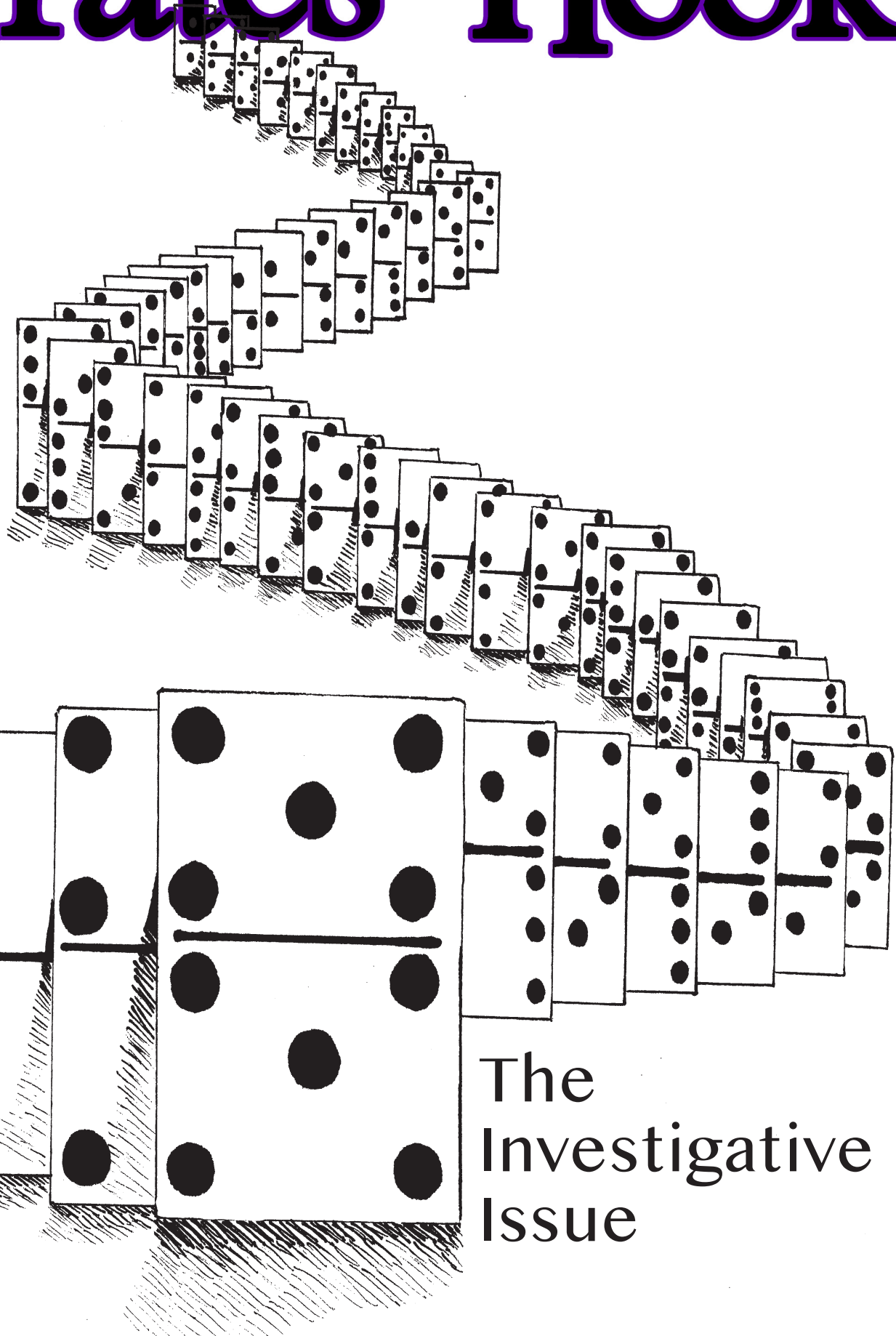


# The Pirates' Hook



The  
Investigative  
Issue



## The Domino Effect

On Tuesday, February 18 at 10:20am, we went into a lockdown—the second in consecutive school days and third this school year.

Beyond the resulting fear and anxiety, these disruptions have had a domino effect on The Hook staff. Missing class time during the lockdowns, along with school closures due to winter weather, forced us to delay our next print edition for the first time in several years.

Fittingly, this edition focuses on cause and effect. The lockdowns have caused school-wide uneasiness, the result of students being crammed into dark corners and anxiously awaiting updates. Now, every announcement freezes students in apprehension.

The toll on students' mental health (a topic Nico Jordan and Nellie Purdy cover on page 8) is undeniable. After both recent lockdowns, a large portion of the student body, including The Hook staff, decided to go home instead of staying in class for the

rest of the day.

The consistent trend of buses arriving late (page 4) and lockdowns happening early in the day made us wonder, as we sat in the dark on cold tile floors, if students were arriving at school while we were hiding in classrooms.

Communication (page 28 and 31) from the school during the lockdowns was also flawed. Parents, students and staff were left without clear information on what caused the lockdown, and

the announcement over the loudspeaker carried a tone of fear instead of urgency, which instilled even more anxiety into students and staff alike.

Our annual investigative edition aims to explore issues that affect all of us. The past week has given us plenty of story ideas for next year's projects.

The lockdowns exposed deep flaws in our school's communication, safety, and student support. It is clear that changes need to be made.

### Now, every announcement freezes students in apprehension

## El Efecto Dominó

*El martes 18 de febrero a las 10:20 am, entramos en aislamiento, el segundo en días escolares consecutivos y el tercero este año escolar.*

*Más allá del miedo y la ansiedad resultantes, estas interrupciones han tenido un efecto dominó en el personal de The Hook. La falta de tiempo de clase durante los aislamientos, junto con el cierre de escuelas debido al clima invernal, nos obligó a retrasar nuestra próxima edición impresa por primera vez en varios años.*

*Oportunamente, esta edición se centra en la causa y el efecto. Los aislamientos han causado inquietud en toda la escuela, como resultado de que los estudiantes estén hacinados en rincones oscuros y esperen ansiosamente actualizaciones. Ahora, cada anuncio congela los estudiantes en aprensión.*

*El costo para la salud mental de los estudiantes (un tema que Nico Jordan y Nellie Purdy cubren en la página 8) es innegable. Después de los dos aislamientos recientes, una gran parte del alumnado, incluido el personal de The Hook, decidió irse a casa en lugar de quedarse en clase el resto del día.*

*La tendencia constante de los*

*autobuses que llegaban tarde (página 4) y los aislamientos escolares que se producían a primera hora del día nos hicieron preguntarnos, mientras estábamos sentados en la oscuridad sobre suelos de baldosas frías, si los estudiantes llegaban a la escuela mientras nosotros estábamos escondidos en las clases.*

*La comunicación (páginas 28 y 31) de la escuela durante los aislamientos escolares también fue defectuosa. Los padres, los estudiantes y el personal se quedaron sin información clara sobre qué causó el cierre escolar, y el anuncio por altavoz tenía un tono de miedo en lugar de urgencia, lo que infundió aún más ansiedad en los estudiantes y el personal por igual.*

*Nuestra edición anual de investigación tiene como objetivo explorar cuestiones que nos afectan a todos. La semana pasada nos ha dado muchas ideas de historias para los proyectos del próximo año. Los cierres escolares expusieron fallas profundas en la comunicación, la seguridad y el apoyo a los estudiantes de nuestra escuela. Está claro que es necesario hacer cambios.*

## In This Issue

4 *What if students didn't need cars and buses to get to Riverside?*

17 *How long do principals stay at Riverside?*

25 *How did drag find a home in Durham?*

8 *Does school help or harm students' mental health?*

20 *Screen time's effect on literacy may be more serious than we thought*

28 *How does RHS keep its community informed?*

11 *As injury rates spike, student athletes rely on rehab and family*

23 *Digital cameras are making a comeback*

36 *More students are dual enrolling at Durham Tech than ever before*

# OBITUARY



• PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HELM



• PHOTO BY SADIE IRBY

Aryion “AJ” Clendenning died on Saturday, Jan. 11, 2025 in a drive-by-shooting. He was 15 years old.

AJ is survived by his mother, Taniesha Baines, his 17-year-old sister, Asiyah Clendenning, and his uncle, Nathan Clendenning.

AJ attended Glenn Elementary School and Carrington Middle School.

He was a sophomore at Riverside High School and played offensive and defensive line for the football team. He loved going outside, shopping, and playing video games, especially Fortnite, Grand Theft Auto, and Madden.

Science teacher Tavia Webley referred to AJ as a nice young man.

