

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCHOOL OF EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING
MINUTES OF BOCES MEETING
February 24th, 2026
8:00 a.m.

In Attendance: Lindley McCrary (LPS), Kimberlee Sia (DPS), Anne Keke (APS), Emma Ershow (PEBC RMSEL Board)

Staff: Tiffany Almon (Executive Director at RMSEL), Lindsay Emery (Director of Operations), Jessica Vargas (Enrollment Coordinator at RMSEL), Shannon Grant (GNG Consulting group)

Guests: 7th grade students Sophie and Gwen

Call to Order

The February Board Meeting; due to initial lack of quorum, the Board began with the Executive Director's Report.

Executive Director Report – Tiffany Almon

Student's Electives Presentation

- Art: masks
- Genius lab: biomimicry
- Technology: year or invention research
- Anthropology: in-depth research on a world culture
- Strength training: exploring different kind of training (hypertrophy, muscular power, strength and endurance)

Emma Ershow thanked the students and commended the clarity of their presentation.

Kimberlee asked which grades participate in Genius Lab, if it is new this year and whether there is a formal curriculum.

Tiffany explained that Genius Lab is not new. Lindsay added that it began when the new building opened in 2022 and is sometimes referred to as "Makerspace" and it is facilitated by a teacher.

Introductions

Lindley McCrary (LPS), Kimberlee Sia (DPS), Anne Keke (APS), Emma Ershow (PEBC RMSEL Board), Tiffany Almon (Executive Director at RMSEL), Lindsay Emery (Director of Operations), Jessica Vargas (Enrollment Coordinator at RMSEL), Shannon Grant (GNG Consulting group)

Approval of minutes: Motion to approve January 2026 meeting minutes from Kimberlee. First motion to approve moved by Emma, second motion to approve moved by Lindley. January's meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Celebrations

- Mid-year review with Expeditionary Learning school designer; working with curriculum specialist, survey, team, data was analyzed and captured with strengths and weakness and complete EOY goals.
- Curriculum Camp focused on Workshop 1.0 and 2.0 structures
- Staff retreat at TP Raisers as service work
- HS Internships: most eligible high school students are currently participating in 2–3-week internships. Placements include farming, hospital job shadowing, ceramics studio, teaching assistant roles, acupuncture, Shambhala, lobster fishing in Maine, photography, equine therapy, and two internal internships (marketing and small business).
- Staff retention: letters of intent; we only need to hire for 2 positions (7th and 8th grade math, and director of. Lindley asked about the turn over. Tiffany explained average turn over has been low; Lindsay explained the average is around 3 positions.
- Staff professional Learning plan: getting feedback every Wednesday; asking teams to develop learning plans. Tiffany thanked PEBC
- Student retention: lottery, 6th grade shadow day, 7th and 8th shadow days, opportunities for rising freshman to interact with HS

Next Steps

- Ongoing parent and student survey data collection: surveys are aligned to character and school culture. Questions focus on character development, student voice, sense of belonging, trusted adults, empowerment, and leadership. Student participation is strong but family response rates are lower, though multiple children per responding family increase representation.
- Hiring: we have two open positions for 2026–2027: 7th/8th Grade Math and the Director of Community & Culture. Historical turnover averages approximately three staff per year often due to life changes.

Enrollment Update

- 87% return rate (includes graduating seniors)
- 46 non-returners (primarily 8th graders and 15 seniors)
- 245 submitted applications; 65 pending completions
- Over-enrolled at 9th grade (historically balances by fall)
- Strong waitlists at kindergarten and 6th grade
- Recruitment focus needed at 7th, 10th, and 11th grades

Kimberlee asked whether there is a healthy waitlist overall; Tiffany explained that waitlists are strong at kindergarten and 6th grade; limited availability at 4th and 5th grade pending confirmation of returning families.

Wants and Needs

- Tiffany requested support connecting with district communications teams to assist with targeted marketing via text communications. Lindley and Kimberlee offered to follow up with their district contacts.

- Upcoming Events and Partnerships include an auction fundraiser on March 7 to support adventure and expeditionary learning programs
- Networking opportunities with Expeditionary Learning continue, including a Centennial Elementary site seminar visit
- Budget Planning and Crew Trips are scheduled to advance strategic priorities for the next school year. Leadership will collaborate with the district advisory committee to align funding with highest needs

Open Forum: No sign ups nor public comments received.

Board Policy Review

- Policies were reviewed and updated in consultation with legal counsel. Lindley confirmed she reviewed policies and found them aligned with district policies; she also noted one policy requiring clarification regarding the designated reporting position.
- The Board agreed policies will be posted publicly and brought back next month for final approval following the feedback period.
- No additional questions from board members.

FY25 Audit – Final Approval

- Audit is near completion with no major changes since last review; management letter items are largely resolved.
- Payroll controls improved by outsourcing and added internal checks per auditor recommendations
- QuickBooks desktop licensing is now managed externally with daily backups, enhancing financial system security

Motion to Approve FY25 Audit: moved by Emma Ershow, second motion to approve moved by Lindley. Audit unanimously approved.

Budget Report

- Budget Adjustments and Reconciliations reflect updated funding and expenditures including PPR payments and literacy intervention support
- DPS payments for 380 students reconciled against actual enrollment of 375 students
- Increased aide hours temporarily covered teacher vacancies, with supplemental budget to adjust allocations accordingly
- Board Policy Review was completed with updates to clarify roles and align with district standards
- Minor outstanding questions remain about specific reporting responsibilities, to be clarified before final approval
- Policies will be made public for community feedback before formal adoption at the next meeting
- Two additional PPR payments from DPS received.
- READ Act funding received (\$6,517.10).
- Bond principal and interest payment made in January.
- Temporary increase in aide hours during staffing transition; will be reflected in supplemental budget.

Items for Future Agenda:

No items were requested.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned since there were no other items to discuss. moved by Lindley, seconded by Emma. Unanimously Approved

Kimberlee Sia, President

Emma Ershow, Secretary/Treasurer