



Continuum of Community Systems & Structures: Grades K-3 SY 2026-2027

Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning
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I. Mission and Vision

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."

RMSEL scholars will demonstrate pride and ownership as they grow into responsible citizens who strive for high academic achievement and character excellence. RMSEL staff will equip our students with the tools for success in order to make a positive impact on our local and global community. Through our actions, we will exemplify Expeditionary Learning.

To ensure that RMSEL consistently works to pursue excellence in fulfilling our school mission and vision, it is imperative that we follow a continuum of community systems and structures. Organizational systems and structures establish clear expectations for students, parents, and staff, to ensure that our community is able to learn, grow, and thrive. The continuum of community systems and structures serves as a guide for students to become leaders of their own learning.

As a community of educators, we believe all students need both accountability and support to be successful in building the confidence and capacity to achieve academically and demonstrate excellent character. The purpose of this document is to provide the framework for reaching the highest degree of success while understanding that both success and failure play vital roles in academic and character development.

II. Academics and Character

Portfolio Projects and Assessments Standards-Based Grading

Teachers in the RMSEL primary school assess students using standards-based grading. Assessment through projects, tests, quizzes, presentations and other performance-based measures shows students' progress on learning targets which are directly tied to state standards. Student work is evaluated using the following scale:

No Evidence (NE)	The student shows no evidence of mastering the learning target. The student is either 1) not completing assigned work or 2) <u>performing significantly below the grade level expectation</u> . Further action is required of the student and/or family for the student to be on track for completion of the grade level portfolio.
Beginning (B)	The student is in the beginning stages of understanding the learning target but is <u>performing below the grade level expectation</u> . Further action is required of the student and/or family for the student to be on track for completion of the grade level portfolio.
Developing (D)	The student has a developing understanding of the grade-level expectation for the standard.
Accomplished (A)	The student has mastered the grade-level expectation for the standard.
Exemplary (E)	The student has exceeded the grade-level expectation for the standard.

Standards-based grades reflect a student's current level of progress towards a standard. For that reason, we do not average grades. For instance, if a student scores Beginning on an assessment the first time and Accomplished on the same standard on a second assessment, that student is Accomplished on the target, not Developing. A student's current level of mastery of standards is what matters.

Habits of Scholarship: Homework, Classwork, and Supporting Pieces of Projects

We believe that strong habits of scholarship are essential for students' success. We attempt to measure a student's habits of scholarship separate from student progress on learning targets that are tied to state standards. Tasks such as homework completion, classroom habits, and notebook checks are measured as habits of scholarship for each class.

Character Values: Responsibility, Courage, Discipline, Integrity, and Compassion

As an Expeditionary Learning School, one of the things that differentiates us is our focus on character. Throughout the year, students will engage in age-appropriate instruction and character self-reflections on our five-character values. Teachers will assess students on the stewardship of our character values each quarter. Character and Habits of Scholarship are assessed using the following scale:

	Area of Concern (AC)	Making Progress (MP)	Consistently Demonstrates (CD)
Compassion	I rarely demonstrate kindness toward myself, crew, and community.	I sometimes demonstrate kindness toward myself, crew, and community.	Most of the time, I demonstrate kindness toward myself, my crew, and my community.
Courage	I rarely take risks and/or ask for help.	I sometimes take risks and/or ask for help.	Most of the time, I take risks and/or ask for help.
Discipline	I rarely use self-control.	I sometimes use self-control.	Most of the time, I use self-control.
Integrity	I rarely do the right thing when no one is looking.	I sometimes do the right thing when no one is looking.	Most of the time, I do the right thing when no one is looking.
Responsibility	I rarely take care of my own, my crew's, and my community's belongings.	I sometimes take care of my belongings, my crew's belongings, and the belongings of my community.	Most of the time, I take care of my belongings, my crew's belongings, and the belongings of my community.

Progress Reporting: Infinite Campus and Portfolios

For each quarterly grading period, the office generates student progress reports. Progress is reported on Colorado Academic Standards, Habits of Scholarship, and Character Values for each course. Teachers will update Infinite Campus gradebooks weekly. These updates may include daily work, assessments/projects. Every standard must be at a Developing level or higher for students to be considered on grade level. Any time a student receives a B or NE on a standard at the end of a quarter, teachers write a comment identifying next steps for that student to improve achievement on the standard. At the end of each quarter, teachers will report character and habits of scholarship grades, including a 'Stars and Steps' narrative.