“That Thursday was the last day that I saw him,” said Webley. “He carried a board for me so we could cover broken glass. He was being a gentleman, and then his famous words: ‘You got some snacks?’ So I gave him a cupcake.”

“He was a positive person who would lift up others when they were down,” said math teacher Julie-Lynn Bourquin. “He had the biggest smile and the happiest spirit.”

His family members called him a loving person.

“AJ loved the Riverside community,” said Asiyah Clendenning.

“AJ wanted to make sure everyone was happy,” said Baines. “He could put a smile on everyone’s face.”

*Aryion “AJ” Clendenning murio Sabado, Enero 11, 2025 en un tiroteo a traves de un auto mobile. El tenia 15 anos.*

*AJ es recordado por parte de su madre, Taneisha Baines, su hermana de 17 anos, Asiyah Clendenning, y su tío Nathan Clendenning.*

*AJ atendio la escuela Elemntaria, Glenn y la escuela secundaria, Carrington.*

*El fue un estudiante del grado 10 en la Riverside y jugo futbol americano para los equipos ofensivo y defensivos. El amaba jugar afuera, ir de compras, y jugar video juegos, espicialmenete Fortnite, Grand Theft Auto, y Madden.*

*Maestra de ciencias Tavia Webley referio a AJ como un buen joven.*

*“Ese jueves fue el ultimo dia que lo vi,” dijo Webley. “El cargo una tabla para que pudiamos cubrir el vidrio que se rompio. El estaba siendo cabelleroso, y luego dijo su famosas palabras: ‘Tienes unos bocadillos?’ Pues le di un pastelito.”*

*“El fue una persona positiva que siempre queria ayudar a otros cuando se sentian tristes,” dijo maestra de matematicas Julie-Lynn Borquin. “El tuvo la sonria mas grande y el espiritu mas contento.”*

*Sus familiares lo llamaron una persona amable.*

*“AJ amaba a la comunidad de Riverside,” dijo Asiyah Clendenning.*

*“AJ siempre queria asegurar que todos estaban felices,” dijo Baines. “El podia poner una sonrisa en la cara de todos.”*

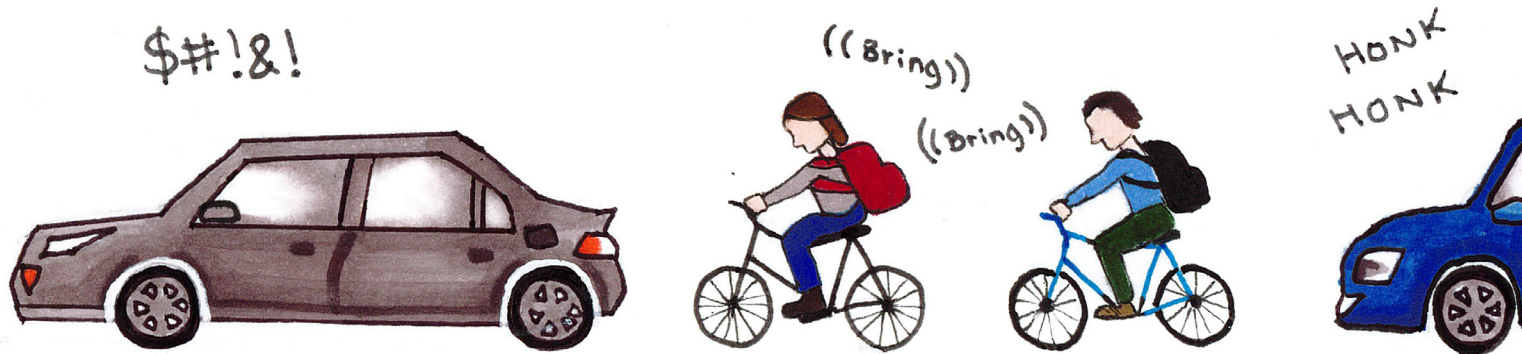
## Staff List

Isabelle Abadie, Delia Aguilar, Sofia Alvarez-Pedraza, Yaderlin Bojoy Aguacata, Levi Brown, Chandler Cates, Taliyah Cooper, Jaida Cooper Parrish, Violet Davis, Aureli Dominguez, Lucinda Dorrance, Kalissa Everett, Oliver George, Emmett Flynn, Aidan Ganter, Conrad Hamel, Diego Hernandez, Sadie Irby, Nico Jordan, Diego Juarez-Velaquez, Norah Lubeck, Jamari Murphy, Cullen McAllister, Lana McIlvaine, Rory O’Conner, Nelly Purdy, Toby Rangel, Soka Rosette, Tula Winton, Austin Wymore

# Gridlock

BY NORAH LUBECK

What if students didn't need



It's 4:15, and the Riverside dismissal bell just rang. Hundreds of students rush to the front of the building to get to their mode of transportation to leave school. Most students likely end up waiting on the property for longer than they want.

According to a poll, for 73% of students it takes over 10 minutes just to leave school grounds before driving home.

Part of the reason for this traffic situation is that the majority of transport for Riverside comes from cars and buses.

According to students and measures of walkability, Riverside is a distinctly unwalkable school, meaning that the majority of students, staff, and parents cannot easily walk to and from Riverside. The school is located in an area with no sidewalks, few options for transportation, and an inefficient traffic design. Compared to other schools, both in Durham and out of the country, Riverside is less accessible to nearby homes and businesses.

## The Benefits of Walkability

Walkability has known benefits, including increased physical and mental health. A study from Texas A&M University found a connection between increased walkability and improved so-

cial interactions and a sense of community, along with the many other known benefits of physical activity.

Another study from the Chinese University of Hong Kong found that increased walkability aided the health and wellbeing of older adults. The access to these walkable areas was due to "the improvement of land use mix-access, infrastructure for walking, and traffic safety," according to the study.

From an environmental standpoint, walkability is also beneficial. According to research from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), gasoline consumption is directly related to how walkable an area is. The EPA also found that Houston, a city that is not very walkable, has an average gasoline consumption of about 200 gallons higher compared to Chicago, one of the most walkable cities in the country.

It's difficult to fully understand walkability without considering the Walk Score concept. Social entrepreneur Mike Mathieu helped develop Walk Score, a metric that measures the walkability of any address by analyzing population density, nearby amenities, and distance to infrastructure like sidewalks and bike lanes. The closer the score is to 100, the better the walkability.

Riverside has a Walk Score of 4, which the platform lists in the

category of "almost all errands require a car."

Durham has an average Walk Score of 30. Other Durham high schools, including Hillside, Jordan, Southern, and Northern, have a slightly better Walk Score but still fall in the category of "almost all errands require a car."

Compared to the rest of the world, specifically Europe, the US is known to be overwhelmingly less walkable. A study published by the American Journal of Public Health revealed that US citizens walk less than the average European and found a higher walking fatality rate in the US compared to Europe, along with Japan and Canada.

Another study from The Center for Technology and Society in Berlin found that students were more likely to walk to school when sidewalks, smaller residential blocks, and a low density of street intersections were present.

Additionally, a national travel survey published by the Department of Transportation in England found that in 2023, 44% of 11-16 year olds walked to school, while only 28% got to school by car. If the trip length to school was under 1 mile, this rose to 89%.

## Student Opinions

According to a *Pirates' Hook* survey about transportation at Riverside, around 90% of stu-

dents said they ride the bus or drive a car to get to school. Only 6% of the 66 responders said they walked to and from school. When asked if they would walk to school if they lived closer, 73% said they would either often or occasionally.

In many cases, people choose not to walk because of infrastructure barriers that make walking inconvenient or unsafe. In 2023, for example, a chain link fence was put up around the school. The fence was a district decision installed for security reasons, but it makes it more difficult for some people who walk to school to get home.

"I have to walk up and then back down around the fence, and then I have to walk into a pile of leaves and then duck under a tree to get around to the other side of the fence," junior Evelyn Walters shared. "So it's kind of annoying."

Walters lives in Fieldstone by the Eno.

