



Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning

"As a K-12 community, the mission of the Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning (RMSEL) is to empower students and staff to be learners, thinkers, citizens, and explorers engaged in and inspired by the real world. We are crew, not passengers."

April 2nd, 2025: Message from the Executive Director

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Message from the Executive Director, Tiffany Almon

Good Afternoon RMSEL Community,

Welcome back from spring break! I hope that you and your families had a chance to rest, recharge, and refill your cup and soul as we embark on the final quarter of the 24-25 school year. I am extremely excited about joining the upcoming 6th grade crew trip to Moab next week. Joining a crew trip is critical for me as the Executive Director, as RMSEL's adventure programming is such a critical component of our model. We will have limited service on this trip; therefore, I will most likely not return emails until the week of 4/14 and I will not send an Executive Director letter out next week. Please read below for important information regarding Early Bird Registration, the Wednesday professional learning focus, and our need for Passage Panelists and a DAC representative.

Early Bird Registration

All RMSEL students must complete registration **each year**. This year, Early Bird Registration is being offered from April 21st through May 9th with an **in-person event on May 2nd** from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in our community room. We are bringing back a full-blown in-person registration to provide families with an opportunity to meet with our Parent-Teacher-Student-Crew (PTSC) organization, to gain a deeper understanding of how to complete service hours through volunteer opportunities, to receive information about YMCA after-school care, and to be able to ask questions to administration. To qualify for the Early Bird incentives, you must complete both the online portion of registration **and** turn in the completed and signed forms by 3:00 pm on May 9th. Forms must be submitted **in person** on May 2nd or to the Enrollment Coordinator's office between 4/12 and 5/9, not by mail, fax, or email. Those who complete Early Bird Registration by May 9th will receive a \$25 discount on student fees and a free RMSEL hooded sweatshirt.

You will receive detailed information on how to navigate the registration process next week from Natalie Newton, RMSEL's Enrollment Coordinator.

If you have questions, please contact Natalie Newton at nnewton@rmsel.org; email is the best and quickest way. If you need immediate assistance with something, please contact the main office.

Passage Panelists

For 30 years, the Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning (RMSEL) has been changing students' lives through challenge and discovery. Our expeditionary learning (EL) approach harnesses the natural passion to learn and is a powerful method for developing the curiosity, skills, knowledge, and courage needed to imagine a better world and work toward realizing it.

Throughout our K-12 program, we balance the development of traditional academic skills with project-based learning. Each year, students prepare a portfolio of the work they are most proud of, including written reflections that explore their growth and mastery in certain areas and project artifacts. In grades 3, 5, 8, 10, and 12, students participate in a culminating portfolio review and passage panel process, during which they showcase and justify their work to a three-person panel.

We are still in need of panelists; therefore, I am reaching out today to ask you to consider serving on a passage panel. During this two-day event, your panel will read the portfolios of three to four students and provide thoughtful, kind, and constructive feedback to students that push them to excel. Students take your feedback and list of tasks to prepare for their presentation day, during which they will present their work and answer your questions. After the presentations are complete, your panel will craft a letter to each student that reflects on their presentation and gives them things to think about as they move on to the next grade.

It takes 110 volunteers plus 30 staff members to create this authentic experience for students. Currently, we have 70 volunteers and are in need of 40 more. I'm hoping each family can contribute one volunteer to serve as a panelist. This can be a parent, family member, neighbor, or other member of your extended community. For parents, participating on a passage panel is a great way to learn about your role in your child's education at RMSEL and get a deep look into the Expeditionary Learning process. *My recommendation is for parents to serve on a panel that represents their student's next passage experience. For example: K/1/2 (3rd panel), 3/4 (5th panel), 5/6/7 (8th panel), 8/9 (10th panel), 10/11 (12th panel). Doing so can give you keen insight into the educational expectations for your student for the next couple of years.*

Below is the schedule for this year's passage panel process:

- *Friday, May 9th: Senior Reading Day*
- *Friday, May 16th: Senior Presentation Day*
- *Saturday, May 10th: Reading Day for grades 3, 5, 8, 10*
- *Wednesday, May 21st: Presentation Day for grades 3, 5*
- *Thursday, May 22nd: Presentation Day for grades 8, 10*

We still need panelists for the following grade-level panels:

- 3rd grade: 9 more volunteers needed
- 5th grade: 10 more volunteers needed
- 8th grade: 12 more volunteers needed
- 10th grade: 5 more volunteers preferred

At RMSEL, we believe that success is achieved by training the whole child through rigorous academics, character development, physical well-being, community awareness, and service to others. When honed, these aspects help prepare students for a successful personal and professional life. Our portfolio creation and presentation process is a critical component of our educational methodology. We'd like to invite you to join us, share your expertise with students, and encourage them to continue to excel.

If you are interested in serving on a passage panel or would like more information, email [Margaret Bierman](#) or [Lindsay Emery](#).

Wednesday Professional Learning Focus

This morning the High School Team caught up on missed learning from the previous two Wednesdays and the rest of the staff put the finishing touches on their upcoming crew trips.

DAC (District Accountability Committee) Opening

We are **STILL** seeking a representative FROM ANY SCHOOL LEVEL for the DAC. Click [HERE](#) for more information on how to apply.

Announcements

RMSEL [Instagram page](#).

In crew,

Tiffany Almon (she, her, hers, and why they matter) Executive Director, RMSEL