Teacher Grading Practice

Student work will be graded and returned to students in an equivalent period of time as required to complete. For example, if a student completes a writing assignment that requires a week to turn in to the teacher in final form, the student should expect to receive his/her grade within one week of the assignment.

Deadlines

It is imperative for student work to be completed in the timeframe assigned by the teacher. Learning is an ongoing process and late or missing assignments impair students from achieving at the highest level. Students receiving accommodations through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or 504 will be granted extended time when necessary. Students who have extended time accommodations due to a 504 or IEP should work with the classroom teacher to establish an alternative deadline.

Homework

As a group of educators we believe homework is a tool to build habits of scholarship that will prepare students to be successful lifelong learners. Homework is a place for students to practice and become experts in skills that are taught at school and allows families to stay connected to the content with their child.

Each week, students will bring home their RMSEL homework folders with their Training Plan and reading/book log which should be returned to their teacher with a parent signature on the assigned day.

	K	1	2	3
Literacy	Daily Reading Handwriting Practice Phonics Practice	Daily Reading Handwriting Practice Phonics Practice	Daily Reading (20 minutes 4x per week) with decodable Reading Log and weekly comprehension questions Phonics Practice	Daily Reading (20 minutes 4x per week) with Assigned text Reading Log and weekly comprehension questions
Math	Illustrative Mathematics	Illustrative Mathematics	Illustrative Mathematics pages 4x per week	Illustrative Mathematics pages 4x per week

Academic Support

In the event that a student is behind in progress for any core class, they will be assigned to Academic Support by their Crew Leader. Sessions occur after school for one hour (Tuesdays 3:10 - 3:50pm). During this time, students will receive the appropriate support as determined by their Crew Leader or Content Teacher. Teachers will notify students and families of the need to attend academic support at least one day in advance. **Attendance is mandatory for students who are notified.**

Portfolios

All students in Expeditionary Learning schools complete 'Portfolios' that display their high-quality work and highlight their academic and character growth throughout the year. Every 2nd and 3rd grader will complete a Portfolio that represents their learning. Students in 3rd grade are in a 'Passage Year,' which means they present their portfolios to a panel of community members at the end of the school year. Completion of the 3rd grade portfolio is a requirement for participating in the 3rd grade passage ceremony and at the end of the school year.

III. Adventure and Fitness Programs

Nutrition

As we continue to nurture a healthy and inclusive learning environment, we want to share some thoughts and reminders around food, snacks, and celebrations at school.

We highly encourage families to send snacks and treats that support student energy, focus, and well-being. In particular, we ask that snacks and celebration items be minimally processed and low in added sugars when possible. Research shows that ultra-processed foods and high-energy-density snacks (like candy, chips, and sugary drinks) can impact student behavior, focus, and long-term health.

At the same time, we *recognize that sometimes* convenience, access, and family resources play a role in what's packed. We never want to shame any student for what they bring to school. Socio-economic factors can impact food choices, and we strive to hold compassion and understanding at the center of all conversations.

To help maintain a healthy classroom culture:

- **Soda and energy drinks are not allowed. If these drinks are seen in school, they will be disposed of.**
- Candy should not be used for regular snacks or classroom celebrations.
- For **Crew parties or birthdays**, we welcome simple, wholesome options—fruits, veggies, popcorn, etc.—that all students can enjoy.
- If you're planning to send in a special treat, feel free to check in with us ahead of time to ensure it fits within our classroom needs and dietary considerations.

Thank you for partnering with us in building a community that supports both health and kindness. We appreciate your flexibility and support as we continue to grow together.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is directly tied to the learning targets connected to each unit of study or learning expedition in the classroom. Students are expected to be prepared behaviorally, academically and with appropriate gear/clothing prior to departure to participate in fieldwork. If a student is unprepared to attend fieldwork, the teacher may request that the student remain on campus and forego the fieldwork experience.

Crew Trips

Crew trips are a unique opportunity to extend learning experiences and build character outside of a typical school day. All students are required to attend crew trips unless a medical exemption is present. A student may be removed from a crew trip or prohibited from attending in the event they are in violation of the student code of conduct. Student safety on crew trips is our team's number one priority and behavioral misconduct in the classroom and/or while on the trip is not acceptable. It is expected that parents/guardians are available to receive phone calls in the event of a medical emergency with their student. Parents/guardians are financially responsible for all medical expenses that may occur in the field.

