Dear RMSEL Parent Community,

Last Saturday evening many of you were able to attend the annual RMSEL Auction along with friends and family members of our community. The theme for this year’s auction was “Scaling the Summit,” and we truly accomplished that by raising approximately $65,000! The organization by the Auction Committee and specifically, Auction Chair Sarah Mullaney, was truly impeccable this year. From start to finish the auction was an absolute success; the venue, in kind beverage donations, dinner, auction items, live events, etc. were truly in a class of their own. I cannot fully express my gratitude to those who spend a year planning such an amazing event. This year we conducted the Live Auction: Paddle Raise to purchase consulting services with EL Education (formerly Expeditionary Learning) to provide 1:1 coaching support for our teachers. At this time the Paddle Raise is currently at $20,000, which is equivalent to 20 total days of support; we set a goal of 30 days for next year and the auction committee has extended the opportunity to give.

The auction committee shared the following: thank you to everyone who participated in the auction on Saturday night. We are thankful to our donors, sponsors, and attendees for their generosity. Several silent auction items remain unsold and are available for bid or purchase through the online site. Go to http://charityauction.bid/rmsel2017 to see what’s available.

The auction consisted of silent, live, and paddle raise events. As stated in pre-auction communication, the funds raised during the silent and live auctions will be used to support RMSEL transportation for our students. The total raised will be communicated to families after the online auction closes at the end of March.

The night of the auction, we held a paddle raise (monetary donation event) to support professional development for RMSEL staff through the acquisition of consulting with EL Education. Each day of consulting costs the school $1,000. Fortunately, through the paddle raise, we’ve been able to raise nearly $20,000, getting us two-thirds of the way to our goal.

We’re asking for your help in raising the final $10,000 the school needs to engage EL Education for 30 days of training and support for our crew leaders and students. If you were unable to attend the auction and would like to donate to the paddle raise, please:

- Go to http://charityauction.bid/rmsel2017
- Click on Virtual Paddle Raise
- Login to your account or register to bid/donate
- Enter your paddle raise donation

Thank you for your support.
- The RMSEL Auction Team
In addition to the recent success of the auction I would like to extend an additional thank you to parent Kelly Contreras for once again organizing the Book Fair during spring conferences. The proceeds from the book fair are allocated in credits for the purchase of books from Scholastic. This year RMSEL received 454 books for our library and teacher classrooms. Thank you to those who patronized the book fair in service of our school, we truly win twice: students reading outside of school and receiving new books for school!

Currently, we are in the process of budgeting for next school year. As a BOCES we do not have the ability to access mill levy override funding that provides additional funding to our annual per pupil funding. The current Colorado Finance Formula takes into consideration (funded pupil count x total per pupil funding + at-risk funding + online funding + negative factor); this formula is concerning as our projections are not received until May of the current school year to establish a budget for the subsequent year. Based on the annual recessions received through our pass through funding model, we believe at this time our PPR number for 2017-2018 will remain flat and/or reflect a reduction as the number of “at risk students” in Denver County has declined in past years and continues to do so based on other economic factors. We bring this to the attention of the community as we begin forecasting for next year in addition to preparing to hire new staff. Julie and I continue to work to ensure that two foundations of our school are not impacted: 1) teacher salary increases and 2) teacher to student ratio and class sizes of no greater than 25 students. I feel strongly that ensuring that our annual 3% increase remains intact without increasing class size reflects our values of ensuring that providing teachers with the resources and compensation to succeed in strained revenue system.

We are in the process of hiring for next school year. Each hiring committee is composed of a teacher teammate, specialist teacher, parent, student (when appropriate), and an administrator. At the conclusion of the initial interview screening, two to three candidates are selected to move forward. This process involves a video review and/or in-person observation, if in the Denver metro community. Finally, two candidates are provided to the Executive Director for final selection. I look forward to interviewing exceptional new teachers to join our school!

In conclusion, I want to celebrate. I recently received notification from Fort Lewis University that two RMSEL graduates were recognized as Dean’s List recipients for first semester. One of the two recipients was home on spring break and shared this accomplishment with me in person. It was great to hear of her success and pick her brain a little bit for areas in which she felt she was prepared and where we can continue to improve for students in their first year at college. It is great to hear and share in stories of success from our students. I value their input and I am humbled by the lasting impression our school and community has had on their lives.

Sincerely,

Chad