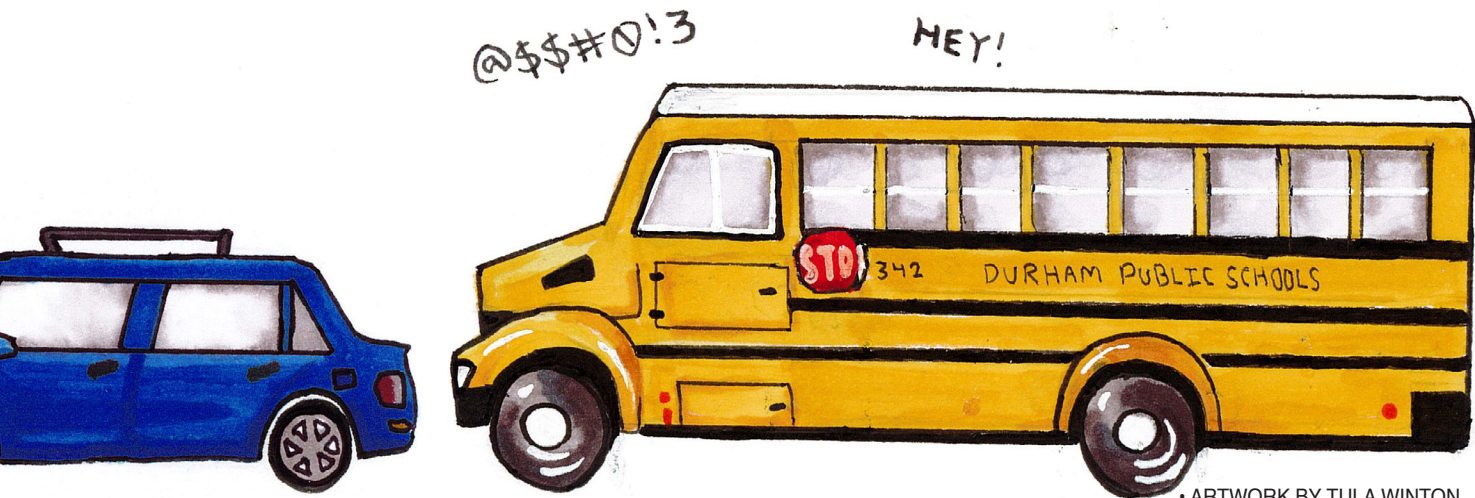
Other students live within walking distance but note that there isn't necessary infrastructure to provide a convenient route to school.

"I live a mile away," one student responded in the survey, "so I can walk to school but there needs to be a sidewalk."

Junior Abbie Deskins lives 1.2 miles from school, but drives to and from Riverside every day.

"I wish [walking to school] was

# cars and buses to get to Riverside?



• ARTWORK BY TULA WINTON  
• PHOTOS BY NORAH LUBECK

an easier option when I wasn't able to drive, but now I do prefer driving," she said.

Deskins thinks she would walk if there was better access to the neighborhoods around Riverside, such as sidewalks and paths.

"It would definitely encourage more walking," she said.

The lack of walkability seems to be a compounding problem. Durham Public Schools now has had an ongoing shortage of bus drivers. Beginning December 2, 2024, the district implemented a rotational bus system.

"With rotational bus service, bus routes operate on a staggered schedule with students assigned to ride the bus on specific days based on their schools and bus routes," The DPS website stated. "Families will be responsible for transporting their students to and from school one day each week, with bus service provided four days per week."

"Having buses to bring you to school and none to drop you back home has to be illegal," one student wrote in the survey.

The service was a temporary solution meant to last only a couple of weeks, but was extended until Jan. 21. The bussing schedule is now back on track but has caused obstacles for numerous students.

"I get [to school] about twenty minutes late, and I'm always marked late," Freshman Justin

Mejia said. "I don't think it's my fault."

Mejia said the shortage affected many other students, too.

"There's some days when my friends had to ride my bus to get home because they didn't have a ride home," he said. "They just stayed in my house until their parents came over."

"It's just really hard because I know some kids really want to go home."

Mejia lives about 15 minutes away from Riverside and can walk but thinks that infrastructure for walkability is lacking.

"The sides of the roads need sidewalks," he said.

A Dec. 17 WRAL article said district leaders were looking into solutions such as "walk zones," where students within a mile of a school would not get bus service, or "express stops," which stop at specific locations instead of multiple neighborhood stops.

## Expert Opinions

Frank Starkey is an architect and real estate developer who lives in Florida. An expert on the topic of walkability on a national scale, he identifies land planning and density trends as the biggest challenges to walkable schools.

"[Schools] now are expected to serve hundreds if not thousands of students," Starkey said. "To get that many students together

### 3218 Rose of Sharon Road

Durham, North Carolina, 27712

Commute to Downtown Durham

17 min 58 min 41 min 60+ min View Routes

Favorite Map Nearby Durham Apartments on Redfin

Looking for a home for sale in Durham?

Walk Score: 4	<b>Car-Dependent</b> Almost all errands require a car.
Transit Score: 29	<b>Some Transit</b> A few nearby public transportation options.
Bike Score: 24	<b>Somewhat Bikeable</b> Minimal bike infrastructure.

About your score

### 400 North Duke Street

Durham, North Carolina, 27701

Commute to Downtown Durham

2 min 11 min 4 min 18 min View Routes

Favorite Map Nearby Durham Apartments on Redfin

Looking for a home for sale in Durham?

Walk Score: 88	<b>Very Walkable</b> Most errands can be accomplished on foot.
Transit Score: 64	<b>Good Transit</b> Many nearby public transportation options.
Bike Score: 80	<b>Very Bikeable</b> Biking is convenient for most trips.

About your score

Walk Score graphics from the Walk Score website. Riverside (top) and Durham School of the Arts (bottom).

## Riverside

Students continue to wait in the rain for their buses to arrive 30 minutes after the final bell. Riverside has a Walk Score of 4.



Detached from the city, Riverside students are stuck waiting for vehicles to connect them to the outside world. To pass time, a student plays soccer in the bus lot.

# VS.

## England

Students walk home from school or to businesses in Wewyn Garden City, a town in Hertfordshire, England. The town has a Walk Score of 84. Mixed use districts present in the city allow for walking and socializing after school, much like the current DSA.



Students walk and bike home from school in Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England. Cambridgeshire has a Walk Score of 94. Many European cities invest heavily in walking and biking infrastructure to make them the two main modes of transportation.

within walking distance requires an enormous density of housing.”

As a country with relatively young cities, mostly built up during and after the Industrial Revolution, the US is heavily reliant on cars. This has made the US less walkable over the years compared to other countries that were built in a time that didn't need to accommodate a car. Many European urban areas predate cars and therefore walking became a primary mode of transportation. This reliance on cars in the US grows as the population increases.

During the 1900s, neighborhood schools were the norm, but, today, many have shuttered due to the migration of some communities of people to areas outside urban centers, budgetary constraints and land use planning rules.

Much like Riverside, whose enrollment as of January 2025 was 1905 students, schools are now expected to accommodate large numbers of students coming from different areas, almost exclusively via cars and buses. Riverside also has a magnet program for engineering which opens up the school to students from all over the district.

Another issue with creating a walkable neighborhood school is how the number of school-age children cycle through nearby homes.

“The number of students in a neighborhood ebbs and flows over time so that's another challenge,” Starkey said.

To create more walkable schools, Starkey recommends several things. He believes that schools need to downsize to fit neighborhoods, and neighborhoods should include a variety of housing types with families that have children of all ages cycling through the school.

“[Homes] can't just be big green lawn, single-family houses because, especially these days, not everyone who has kids can afford to live in a house like that,” he said, “so it's a balance of the size of the school and the composition of the neighborhood surrounding it.”

To be more walkable, a school must be more integrated with its

surrounding communities. Newer schools, like Riverside, seem to be intentionally separated from their surroundings.

But campus security concerns can make this difficult.

“[A] lot of what drives our school design is paranoid parents and lawyers,” Starkey said. “Part of the issue with these schools is that they want ‘one in and one out’ for surveillance purposes. They want the whole school fenced so they can’t have people just wandering on [campus] from any direction.”

every effort to internalize and analyze the community suggestions, it’s just not economically feasible, nor is it ... [professionally responsible], for us to recommend

the board move in an alternative fashion,” He said in a statement to the Indy Week.

Watson thinks that the demographics of DSA will change along with the move.

“I think people coming to DSA will be different,” she said. “We might even have less diversity because DSA is so diverse right now because we’re downtown.”

Watson gets to school via car and doesn’t leave campus often, but notes that many other students utilize their ability to walk to surrounding businesses.

“DSA is kind of a hub still after school,” she said. “There’s Rose’s, and a lot of people go there. And the gas station. Even after school [and] before school, there’s a ton of people and I think it’ll be a lot different when we move.”

## Local Opinions and Efforts

John Tallmadge is the executive director of Bike Durham, an organization working towards sustainable transit in Durham. He thinks cost is another reason why schools are not walkable in Durham.

“The school system, when they purchased the land, was looking for less expensive property,” Tallmadge said. “But also, a lot of the schools were built in a time where there was an acceptance that most people were going to drive to get to the schools. So, I think that it was also just not on their priority list to be looking for [walkable land].”