In order to attend a landmark trip, the additional fees related to that trip must be paid in full.

IV. Accountability and Behavior

Attendance and Tardies

Student attendance is taken to begin the school day in all primary school classrooms. School hours are from 7:45 AM – 3:00 PM (M/T/TH/F) and 8:45 am – 3:00 pm (W). To support parents in arriving at school in a timely manner, students are permitted to enter the building at 7:30 AM. Teachers will provide supervision in their crew classrooms.

Excused Absences - The following shall be considered excused absences:

1. A student who is temporarily ill or injured, or whose absence is approved by the administrator of the school of attendance on a prearranged basis. Prearranged absences shall be approved for appointments or circumstances of a serious nature only, which cannot be taken care of outside of school hours.
2. A student who is absent for an extended period due to physical, mental, or emotional disability.
3. A student who is pursuing a work-study program or fieldwork under the supervision of the school.
4. A student who is attending any school-sponsored activity or activities of an educational nature with advance approval by the administration.
5. A student who is absent in observance of an established religious holiday.
6. A student who is suspended shall be considered excused.
7. A student whose absence is approved by the Executive Director at the request of the parent or guardian.

The district may require suitable proof regarding the above exceptions, including written statements from medical sources.

Unexcused Absences - An unexcused absence is defined as an absence that is not covered by one of the foregoing exceptions. Unexcused absences may be deemed unacceptable by RMSEL regardless of prior notice or knowledge of the parents. Absences not properly reported by parents are unexcused.

Continued absences and/or repeated tardiness may be considered cause for disciplinary action. In accordance with law, the school may impose academic penalties which relate directly to classes missed while unexcused. The administration shall develop procedures to implement appropriate penalties. Students and parents/guardians may petition the BOCES for exceptions to this policy or the administrative procedures provided that no exception shall be sustained if the student fails to abide by all requirements imposed by the BOCES as conditions for granting any such exception.

When a student returns to school after a period of absence, a note signed by one of his or her parents should be sent which indicates that the student was absent with parental permission. The note must contain the parent's full name, the date and the number of days the student was absent. A parent may also contact the RMSEL Academic Secretary to report student absences. In the event that a student is placed on an Attendance Contract, the parameters of the contract may require sustainable proof, including written statements from medical sources.

Any student who has been absent from class for six consecutive weeks or more in any one school year, except for excused long-term illness or death, is considered a "dropout" and shall be reported to the Department of Education by the school. However, if the student is in attendance at the end of the school year, or enrolled in another school, home study course or on-line program, such student is not considered a dropout and shall not be reported.

Make-up work - Make-up work may be allowed for excused absences only. Make-up work shall be provided for any class in which a student has an excused absence unless otherwise determined by the administrative or executive director. It is the responsibility of the student to pick up any make-up assignments permitted on the day he or she returns to class. Students are required to complete any make – up assignments within two school days per excused absence, not to exceed one week from the original assignment date, unless otherwise arranged with a crew leader.

Procedures for Monitoring and Compliance of Compulsory Attendance - The following procedures will be utilized to monitor the excused and unexcused attendance.

1. 3 absences per quarter – Initial contact: concern about missed class time.
2. 5 absences per quarter – Letter: missing instructional time.
3. 7 absences per school year – Parent Meeting with Administration and School Support Staff.
4. 10 absences per school year – Attendance Contract and Plan - Any absence in excess of 10 after an Attendance Contract and Plan is established without prior approval by the Executive Director will result in a referral to the school psychologist that will file with the court system.
5. 15 or more absences per school year – Referral to RMSEL Attendance Review Board - Request for referral to school district of residence.

On our website, under Governance > BOCES > BOCES Policies > JH-Student Absences and Excuses

Dress Code

The purpose of the dress code is to create an environment that fosters a collegiate atmosphere, one where learning is at the forefront of our experience.

