Dear RMSEL Parent Community,

Welcome – RMSEL 25th Anniversary

I could not be more excited to begin another school year at RMSEL. This year we will be celebrating our 25th Anniversary as a founding Expeditionary Learning – Outward Bound School and program. In 1993, the founding members of the crew set out on an ambitious journey in a time of dramatic change within our nation’s education system. Pioneering BOCES members sought a path forward for RMSEL to provide students with the opportunity to reach their highest potential academically while they also fostered a series of core values in building responsible citizens. After 25 years, our mission and vision are deeply rooted in the original foundation of our school. As we begin a new year, our continued commitment to providing your child with an exceptional learning experience is as important today as it was in 1993! We intend to model excellence and citizenship through our actions and leadership to ensure that our students are prepared to make a positive impact both locally and globally. In Roots: From Outward Bound to Expeditionary Learning, author Emily Cousins captured this modeling, stating, “Outward Bound instructors have to live what they are teaching, or they lose credibility with their students. Instructors and students live so closely that it would become immediately apparent if an instructor had a different standard of conduct for themselves and for their students. They have to walk the talk. If they are not lit up by learning, there is little chance they will light up their students with the excitement of learning.” As a CREW, we are truly “lit up with learning” to begin another school year, as well as to celebrate our story as a school throughout our 25th anniversary year.

Back to School Social

On Thursday, August 9, 2018 at 5:30 pm, the RMSEL District Accountability Committee (DAC) will be hosting our annual Back to School Social at RMSEL. DAC has worked with local vendors to provide three food trucks and one ice cream truck at the social to assist families with dinner plans. The food vendors will accept cash or credit for your purchases. You can certainly attend the social and bring a picnic of your own as well. The Back to School Social is a great opportunity to meet families in your crew, connect with DAC, interact with the RMSEL Administration, and allow our kiddos to get some wiggles out on the field and playground. RMSEL teachers are not required to attend the social as they will have been out on retreat and are working...
High School Colorado Trail

In high school students are afforded the opportunity to participate in a true Outward Bound style “Classic.” The “classic” designation is connected to the length and true backcountry format of the expedition. These trips are three weeks in length and this school year we were granted a four-year special use permit for our students to backpack the Colorado Trail (CT) within our beautiful state. In the past, we have traveled to the desert southwest for our high school trip, requiring multiple days in the bus and desert travel protocol to be implemented. This school year our students will be able to leave from a local trailhead to begin their journey, absent of bus travel, maximizing the number of days on the trail and providing our students with the opportunity to build community through Crew while experiencing the magic of a thorough hike. A student starting at this year as a freshman will have the opportunity of the next four years to hike the entire Colorado Trail. I appreciate our collaboration and permitting with the National Forest Service and local ranger districts to provide our students this amazing opportunity. I also want to recognize our Adventure staff and High School teachers for their dedication to making this a success for our students. For many of us, it is challenging to be away from home for a few short days; our teachers and team are away from their home and family because they see the transformational power of adventures like this for students. If you see a member of this team, please kindly thank them for their service to this community.

Outside Magazine

We were fortunate to have adventure journalist Brendan Leonard share the commencement address at the 2018 RMSEL High School Graduation in June. Brendan shared a powerful message with students that later went on to be featured in the June 2018 issue of Outside Magazine. The link to the address and video is (https://www.outsideonline.com/2317236/advice-living-outdoor-life?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=facebookpost)

In his address, I found this advice to be simple but powerful for our students, staff, and community. “The first three things I’m going to tell you don’t require specialized training, and anyone at any job can do them, whether their job requires a Ph.D., or no education at all. These three things seem incredibly simple, but believe it or not, they’re not practiced as much as you’d think. They’ll help you stand out in school, at work, and be a better friend and spouse. These three things are: Be kind. Show up on time. And do what you said you were going to do. I believe they’re better than being talented. Because it takes zero talent to be kind. It takes zero talent to show up on time. And it takes zero talent to do what you said you were going to do.”

Registration

I want to thank those community members that volunteered to make our registration process a success. I also want to thank each family for coming to registration prepared with your required medical and school forms. As a staff, we understand that this is a mountain of paperwork for you to prepare each year. Based on the nature of our school and program, we require extensive documentation to prepare for students to be in the field as well as properly care for them in the event of injury. We revised our process this year to best serve your students with our care.
New Staff

Unfortunately, over the course of the summer we received a few unexpected late resignations. We are however, excited to welcome new members to our crew.

Wayne South will be joining the middle school team as the 7th/8th grade English Language Arts Teacher and Crew Leader. Wayne has worked at Castle View High School for the past 6 years as an Educational Assistant. In addition to his responsibilities of supporting teachers as students, Wayne also served as the Technical Director of the CVHS Theater Company. He is no stranger to the outdoors, serving as a counselor and area director for the Boys Scouts of America and is a Leave No Trace trainer.

William “Bill” Smith will join our team as the K-12 Music Teacher. Bill most recently worked at Cherokee Trail High School, as well as Larkspur Elementary School (EL DCSD Program). Bill has a love of music that he looks forward to sharing with our students, from playing guitar to turning a bucket into a drum. We look forward to the sounds that fill our hallways from his classroom.

Nicole Hooks will join our team as the 6th–8th grade Learning Specialist. Nicole most recently worked with students in a residential setting at Jefferson Hills. Prior to this teaching experience, Nicole also worked in Jefferson County Schools as a Para Educator.

We want to welcome these new team members to RMSEL, and as a staff, we look forward to getting to know everyone on our annual staff retreat. This year we are rafting the Colorado River, expedition style, for three days / two nights. The annual retreat provides an opportunity for our staff to build relationships and model expeditionary camp craft for crew trips.

Best,

Chad