**"It makes it extremely difficult to integrate a school into a neighborhood and make it walkable if it has to be 30 acres."**

**- John Tallmadge**

Another factor that makes it difficult to build walkable schools that are centrally located to homes (like the current DSA) is that there is a minimum acreage regulatory rule. In other words, schools must be built on larger pieces of land that might not be available in denser areas.

The American Planning Association (APA), puts these regulations in place. For example, North Carolina has a 12-acre minimum, with a requirement of 26 acres for 1200 students. DSA was built on 17 acres and outdates this rule.

“[Minimum acreage is] a real challenge for school districts that want to do things differently,” Tallmadge said. “My understanding is that it is only a requirement if you are accepting state money. But it makes it extremely difficult to integrate a school into a neighborhood and make it walkable if it has to be 30 acres.”

Tallmadge thinks there are some design features a school can have that make it more walkable, such as the location of fields and parking relative to where the school is placed on its given property.

“There are design changes that could be made so that the school building is actually brought closer to the nearest street,” he said.

Riverside is placed far back from the street to accommodate fields and parking lots in front. Tallmadge says that when a school is placed further back from the street it makes it less accessible by foot.

In the local community, Bike Durham is looking to help make

school transport more accessible.

“We have been doing work at the elementary school level primarily,” Tallmadge said. “It is a combination of

teaching bicycle safety skills to elementary school students [and] working with DPS to put together a walking safety curriculum that teachers can deliver.”

Tallmadge hopes the organization can scale its work with elementary schools to help the entire district.

“We are figuring out how to expand that to middle and high schools,” he said. “And more broadly, we’ve been pushing for increased funding of sidewalk projects.”

A bond that passed recently included a sidewalk project that connects Southern High School to some of the nearby neighborhoods.

In the future, such funding could potentially go to Riverside, where it could provide more resources to students and staff along with the ability to get to places during lunch and after school.

This could include sidewalks connecting students to surrounding neighborhoods, bike lanes on nearby roads, and more accessible transit.

Over 80% of students who responded to the survey said they’d like the opportunity to walk to places during these times.

But for now, students will continue to rush to their cars so as to not wait in long lines to leave school.

“I sprint out the door,” Senior Zach Davis said. “If I take even a minute longer to get out of school, that’s going to cost [me] like 10 minutes waiting in the line. So I’m actually running.”

## A Relic from the Past

Durham School of the Arts (DSA) was built in 1922. Originally Durham High School, the school was changed into DSA in 1995. Located in central downtown Durham, it’s the most walkable public high school in the area. DSA has a Walk Score of 89, which the platform labels as “most errands can be accomplished by foot.”

However, DSA plans to move to a new location - 3000 Duke Homestead Road in North Durham - in 2026. The new campus will have a Walk Score in the 20s.

“I am really against DSA moving,” DSA junior Stella Watson said. “I think there’s so much culture here, and I think our location is really cool and central. But also, I can see why we need to move, especially today. My classroom in the basement was flooded, and so I had to walk through pallets to get to class.”

The decision to move was due to overcrowding, outdated facilities and structures, and to accommodate more students. The DPS school board faced backlash from many Durham residents, who argued that renovating the building would keep the school on its historic, centrally located land while saving the district money.

Former DPS building services director Fredrick Davis II explained the district’s decision at public meetings and through media interviews.

“While we have tried to make

# Teen Mental Health Crisis Deepens: What to Know

...outh from social media, mass violence and the r...  
...s. See the report for more.

...the midst of a national emergency when it comes to teen ment...  
...w that teen depression and suicide are on the rise, made worse,

The Conversation  
Being bullied in high school can make teens less optimistic about the future

The effects of bullying on teens' mental health are well-documented. But could bu...  
...also shape their future...

## Teens are talking about mental health

1 in 7 children and teens impacted by mental health conditions

Around one in seven children and adolescents...  
...health conditions - with anxiety, depression and...  
Oct 9, 2024

### MENTAL HEALTH Is 'Crisis' Thinking About Youth Mental Health Doing More Harm Than Good?

By Nadia Tamez-Robledo Sep 6, 2024

- 22% of teens have seriously considered attempting suicide (Am...

...and the gap between the number of...  
...ons like anxiety, depression, and hopelessness and the num...

## Screens are poisoning kids' minds

Nearly 1 in 3 U.S. Adolescents Are Getting Mental Health Treatment

...pressures of academics, social dynamics, and the online world bearing...  
• GRAPHIC BY NELLIE PURDY

# COPING OR COLLAPSING?

Riverside students are struggling to manage their responsibilities

BY NELLIE PURDY & NICO JORDAN

Teenage years are supposed to be tough, but junior Zainab Shattawi didn't expect school to make them even harder.

Shattawi is one of many students at Riverside that has a job. After a day of classes, she clocks in at Harris Teeter. "It's very hard going home, especially late at night, knowing that I still have to stay up later to do work," she said.

Shattawi describes work in addition

to school as stressful.

"When I get home, I'm already very tired, so I won't be able to do my work," she said. "I get very behind and it just adds on top of it."

Shattawi has recently been more stressed than usual as the semester came to an end.

"I was most stressed when I had to finish a lot of assignments, trying to be exempted from finals and stuff."

Shattawi isn't the only student feeling this way. The CDC reports that four in ten high school students

experienced persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness, much of which could be caused by school.

When Riverside's doors open at 8:45, students flow in. The bell rings at 9:15 and classes consume the rest of the day, dragging on for what feels like forever to some, but is really only until 4:15.

Then students get to leave school, but have to wait for the slow carline and late buses.

On top of this, some students have to stay even later after school to do

sports or other extracurriculars.

Spending a bare minimum of 7 hours inside the building, school takes up almost half of a student's waking hours.

That number only increases when the time it takes to get to school, the time spent waiting to go home, after school activities, and any homework students have for their four classes.

Many students are balancing schoolwork with athletics, clubs, work, a social life, and family duties. It's easy to understand why so many teens struggle with mental health.

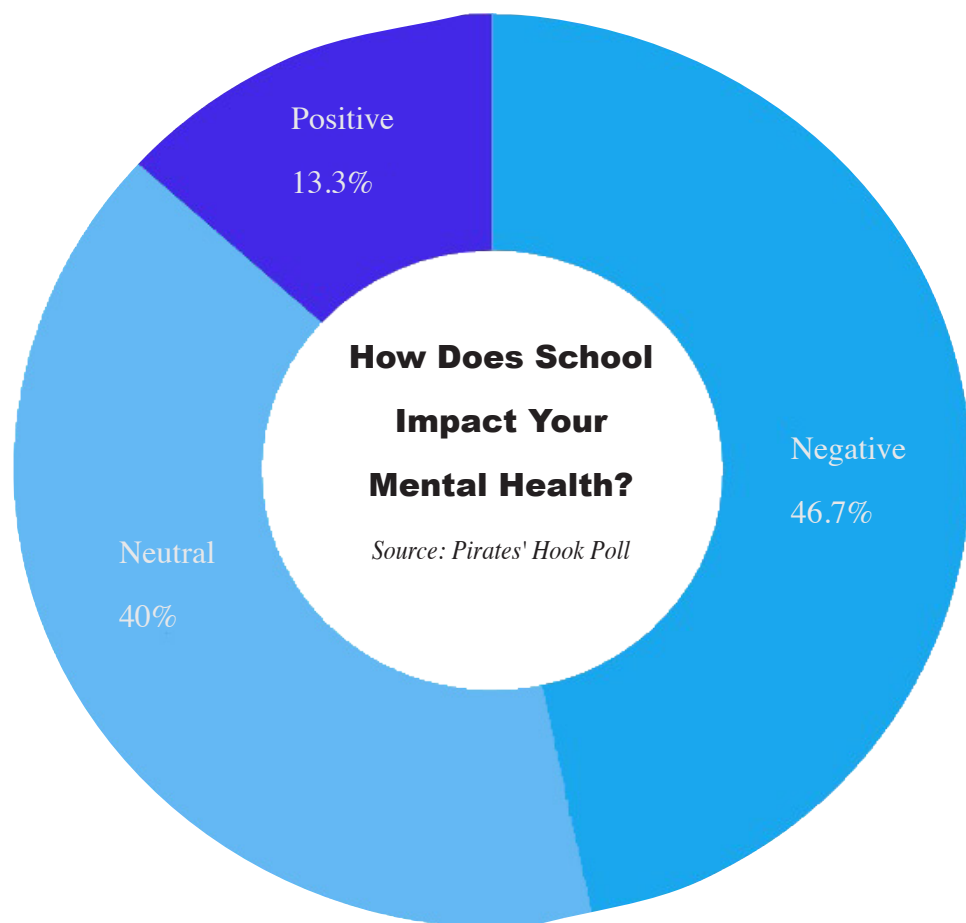
"I think our highest GPA this year is a 4.83," said school counselor Shannon Doherty. "That's out of a 4.0 scale. So there is an immense pressure on students to perform perfectly. How do you even get a GPA that high? You have to be close to almost everything completely right, so that is a huge pressure piece for sure."

