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RCSD Brings Student Voice to the National Stage

Four students from Edison Career and Technology High School and Northeast College Preparatory High School will represent the RCSD on a national stage later this month!

Alex Santiago, a senior in the Pathways to Technology Program at Edison, is one of 13 students from across the country selected to participate in the Mikva Challenge's Soapbox Nation. He will give a speech at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. on Sunday, May 21. Soapbox Nation is the culminating event of Mikva Challenge's Project Soapbox Program, where students engage in public speaking about issues impacting their communities. They deliver powerful speeches that have lasting, transformative impacts on classrooms, schools, and communities. Alex has chosen to speak on the topic of the negative aspects of social media.



"It is more exciting than nervousness," said Alex. "I am looking forward to speaking about what I think should happen. My speech focuses on the trends and other things that happen on social media that mostly involve violence as a way to get followers and get attention, which is something I think you should not do. I do not think you should hurt other people just so you can get some attention."

"We are immensely proud of Alex for being selected to participate in this prestigious nationwide showcase," said Dr. Carmine Peluso, Superintendent of Schools. "This is a true testament to his dedication and hard work and serves as a reminder of the impact that young people can have on our world. It is an honor to have these students represent our District in such a meaningful way."

This school year, Alex was one of 10 students from Participation in Government classes at Edison chosen to deliver his "soapbox" speech for the entire school building. From there, his name was submitted for nomination to the national showcase.

Three other seniors from the RCSD will accompany Alex on his trip to Washington, D.C. Azaria Bowman attends Edison, and Jorge Luis Jimenez Ortiz and Corey Rivers attend Northeast. All four students will be participating in Mikva Challenge's Youth Summit, a three-day leadership and civic education opportunity for students nationwide. The focus of the summit is to create civic action task forces that address critical areas facing young people, which include education, the environment, equity, mental health, community safety, etc.

The RCSD congratulates Alex, Azaria, Jorge, and Corey on their accomplishments and wishes them the best of luck on their journey to Washington, D.C. The District is proud to have such outstanding students representing us nationally.