The following items are deemed disruptive to the classroom environment or the maintenance of a safe and orderly school. They are not acceptable in school buildings, on school grounds, or at school activities:

1. Articles of clothing or sunglasses that cover your face.
2. Clothing that bares or exposes traditionally private parts of the body, including, but not limited to, the stomach, buttocks, back, and breasts (e.g., midriffs, halter tops, backless clothing, tube tops, garments made of fishnet, mesh or similar material, muscle tops, etc.).
3. Any clothing, paraphernalia, grooming, jewelry, hair coloring, accessories, or body adornments that are or contain any advertisement, symbols, words, slogans, patches, or pictures that:
 - Refer to drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or weapons
 - Are of a sexual nature
 - By virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, or other attribute, denote membership in gangs which advocate drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior
 - Are obscene, profane, vulgar, lewd, or legally libelous
 - Threaten the safety or welfare of any person
 - Promote any activity prohibited by the student code of conduct
 - Otherwise disrupts the teaching-learning process

On our website, under Governance > BOCES > BOCES Policies > JICA - Student Dress Code

Technology and Cell Phones

At the Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning, we are committed to actions to ensure that we develop Healthy Compassionate Scholars. As a school staff, we understand that technology has a place in the educational setting when utilized as a tool per the teacher's instructional plan. Based on our review of instructional plans and the educational environment, we are committed to a 90% device free learning environment. We strive for the school day to be filled with collaborative learning experiences that engage students in complex problem solving absent of an electronic device. No more than twenty instructional days per year will require the use of an electronic device.

This technology position statement is our commitment to providing exceptional learning opportunities in a safe school environment. To establish this environment the following will be required of students and families:

- In Kindergarten – 8th grade students may not bring any electronic device to school including a cell-phone. Electronic devices are tablets, i-pads, headphones, earbuds, computers, smart watches (i-watch), and cell phones. In the event a student needs to communicate with a parent during the school day they may use the telephone in the main office.
- When devices are required for use on campus or per a student's accommodations as outlined in a 504 / IEP, they will be provided by RMSEL accordingly.
- To ensure equitable access for technology usage any student who does not have a computer for use outside of the school day may check-out a device for annual use at-home. The device will remain the property of the school and BOCES J Policy JS Student Use of the Internet and Electronic Communication.

Our commitment to a device free learning environment demonstrates that we understand that 43.75% of a student's waking hours (16 hours daily) should not include the use of a device. We expect that our students will thrive in this environment in all three domains of student achievement.

Student Behavior

Consequences in the learning environment are not punitive; rather, they are a tool for developmentally appropriate learning and redirection. Crew leaders will use a tiered structure as a guide to respond in the classroom in partnership with families prior to requesting intervention by the Director of Elementary Education. It is the expectation that teachers and families will act as partners to support appropriate conduct at school.

Repeated patterns of misbehavior may necessitate a meeting between the family and teacher, as well as a behavior tracker/contract to be implemented at the discretion of school staff. A RMSEL staff member will communicate directly with parents when any consequence is issued for Level 2 or Level 3 behaviors (uncivil, unsafe, policy violations). School staff will be guided by RMSEL BOCES policy in their response and interventions to student misbehavior.

Types of Behavioral Consequences:

	You Break it --- You Fix it	Loss of Privilege
<i>Examples</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbal or Written apology ● Helping to clean up ● Conflict resolution process ● Completing a task at another time during the day ● Classroom reflection sheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Losing the use of a specific learning tool ● Assigned seating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Classroom, Lunchroom, Specials classes ● Designated playground area ● Temporary removal from the crew/class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inside the classroom or office ● Transitioning with teacher support ● Specific bathroom procedure ● Loss of Recess Time ● Loss of Choice/Free Play Time

V. School-Home Communication

The teaching team will provide weekly updates on crew and academic announcements to students in their weekly homework folders and Training Plans.

Positive communication between parent/guardian(s) and teachers is encouraged to support the development of students' holistic learning. Teachers will communicate frequently with parent/guardian(s). Teachers will communicate behavior concerns, information regarding a student's individualized learning plan, and other conversations where sensitive information may be discussed over the phone or in person. In the event that you need to reach a teacher by phone, your call will be forwarded to their voicemail box. Teachers will respond to communication within 48 hours.

To encourage face-to-face interactions, teachers will have conference hours M/W/Th/F from 3:00-3:25 **by appointment only**.

The content itemized above makes up the structure and foundation in which work of high quality can and will be produced by students. RMSEL provides an opportunity to exceed the expectations of a traditional learning environment, not simply provide an alternative learning environment. The work that we do with students will serve as a catalyst for great success in their elementary school years. We look forward to another amazing school year at RMSEL!

Sincerely,

K-3 Crew Leaders