Data suggests that the school environment has a major impact on teens' mental health, and Riverside students list finals, tests, and college applications as their biggest stressors.

"It's a lot," said freshman Adelina Smith. "I have two final projects [due] this week, so I'm really worried about getting everything done."

"It's just a lot of work and a lot of things to do and it can be really hard to keep track," said sophomore Izzy Halpern.

"It's just overwhelming because



there is a lot of essay writing and you have to manage your schoolwork along with applications," said senior drum major Andrew Pipeling. "Right now, college applications, music portfolios, and music auditions [are the most stressful]."

Students' mental health is affected by more than just academic pressure at school.

"[Marching band] is definitely something for me to stress about," said Smith. "Since there's not that

many of us there's a lot of pressure to get everything right and not mess up."

"When I get home [from work], I'm already very tired, so I won't be able to do my work. I get very behind and it just adds on top of it," said Shattawi.

Doherty has also noticed the decline in students' mental health.

"I think we've seen a rise in mental health issues amongst adolescents," Doherty says. "[It has] a lot to do with technology use and constant



• COMIC BY DJ HERNANDEZ

stimulation and constant immediate gratification.”

From her perspective: sleep deprivation, social struggles after COVID, the stress of school and families pushing their children to reach perfection harm mental well-being.

It's not all bad, however. Schools also act as a safe space for many students and allow them to connect with peers and caring adults.

“[My mental health] is getting better. It used to be pretty bad, but it's pretty good now,” said senior Katie Beckwith. “[My] social life was not always the best at school. But now I think I have a good support system.”

“[My mental health is] mostly upheld by sports,” said senior John Feller, who was a captain on the 2024 men's soccer team. “It can be [more stressful] but it's a good way to escape the stress for an hour each day. Having friends and a good community that's around you that can support you and also just being so busy you can't think about other things.”


“[Riverside has] given me a lot of my friendships,” said senior Maya

# Struggling?

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:  
Call or text 988

North Carolina Hopeline:  
Call or text 877-235-4525

For additional resources, scan QR code and visit NC Adolescent Health Resource Center



billy

Hopkins.

“[School clubs are] definitely an outlet,” said Pipeling. “It's a chance to do good in the community without worrying about academics.”

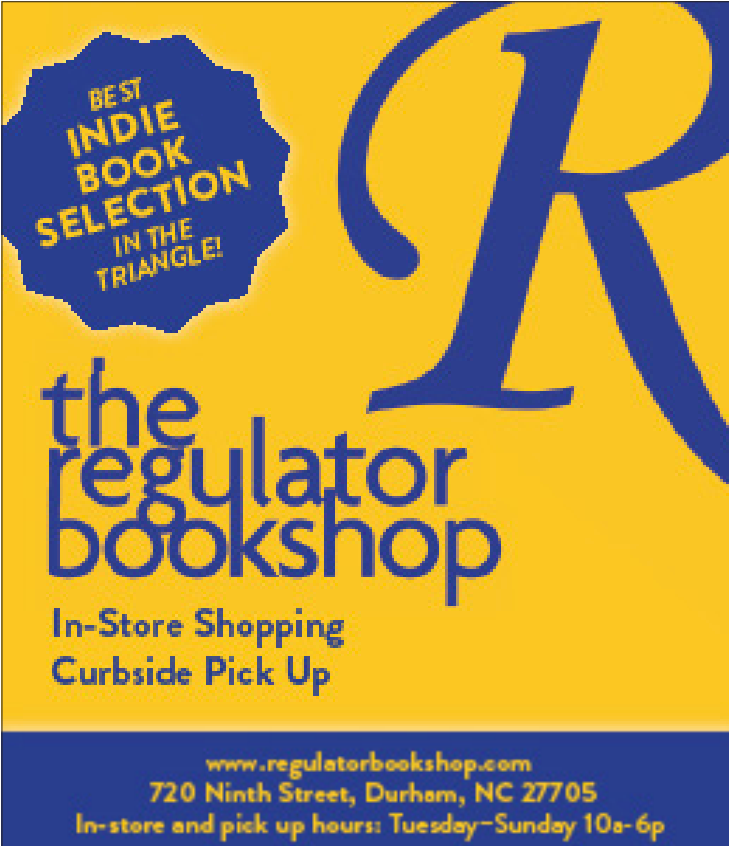
“I hear more from students that being a part of a sports team or a club is positive,” said Doherty. “I think the payout of having that community and that team and also being able to be outside and exercise and have that routine is more beneficial for students' mental health.”

Some adolescents are more vul-

nerable to mental health conditions and suicide than others. Exposure to abuse, poverty, and violence can drastically increase this risk.

Poor mental well-being as a teen can continue into adulthood, often leading to increased behavioral and health risks.

*Editor's note: If you are struggling with mental health, there are many resources available including school counselors, friends and family, and mental health hotlines. To reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, dial 988.*



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(Left) Riversside athletic trainer Erin Samuels teaches her sports medicine students the parts of the spine. (Right) T.J. Moore works with an athlete rehabbing an injury in Riverside's training room. Moore also works at Duke Sports Medicine as a physical therapist.

## "They need to believe in their strength"

*As injury rates spike, student athletes rely on rehab and family support to get back on the field.*

BY FIONA FEHRMAN, LEVI BROWN & AURELI DOMINGUEZ

It is a Tuesday afternoon in November. Volleyball season ended weeks ago, but junior Daniyah Humphrey is hard at work in Riverside's sports medicine room.

Humphrey takes a resistance band and presses her foot against it like she would a gas pedal. She goes to physical therapy every day after school and does a series of stretches and exercises that are routine now.

Humphrey tore her ACL three weeks into the 2024-2025 season when she jumped up to hit the ball and her knee dislocated. More than two months later, she had major surgery and constant physical therapy sessions. But the

hardest part has been missing out on is the experience of playing with her teammates this season.

"It's my junior year and it was my first year playing for this school in general so I was really upset, and this is a 9-12 month process," said Humphrey. "Next year is my senior year, so I really do hope to play."

Working alongside Humphrey in the training is Erin Samuels. Samuels is Riverside's athletic trainer. Her job is to help rehab injured athletes and manage their return to play plan.

Samuels works with athletes from all sports, but sees the most season-ending injuries in volleyball.

A 2012 Riverside grad herself, Samuels was a member of the

Pirate cheerleading, swimming and diving, gymnastics and lacrosse teams. She also took sports medicine classes and worked with Riverside's athletic trainer (AT).

"That's what made me want to be an AT," said Samuels.

Samuels treats the physical impact of an injury on an athlete, but she also sees students' mental and emotional journey after suffering a season-ending injury.

"With serious injuries, they go through multiple stages, the first one being devastation," said Samuels. "They have a grieving stage that their season or career may be over."

Even after athletes recover from their injury, they have to fight to regain confidence in themselves and in their body post-injury.

"They struggle mentally in trusting the leg that they injured and getting past that mental block," said Samuels. "They need to believe in their strength."

Samuels also works with TJ Moore, a Physical Therapist (PT) and AT from Duke Sports Medicine. As a licensed PT, Moore can give supplemental help to athletes and provide a surgical protocol when needed.

During the fall season Moore is at Riverside five days a week after school to work with football players. During the rest of the year he's in the training room three days a week.

Samuels and Moore evenly split the athletes that they work with. Usually, Samuels takes the shoulder injuries, while Moore

# "Soccer was always a huge part of my personality and of who I was, and that got taken away from me."

- Jackie Wenzlik, '24

does the knees.

Another issue that Samuels deals with is athletes not following their return-to-play plan and not showing up to rehab sessions.

"I struggle to keep kids coming in," she said.

Once they stop rehabbing, Samuels says that athletes will also return to their sport before they're ready,

"They keep pushing themselves and get injured," she said.

## RISING RATES

Humphrey's injury isn't the first time Samuels has dealt with ACL tears. Rates have been gradually increasing since studies began in 2007. According to the National ACL Injury Coalition, 8.2 female athletes experienced an ACL tear per 100,000 in 2022, up from 6.2 in 2007.

The growth isn't limited to just female athletes either, as male athletes have also seen their cases rise to 6.3 tears per 100,000, up from 5.5 in 2007.

