

# THE ROOST REPORTER

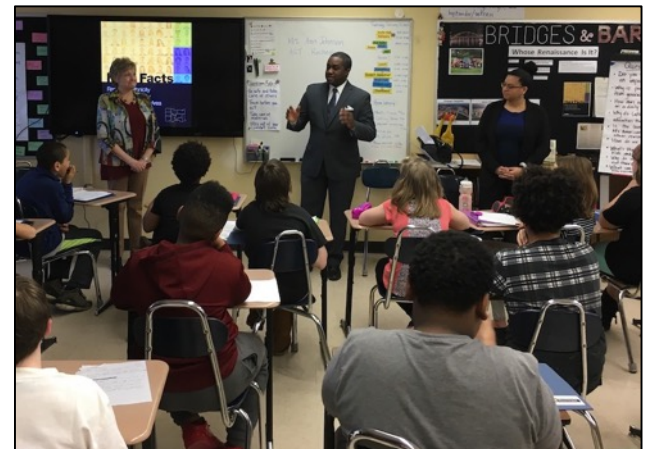
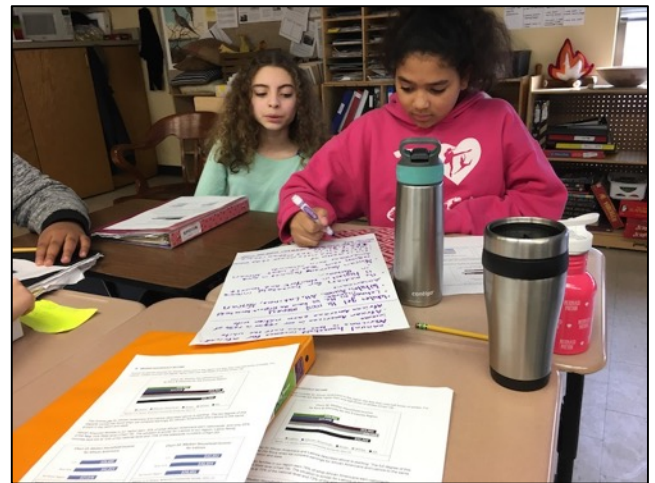
*The Newsletter of Record for Sixth Grade*

*Feb. 16, 2017*

## Close Read of Hard Facts

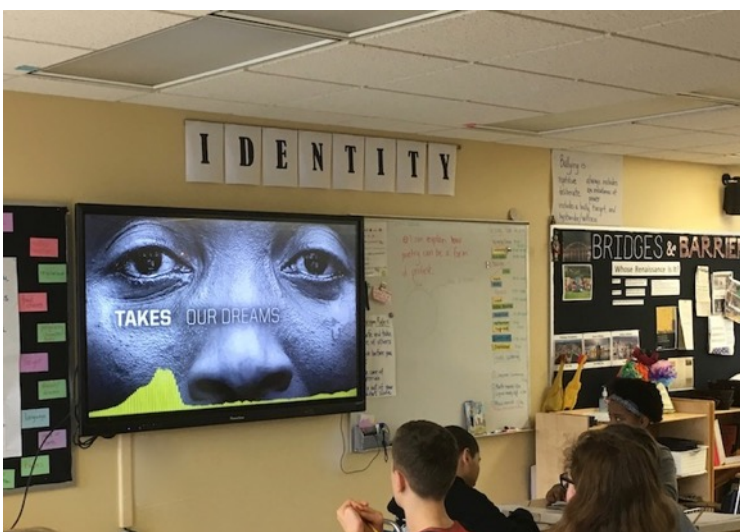
We are grateful that members of [ACT Rochester](#) were able to pay us a visit this week and help us process the data in the Hard Facts report. We examined the data for Rochester and the nine-county metropolitan area and came away startled by the inequality presented in the report. By all measures, Black and Latino members of the community have lower home ownership, more dire health outcomes, greater unemployment, lower income, and less education. The students had plenty of questions, but could already see the role systemic and institutional racism played in the reality of the data.

Ann Johnson, Simeon Banister, and Yahaira Laboy from ACT Rochester joined us Thursday to address our questions and discuss why facing these “hard facts” is imperative if we want our community to move forward in a more equitable way. They challenged us to speak to people in our community, learn about their needs, and when we return for our Four Cities trip, share with them the successes (and failures) other communities have had while trying to build bridges across neighborhoods. We are grateful to work with them and share our findings with such an influential and authentic audience!



## Writing Our Identities

Our work with [The Crossover](#) is coming to an end and students will be working on their own stories to share at exhibition night. We introduced “Where I Am From” by George Ella Lyon as a model for telling our stories, a way of merging memory and place in a narrative form. We are also continuing our work with Almeta Whitis and students will be sharing monologues and poems that express elements of their identity. We also spent some time examining how poetry can be a form of protest – how our experiences shape our identities and how hardship and unfairness can be a muse for story-telling and prose. We examined the works of Langston Hughes, Nikki Giovanni, and Kwame Alexander to see their experiences shaped identity – and their written works. We are looking forward to sharing our work with you in a few short weeks!



## Fundraising Nearing Its End



With just one month to go before our Four Cities adventure begins, we wanted to remind families of a few more opportunities to knock a few dollars off their final bills. Our paper flower sale was a huge success (thanks Wendi Farkas, for helping spearhead this!) and the Savers donation drive also brought in some funding. Students can participate in two more options before departure day. A snack and craft sale at Community Circles and Exhibition Nights would allow students to raise funds for themselves (we'd need parent volunteers to help monitor this) and a Walk-a-thon would allow kids to "step up" their fundraising by collecting pledges for the total number of miles or steps they take in a one-week period. Look for information on these endeavors in email soon.



### Simon Says...

- ✓ **Passage Work** - Passage research questions are done and now comes the hard work of writing! Check in with your sixth grader about what sources they might need to support the research.
- ✓ **Math Update** - We may sound like broken records in the classroom, but text coding word problems and organizing our work has paid dividends in our most recent math assessment. Taking the time to do good work the first time is a life lesson. Quality matters! Math menus are due next week - have your child share his/ her work with you!
- ✓ **Exhibition!** - Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 - 7:00 pm in the Eisenhart Auditorium.
- ✓ **Social skills groups** - We have the opportunity for students to work with our Social Worker, Lauren Grimm, in small groups to work on coping skills and strategies and other areas that could support social and emotional learning. Watch for email invites soon or let us know if you feel your child might benefit from such a group.

## Happy February Break!



The longer days and warmer weather means that coats come off at recess and the blanket of snow has been replaced by a sea of mud. It also means an uptick in colds, flu, stomach bugs (and other kinds of bugs, too!). We are grateful for a mid-winter break to rest, heal, perhaps even reflect. Enjoy the time with your children and know that when they come back, we will be moving full force towards exhibition night prep, Better World Project work, and gearing up for Four Cities (only one month to go!). We will be working on passage work and our "Where I Am From" poems next week. We will post the work in Google Classroom so kids can access the work remotely if they are away (or catch up when they get back).

Your Sixth Grade Team

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