and Hook” Replacement  
Outdoor Furniture Replacement – 5 Trash Cans, 4 Benches, and 5 Picnic Tables  

**Pending Projects**  
Building wide Display Board Update – Installation – 8/5/2015  
6th Grade – 60 Student Lockers – Installation – 9/08/2015  
7-12 – 62 Lockers reinstalled in the upper hallway – Installation 8/5/2015
Two important dates that did not make it onto our originally published school calendar should be added to your calendars at this time. Back to School Night is scheduled for Thursday, August 20th for 6th – 8th crews and Thursday, August 27th for Lower School (K-5) and High School (9-12) crews. Back to School Night is scheduled from 5:00 – 6:30 pm. Back to School Night is an important time for families to connect directly with crew leaders as we begin the school year.

I will host our first “Chat with Chad” on Friday, September 4th at 8:00 a.m. in the RMSEL Community Room. This is our bi-monthly open forum for parents to attend to learn in person about our school program. It is an opportunity for parents to ask questions and raise any concerns. This year we will be thematic in our sessions; the first “Chat with Chad” will be dedicated to new families who may have unanswered questions about our school. I encourage veteran parents to attend as well, to connect with new families who may be in your crews. I am looking forward to an amazing school year!

Welcome Back to School,

Chad