

Northeast Panther News

Every Panther by Face and Name, to and through Graduation

Points of Panther Pride:

- ✓ Seniors Shauntrice Ellington & Andino Nyong were recognized for high academic achievement at the Board's Black History Celebration. Congratulate them!
- ✓ Boys basketball & our cheerleaders represented us well in sectionals over break. They did not advance but put their hearts into the competitions and we appreciate them! Thanks to staff who came out to support.
- ✓ Mr. Ibezim was busy over break continuing to nurture a partnership with RIT, which will provide access to lab equipment and opportunities for science scholars. Thanks to Ms. Buckley for her family connections!
- ✓ Ms. Jackson and Ms. Reitkopp conferenced 1:1 with sophomores on progress to date.
- ✓ 122 students achieved Honor Roll, and 50 students went skating to celebrate
- ✓ 20 students were trained as "ROCresponders" and can now help other students resolve conflicts more peacefully.



Upcoming Events

March 7, morning

NYSED Asst Commissioner
Dr. Wilkens visits campus

March 7, 3:45 in Library

Voluntary Staff Meeting

Every Thurs/Fri AC Day

Teacher Collaboration/Core
Department Time

March 8th, 9th Period

International Celebration

March 12, at noon

Grades due for Progress
Reports

March 12 - 14

Selected Seniors take
SkillsUSA Workshop & Exam

March 14, 3:45 in Library

Staff meeting with Chief
Schiavi

March 15

Junior CMAP Luncheon

March 18

Junior Class - National
College Fair @ Convention
Center

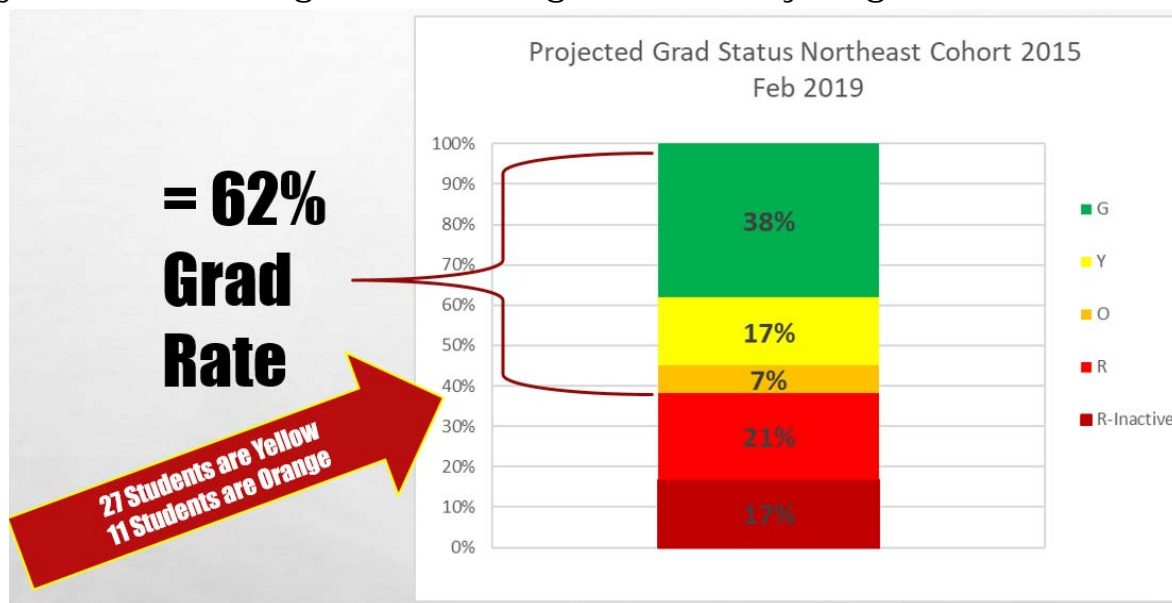
Important Updates on Senior Class

We are on a 4-month countdown to graduation for the class of 2019. While not all of us work directly with seniors, graduation rate is a critical measure of our school's success and obviously critical to each young person. While many students are sitting pretty for graduation, there are a large number of students with significant needs that we must meet in order for them to graduate. A few facts to keep in mind:



- Our target for graduation rate is **60%**. This would be a substantial gain over last year's 54.5%.
- There are 159 students in this cohort (it fluctuates); 139 students are still active; 113 attend on campus, 15 attend other programs. The rest have dropped out, or are no-shows—both of which count against us.