Researchers studying ACL tears have a few theories as to why these rates have been on the rise. A common opinion is that athletes were sedentary during COVID, which hurt the development and health of their ACL's and led to a spike in injuries during 2021. Another thought is that lots of kids have been spending less time outside and exercising themselves and spending more time indoors, which doesn't properly develop these athletes' bodies.

The National ACL Injury Coa-

lition also concluded that around half of the injuries are non-contact, meaning neither a teammate nor opponent made contact with them when they went down. This is usually from pivoting or rotating around the knee, or landing from a jump. 57.5% of ACL tears are non-contact for female athletes, while just 39.7% are non-contact for male athletes. The rate was most extreme in women's lacrosse, where over 80% of the ACL tears were non-contact.

Researchers have also determined one of the biggest factors contributing to the rise in injuries is poor lower body control. A study from the Hospital for Special Surgery saw that 80% of adolescents that play sports don't have adequate control over their trunk or knee joints when performing activities like squats or jumps. This could also be related to athletes being held inside during COVID, which led to inadequate neuromuscular control.

Riverside has seen these rising rates in its athletes too, Jackie Wenzlik was a senior at Riverside last year. She was known around the school as one of the best women's soccer players and was one of three co-captains in her junior year.

On December 16, 2023 that changed.

She tore her ACL and meniscus and sprained her LCL and MCL in her last home game for her club team, Triangle United.

The injury sidelined her for the rest of her club season and her

entire senior high school soccer season.

"Soccer was always a huge part of my personality and who I was and that got taken away from me," said Wenzlik.

Instead of attending practice, she had physical therapy twice a day. On Jan. 12, Wenzlik had surgery to repair the torn ligaments.

"I lost all the muscle in my right leg, and I lost a ton of weight from not playing soccer," she said.

Wenzlik's injury even caused tension in certain relationships.

"All of my closest friends were soccer players and when I got hurt none of my friends really knew how to act around me," she said. "My injury ruined a lot of relationships in that way. I really found out who my true people were, because a lot of people left my life when I got hurt."

The injury forced her to find a new network to rely on.

"My biggest support was definitely my parents," said Wenzlik. "Those were the only two people who were really there for it, through the entire process."

An injury leaves the team and coach scrambling to fill the void left by that player, too.

When Wenzlik got hurt the team lost a key player as well as a captain that they could rally behind.

"Our team really struggled," said senior captain Subi Tallmadge. "She was such a key person on our team and without her our offense really struggled to get not only goal counts up, but make connections."

"These types of injuries not only hurt a team by being down a player, but it also really drains the spirit of a team," said head women's soccer coach Sarah Holland (formerly Cade). "When Jackie got injured, it was devastating news for the team, but you have to stay encouraged while knowing when to take some time to mourn the player missing their season."

"We did still have a good season," said Tallmadge. "It was just hard."

When Humphrey makes a full recovery, she feels she'll be making safer decisions on the volleyball court.

"I think I'll be a lot more safer on the court," said Humphrey. "I'll definitely be a lot more cautious about how I'm doing things. I'll probably wear a kneebrace and change up the shoes I wear as well,"

Humphrey is looking forward to playing next season. And Wenzlik is on the Randolph Macon College soccer team in Virginia. A year after her injury, she is still not cleared to play but is getting closer.

"My knee is still really stiff and it swells up sometimes," she said.

When she does get back on the field, Wenzlik says that she will value her playing time more.

"I'm definitely going to have more of an appreciation for the time on the field because it was taken away from me for 13 months," she said.



(Derecha) Jackie Wenzlik, clase de 24, en una cita para su ligamento cruzado anterior (LCA). Después de más de un año, todavía se está recuperando de su lesión. (Izquierda) Wenzlik derribando a una defensora en un partido de fútbol de su club. Jugó para la Triangle United Soccer Association.

• FOTOS CORTESÍA DE JACKIE WENZLIK

## "Necistan creer en su propia fuerza"

*En lo que se aumentan las rifas de lecciones, estudiantes atletas tienen que confiar en su rehabilitación y el apoyo de sus familias para regresar a jugar.*

BY FIONA FEHRMAN, LEVI BROWN & AURELI DOMINGUEZ

Es un martes por la tarde en Noviembre. La temporada de voleibol acabó hace semanas, pero Daniyah Humphrey, un estudiante del grado 11 está echando ganas en el cuarto de rehabilitación de deportes de Riverside.

Humphrey agarra una banda de resistencia y le pone presión como uno hace a un pedal de acelerador en un carro. Humphrey va a terapia física todos los días después de la escuela y hace una serie de estiramientos y ejercicios que ya son rutina para ella.

Se estiró el ligamento cruzado (LCA) tres semanas después que empezó la temporada del año escolar 2024-2025. Esto paso cuando Humphrey brincó para pegarle a la pelota y se dislocó la rodilla. Más de dos meses después, Humphrey tuvo surgi-

eron fuertes y muchas sesiones de terapia física. Pero, la parte más difícil para ella es perder la experiencia de jugar con sus compañeras esta temporada.

"Es mi tercer año, y era mi primera vez jugando en este equipo de escuela en general por eso estuve muy decepcionado, y esto es un proceso de 9 a 12 meses," dijo Humphrey. "El próximo año es mi último año, pues espero poder jugar."

Trabajando junto a Humphrey en su rehabilitación, es Erin Samuels. Samuels es la entrenadora deportiva de Riverside. Su trabajo es ayudar a los atletas lesionados a regresar al juego. También a facilitar su plan de regreso a juego de los atletas.

Samuels trabaja con atletas de todo deporte, pero ella ve más lesiones a largo plazo en el deporte de Voleibol.

Samuels se graduó en Riverside en el 2012. Ella fue una miem-

bro de los equipos de porrista, natación y clavados, gimnasia, y lacrosse. Ella estaba inscrita en clases de medicina deportiva y trabajó con la entrenadora que estaba en ese tiempo.

"Es lo que me hizo querer ser una entrenadora," dijo Samuels.

Samuels trata el impacto físico de la lesión del atleta, pero ha visto como una lesión a largo plazo afecta la salud mental del atleta.

"Con lesiones serias, ellos van por diferentes etapas, y la primera es devastación," dijo Samuels. "Tienen una etapa que su temporada o carrera ya se acabo."

Después que los atletas se recuperan de su lesión, tienen que luchar para recuperar su confianza en ellos mismos y en sus cuerpos.

"Tienen dificultades mentales para confiar en la pierna que se lesionaron y superar ese bloqueo mental," dijo Samuels. "Necesitan creer en su fuerza."

Samuels también trabaja con TJ Moore, un terapeuta físico y un entrenador atlético del departamento de medicina deportiva en Duke. Como fisioterapeuta autorizado, Moore da más ayuda a los atletas y proporciona un protocolo surgical cuando es necesario.

Durante la temporada de otoño, Moore está en Riverside cinco días a la semana después de la escuela para trabajar con los jugadores de Fútbol Americano. Durante el resto del año él está en el salón de entrenamiento tres días de la semana.

Samuels y Moore dividen actualmente los atletas con los que trabajan. Generalmente Samuels trabaja con las lesiones de hombro y Moore con las lesiones de la rodilla.

Otro problema que enfrenta Samuels es que los atletas no siguen su plan de regreso al juego y no aparecen a sus sesiones de

rehabilitación.

“Cuesta para que los niños sigan viniendo,” ella dijo.

Cuando dejan de rehabilitarse, Samuels dice que los atletas también regresan a sus deportes antes que estén listos,

“Si siguen esforzándose y se lesionan,” ella dijo.

#### TASAS EN AUMENTO

La lesión de Humphrey no es la primera vez que Samuel ha trabajado con un esterimento del LCA, tarifas se han ido aumentando paulatinamente desde que los estudios empezaron en el 2007. Según la coalición nacional de lesiones del LCA, 8.2 atletas femeninos de 100,000 sufrieron una lesión del LCA en el 2022, aumentado del número 6.2 en 2007.

El crecimiento no no más es limitado a las atletas féminas, los atletas masculinos también han visto una aumentación de casos. Casos crecieron del 5.5 atletas lesionados por esto en el 2007 al 6.3 de 100000, según los estudios de la coalición nacional de lesiones del LCA.

Investigadores que están estudiando esta lesión tienen algunas teorías sobre por que estas tarifas han crecido. Una opinion comun es que los atletas eran sedentarios durante COVID, esto affecto negitivamente al desarrollo y salud de sus LCA's. Otro opinion es que niños y adolescentes ya estan pasando menos tiempo afuera y haciendo ejercicio. Mucho tiempo adentro no desarrolla bien a los cuerpos de estos atletas.

