Communication Summary
1. Kelsey Haddock – Principal Introduction
2. Colorado School Finance Update

Dear RMSEL Parent Community,

I have the privilege to share that Kelsey Haddock has been named the Principal at Aurora Quest K-8 in Aurora Public Schools. As a staff, we are extremely excited for Kelsey to make this transition as a professional and at the same time, we will miss her dearly as a member of our crew. It has been amazing to work alongside Kelsey as an administrator, teacher, and parent over the past 7 years at RMSEL. Kelsey has so much to share and give to her new community. While she will be making this transition, she will always be a member of our crew and community. Kelsey asked that we share the following:

Dear RMSEL Community,

This is a bittersweet announcement, as I wanted to let the RMSEL community know that I have formally accepted a principal position in Aurora Public Schools for the 2018-19 school year. Over the last 13 years, I have had the honor and privilege of being a part of the RMSEL community, both as a parent and as a staff member. Those 13 years have truly been an amazing experience, in large part because of the community that exists with parents and staff members. Having worked in a few different schools, I can state that the focus on relationships is unique here, which makes this announcement so bittersweet. While I am excited for new adventures, it is hard to leave this place.

My goal has always been to contribute in a positive way to where I work, and I hope that is true for my time at RMSEL. Thank you for gift of getting to know each of you and thank you for the ongoing collaboration in raising humans that will positively impact their world. I know that I am a better person because of our time together. I also know that your kids are in a great school with teachers who are passionate about teaching and who care deeply for your kids.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

With lots of love,

Kelsey

We will be working as an administrative team to create a revised organizational leadership chart and post for a new Dean of Students accordingly. We will post for the position and begin the hiring process once the position closes. We look forward to welcoming a new member to our leadership team for next year.
Colorado School Finance Update

Last year, I shared the following information that is still present and relevant to the Colorado School funding conversation.

I have recently received inquires from parents regarding the larger state budget and the impact to RMSEL and our community. This is a simple question with, unfortunately, a complex answer. The Colorado School Finance Report recently released a report ranking school funding by state. Currently Colorado ranks 40th in the United States with a per pupil spending rate of $9,471 per student; this is $2,685 less than the national average of $12,156. As of 2014, Colorado ranked 14th in the nation as reported by the Federal Commerce Department for Cost of Living Index. For comparative purposes, if our Cost of Living Index and School Funding were equivalent, our state would receive $14,156 per student, which is that of the State of Delaware, which is currently ranked 14th in school funding. When this is localized to our school, we are currently operating at a deficit of $4,685 per child or $1,827,150 annually.

In short, the cost of living in the State of Colorado continues to increase and has done so substantially since 2014; our funding for public schools remains in the bottom 20% nationally. As with anything, a logical next question from parents is “so, what can we do?” Being an informed and engaged citizen is imperative while communicating your concerns to your respective state representatives. This truly should be a bipartisan issue at our state capital; I do believe any representative, no matter party affiliation, can support legislation that properly funds great schools in Colorado. While I am always open to share and answer questions parents have regarding this complex issue facing our state and schools, I encourage families to research and read information released as to possible solutions that may be brought forth in upcoming legislative session.

This is an important conversation in which we should request that our state legislators begin looking at the Tax Payer Bill of Rights (TABOR), as this amendment to the state constitution was drafted and voted on by the people of Colorado in a time of a prosperous statewide economy (1992). Unfortunately, the 2008 world economic recession impacted our state as defined by TABOR, creating a new lower tax revenue ceiling. The restrictive nature of TABOR creates barriers that not only impact school funding but also all public infrastructure in the State of Colorado connected to the state general fund. This is not an evaluation of TABOR in context to when it was voted upon by the citizens of our great state, but an understanding of the unintended consequence created by the recession of 2008.

To increase teacher salaries, school facilities, school resources, retirement stabilization, and other current challenges, as a state we must begin the conversation in a bipartisan capacity to support lifting up public education to ensure our graduates are leaders in contributing to a local and global economy. This conversation starts with current legislation that significantly limits the state’s ability to do so. Please know that I believe that this is not a “red” or “blue” conversation, this is a dialogue about our kids and what it takes to operate in 2018 vs. the current 2008 revenue ceiling that is crippling our state.

The Colorado School Finance Project is a bipartisan resource that provides tools and research to be an informed and active citizen regarding this discourse. The following link is an exceptional resource to explain our school finance formula in our state. (http://cosfp.org/default.htm)
While I am not the foremost expert on this subject, I am open to discussion with parents as to how this impacts RMSEL at any time. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Chad