- The chart below shows how we have assessed the students, based on their credits, exams, current grades, attendance, and overall context. You can see that to reach our target graduation rate, we need to support every yellow and orange student to graduation by August.



- **GRADUATION MENTORS:** We are looking for mentors for about 45 students who need significant support and a creative, loving cheerleader. **Please watch for and respond to Ms. Pryor's email requesting mentors.**
- **SKILLS USA EXAM:** One of the pathways that students can use to graduate includes passing a career employability exam (SkillsUSA) in place of one of

the Social Studies Regents. Students have to have sat for both exams, and have to complete some online course work in order to sit for the SkillsUSA. All seniors who need this exam will be excused from 2.5 days of classes to take this exam. They will be in **SkillsUSA workshops on March 12th from 9:30 – 3:30, March 13th from 9:30 – 1:00, and then take the exam on March 14th.** Please watch for an email with the list of students.

- **Senior Supports:** Students have a variety of very individual needs—including credit recovery, exam prep, tutoring, lab minutes, mental health, attendance, etc., etc. As we come into the home stretch, we will be working closely with you all about setting up viable personalized options. Thank you in advance for always partnering to provide opportunities for students—which we know can be frustrating and time-consuming on the adult end!

Reminders about Cell Phone Policy and Procedure

We welcome the new team (plus some faithful year-rounders!) to cell phone collection and distribution this semester. We are grateful and ask that you let us know if you see issues, so that we can all get better. A couple of notes and thank yous:

- **Ms. Whaley** comes in early every single morning and singlehandedly sets up the morning bins and tables. It is NOT overlooked and is very much appreciated.
- **Ms. Blythe** is another powerhouse on the phones, pitching in much more than her assigned times to help colleagues and our school.
- **9th period teachers**—PLEASE keep your envelopes alphabetized as you distribute phones. You really can't imagine how much smoother it goes during morning collection and early dismissals.
- **9th period teachers**—no matter what time the bins come to your classroom, please do not distribute phones until 3:25. We are starting to see students taking walks with phones as early as 3:00. This poses safety risks and does not maintain a culture where every minute matters.
- No system is perfect and it is adolescents' job to be creative and persistent in skirting rules. We are working with the safety and security staff and we ask that you continue to alert an SSO, PPR or an administrator if you know a student has a phone. We have to be together on this to keep it up!

School Updates – Variety of Subjects

Black History Month

Visible support included:

- Enthusiastic participation in the door decorating contest
- Douglass re-enactment & birthday
- Student research projects on scientists of African-American descent
- 18 staff participating in a collegial circle on Dr. Chris Emdin's *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood*

Our ongoing work is to incorporate texts, materials, current events and topics that reflect African American and Latino experiences as part of your lessons on the regular, not just in February. This is a critical part of our work to connect with & engage our students. Looking to expand our own understandings, examining our own biases and creating opportunities for youth leadership on campus also are year-round ways to celebrate Black History.

School Climate Survey

Every District employee and student has been sent a link to a school climate survey. This is part of the federal education law (ESSA) and each school will receive a climate index, based on the survey results.

- ✓ Survey is live from February 25 through Friday, April 5.
- ✓ You should have received an email on Monday, February 25, from SchoolClimateSurvey@rcsdk12.org with the subject line, "School Climate Survey."
- ✓ All students received a link. We are asking all English teachers to make sure that students have 30 minutes devoted to completing the survey, before the April 5 deadline. It is important that students receive ample time to complete the survey in one sitting; there is no way to pause and resume the survey at another time.
- ✓ For more information, please do not hesitate to reach out to Brennen Colwell at the survey email address provided above or internally at 262-8111.

Updates

- ✓ March 8th is the mid-point of the 3rd Marking Period, and Progress Reports will be distributed to students/families. Please make sure grades are up to date by noon on the 12th so that Ms. Gilbert can run Progress Reports on the 14th.
- ✓ It's budget season in RCSD, which means that stress is high as people begin to hear and talk about budget and staffing cuts. We are advocating for all the resources we can get to continue the programs that have helped us during Receivership. At the same time, we are likely to experience reductions in staffing and funding as a school. As is true every year, we will not have final answers for many months, and we ask that we all stay focused on the students in front of us. Please feel free to talk with us at any point.
- ✓ Please check your clocks and be mindful of dismissal time for each period.
- ✓ March can be a long stretch—take some steps to put some energizing, fun interactions into your days!