La coalicion nacional del LCA tambien concluyo que mitad de las lesiones fueron sin contacto fisico. Esto dice que ningun companero o contrincante hizo contact con el atleta

cuando se lesionaron. Esto generalmente es de girar alrededor de la rodilla, o de caer mal de un brinco. 57.5% de estiramientos del LCA de atletas femininos son sin contacto. 39.7% de las lesiones son sin contacto para atletas masculinos. La tariffa mas extrema es en lacrosse femetil, 80% de los atletas de crossover femetil tuvieron lesiones del LCA sin contacto.

Investigadores tambien determinaron que uno de los elementos mas grandes del aumento de lesiones es a causa de mal control de la parte bajo del cuerpo. Un estudio del Hospital de Cirugia Espicial encuentro que 80% de adolescentes que juegan deportes no tienen suficiente control de sus articulaciones del tronco o de la rodilla cuando haciendo ejercicios como squats y brincos. Esto tambien puede ser relacionado a atletas que casi no salieron afuera durante el tiempo de COVID, y causo que los atletas no tienen suficiente control de sus neuromusculos.

Riverside ha visto aumentaciones de estas tarifas en sus atleteas tambien, Jackie Wenzlik fue una estudiante del grado 12 en la Riverside el ano pasado. Ella fue conocida a todo la escuela como una de las mejores jugadoras de futbol femenino y fue una de las capitanas cuando estaba en el grado 11.

En Diciembre 16, 2023 eso cambio.

Ella se estiro su LCA y su menisco y se torcio su ligamento colateral lateral (LCL) y su ligamento colateral medial (LCM)

Su lesion la dego fuera de juego por el resto de la temporada de futbol de club y todo la temporada de futbol preparatoria.

“Futbol siempre fue

una parte muy grande de mi personalidad y fue quien yo era y eso me lo quitaron.” dijo Wenzlik.

En cambio de asistir en practica, ella tenia fisioterpaia dos veces al dia. En Enero 12, Wenzlik tuvo cirugia a componer los ligamentos estirados.

“Perdi todo el musculo en mi pierne derecha, y oerdi mucho pezo de no jugar futbol,” ella dijo.

Su lesion de Wenzlike tambien causo tension en unas de sus relaciones personales.

“Todos mis amigas eran jugadoras de futbol y cuando me leione ninguna de mis amigas sabia como actuar a mi alrededor,” ella dijo. “Mi lesion arruino muchas de mis amistades en esa forma. Yo aprendi quien eran mis verdaderos amigos, porque muchos se fueron de mi vida cuando me lesione.”

La lesion la forco a encontrar una nueva sistema de apoyo.

“Mis admiradores mas grandes fueron mis papas,” dijo Wenzlik. “Ellos fueron los unicas dos personas que estaban alli conmigo por eso, durante todo el proceso.”

Una lesion no no mas affecta al atleta. Deja todo un equipo y entrenador luchando para llenar ese ollo que deja ese jugador.

Cuando se lesiono Wenzlik, el equipo perdio una gran jugadora y capitana que pudieran apoyar.

“Nuestro equipo tubo dificultades,” dijo Capitana del grado 12 Subi Tallmadge. “Ella fue una persona muy importante en nuestro equipo y sin ella nuestra offensa tuvo dificultades de meter goles y hacer conexiones.”

“Estas tipos de lesiones no no mas affectan un equipo con perdiendo un jugador, pero tambien

affecta el espiritu del equipo,” dijo Sarah Holland (antes Cade), la mera entradora del equipo de futbol femino.” Cuando Jackie se lesiono, era noticias bin triste para nuestro equipo, pero tienes que siguer pero sabiendo cuando a tomar tiempo a extranar la jugadora que se esta perdiendo su temporada.”

“Todavia estamos recuperandonos pero estamos bien ahorita y vamos a tener una buen temporada,” dijo Tallmadge. “No mas era difiicl.”

Cuando ella hace su regreso al juego, Humphrey piensa que va hacer decisiones mas seguros cuando esta en la corte de voleibol.

“Pienso que me voy poner una rodillera y voy a cambiar los zapatos que me pongo tambien,”

Las piratas acabaron su temporada con un triunfo de 3-2 contra Hillside despues de luchando contra un cambio de entrenadores.

Esperando a jugar en la proxima temporada, Humphrey es una de muchos atletas que tienen esta experiencia.

Ahorita Wenzlik juega en el equipo del Colegio de Randolph Macon en Virginia. Un ano despues de su lesion y ella todavia no esta permitida a jugar pero esta mas cerca.

“Mi rodilla toadvia esta tiesa a tiempos y se incha,” ella dijo.

Cuando ella se regresa a juego, Wenzlik dice que ella va a apreciar su tiempo de jugar mas.

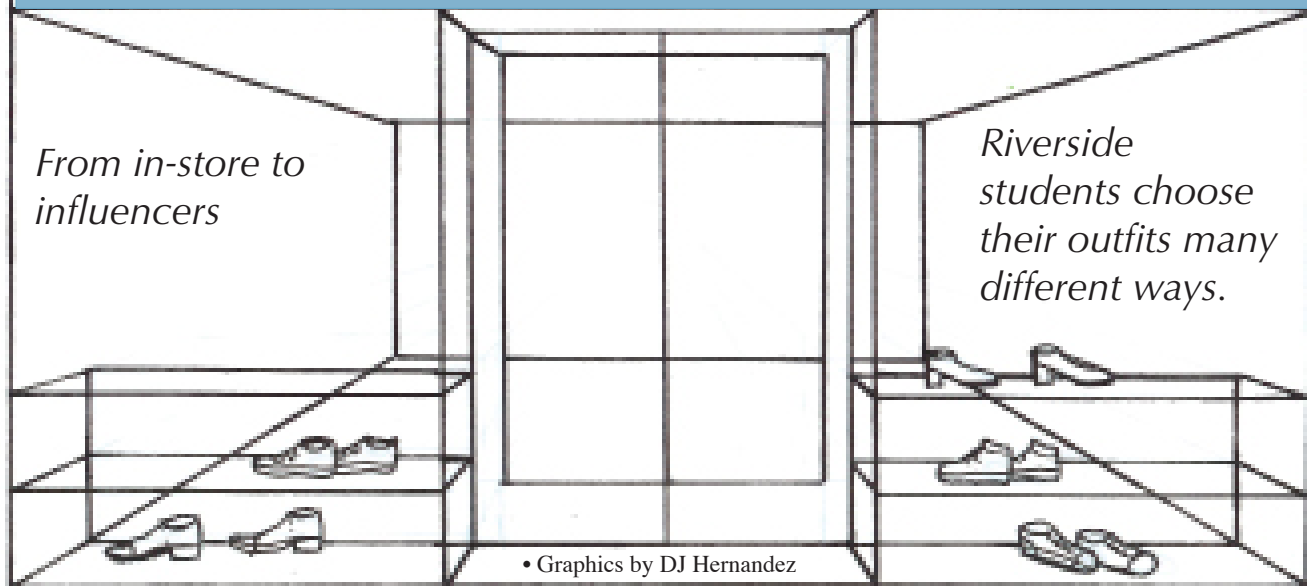
“Defintivamente voy a tener mas orgullo del tiempo que tengo en la cancha porque yo no lo tenia por 13 meses,” ella dijo.

TRADUCIDO POR AURELI DOMINGUEZ

**“Estas tipos de lesiones no no mas afectan un equipo con perdiendo un jugador, pero tambien afecta el espiritu del equipo.”**

**- Sarah Holland (antes Cade)**

# Foggy Fashion



BY CHANDLER CATES &  
YADERLIN BOJOY AGUACUATA

Senior Tiam Famet refuses to buy Crocs.

Famet chooses not to purchase Crocs simply because she doesn't like their design. But the fact that they're "fast fashion" makes some students feel conflicted about buying them.

Design is just one of the many factors students consider when purchasing their clothes.

Crocs are one of the most popular types of shoes at Riverside. They cost as little as \$20, come in dozens of colors, and are worn by numerous celebrities, including Lil Nas X, John Cena, Saweetie, and many others.

The company also comes out with new models every month. According to Sole Retriever.com, a company that tracks and publishes information about sneaker release dates, Crocs released 141 different models in 2024.

"Crocs is a world leader in casual footwear for all, combining comfort and style with a value that consumers know and love," the company wrote in an October 2024 press release.

According to its website, Crocs are sold in more than 85 countries through wholesale and online.

"We are continually building

upon our guiding pillars of sustainability, community, and inclusivity and will always invite the world to come as you are," the website states. "Rooted in comfort, our purpose is to create a more comfortable world for all."

Famet, however, believes consumers should think about what happens before and after they add products to their wardrobes before they buy.

Famet thinks it's great that Crocs are taking steps towards being more ethical and sustainable. But, she isn't completely sold.

"Only time will tell how serious they care about these actions," she said.

"On the most basic level, fast fashion is quickly-produced trends sold at low price points," writes Alyssa Hardy in an April 2024 *Vogue* article titled "Everything You Need to Know About Fast Fashion."

The U.S. fast fashion market has been valued at \$41.15 billion in 2023 and is predicted to reach \$59.85 billion by 2030, writes Hardy. The fashion industry is accountable for up to 10% of global carbon emissions annually.

Shein is considered an ultra-fast fashion brand and it can create new styles in a few days using advanced algorithms. Brands like Forever21 and Zara began producing clothing at upwards of 52 "micro-seasons" a

year. Online-only brands like Shein and Temu are producing at a faster rate due to the fact that social media helps to amplify fashion trends.

Fast fashion products are significantly cheaper than traditional options. For example, a top from H&M retails for \$8.99, while a similar item at Toad & Co. costs \$30.

However, the practice of buying cheaper clothing more frequently has serious global implications. According to earthday.org, an environmental advocacy organization, fast fashion contributes to dangerous working conditions.

"Workers endure unsafe working conditions, wage theft, minimal pay, gender-based harassment, and working exhausting hours," its website states.

Additionally, when consumers buy clothing more frequently, they also get rid of old garments, too. According to a January BBC article, buying fewer clothes is a simple way to help the planet.

"The fashion industry is responsible for 8-10% of global emissions, more than the combined emissions from aviation and shipping," the article states.

It also notes that fast fashion items are often made from materials that are not eco-friendly. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, an environmental non-profit, the equivalent of a garbage truck's

worth of clothes is either burned or buried in landfills

Some Riverside students consider the global impact of their wardrobe decisions more than others.

Junior Jasmine "Jazz" Griffin prefers to shop in-store rather than online.

"I find it more fun to do retailers," Griffin said.

"I like both," said junior Mikayah Simmons. "When you go in-store, it just gives you [a] thrill."

Senior Kris' Ani "Krissey" Hunt prefers to shop online, claiming that stores can be overwhelming.

"I feel like when I go to the store, they don't have what I'm looking for," said Hunt. "But I know that if I look it up online, it's going to be there".

Famet and Dre'ma Harris run a fashion club at Riverside. Famet described it as a safe space where students can talk about all things fashion.

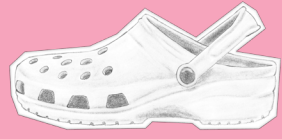
At club meetings, students go over different trends, subcultures, and current events in the fashion industry.

"I wanted to create an environment for students to express themselves freely and to find the significance in something many people view as shallow or superficial," says Famet.

The club meets on Fridays in room 113.



# Moda Brumosa



De la tienda a los influencers, los estudiantes de Riverside eligen sus trajes de muchas maneras diferentes.

POR CHANDLER CATES & YADERLIN BOJOY AGUACUATA

Tiam Famet, estudiante de último curso, se niega a comprar Crocs.

Famet opta por no comprar Crocs simplemente porque no le gusta su diseño. Pero el hecho de que sean “moda rápida” hace que algunos estudiantes tengan dudas a la hora de comprarlos. El diseño es sólo uno de los muchos factores que los estudiantes tienen en cuenta a la hora de comprar su ropa.

Los Crocs son uno de los tipos de zapatos más populares en Riverside. Cuestan tan sólo 20 dólares, están disponibles en docenas de colores y los llevan numerosos famosos, como Lil Nas X, John Cena, Saweetie y muchos otros.

Además, la empresa saca nuevos modelos cada mes. Según Sole Retriever.com, una empresa que rastrea y publica información sobre fechas de lanzamiento de zapatillas, Crocs sacó 141 modelos diferentes en 2024.

“Crocs es líder mundial en calzado informal para todos, combinando comodidad y estilo con un valor que los consumidores conocen y adoran,” escribió la empresa en un comunicado de prensa de octubre de 2024.

Según su sitio web, Crocs se vende en más de 85 países al por mayor y en línea.

“Estamos continuamente construyendo sobre nuestros pilares de sostenibilidad, comunidad e inclusión y siempre invitaremos al mundo a venir como eres,” afirma la página web. “Arraigados en la comodidad, nuestro propósito es crear un mundo más cómodo para todos.”

“En el nivel más básico, la moda rápida son tendencias producidas rápidamente y vendidas a precios bajos,” escribe Alyssa Hardy en un artículo de Vogue de abril de 2024 titulado “Todo lo que necesi-

tas saber sobre la moda rápida”.

El mercado estadounidense de la moda rápida se ha valorado en 41.150 millones de dólares en 2023 y se prevé que alcance los 59.850 millones de dólares en 2030, escribe Hardy. La industria de la moda es responsable de hasta el 10% de las emisiones mundiales de carbono al año. Shein está considerada una marca de moda ultrarrápida, puede crear nuevos estilos en pocos días utilizando algoritmos avanzados. Marcas como Forever21 y Zara empezaron a producir ropa en más de 52 “microtemporadas” al año. Las marcas exclusivamente en línea, como Shein y Temu, producen a un ritmo más rápido gracias a que las redes sociales ayudan a amplificar las tendencias de la moda.

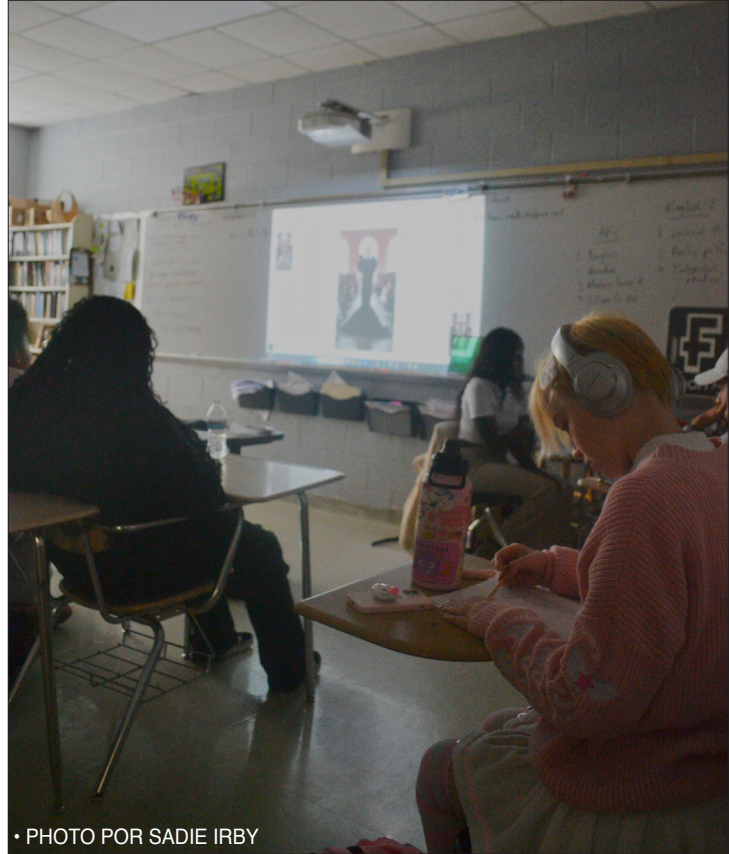
Los productos de moda rápida son bastante más baratos que las opciones tradicionales. Por ejemplo, un top de H&M se vende por \$8.99, mientras que una prenda similar en Toad & Co. cuesta \$30.

Sin embargo, la práctica de comprar ropa más barata con más frecuencia tiene graves implicaciones globales. Según earthday.org, una organización de defensa del medio ambiente, la moda rápida contribuye a crear condiciones de trabajo peligrosas.

“Los trabajadores soportan condiciones laborales inseguras, robo de salarios, salarios mínimos, acoso por razón de sexo y jornadas agotadoras,” afirma su página web.

Además, cuando los consumidores compran ropa con más frecuencia, también se deshacen de las prendas viejas. Según un artículo de la BBC del 2 de enero, comprar menos ropa es una forma sencilla de ayudar al planeta.

“La industria de la moda es responsable del 8-10% de las emisiones mundiales, más que las emisiones combinadas de la aviación y el transporte marítimo,” afirma el artículo.



• PHOTO POR SADIE IRBY

Miembros del club de moda asisten a la presentación de Tiam Famet. Famet es la presidente del club de moda.

También señala que los artículos de moda rápida se fabrican a menudo con materiales que no son ecológicos. Según la Fundación Ellen MacArthur, una organización medioambiental sin ánimo de lucro, el equivalente a

un camión de basura de ropa se quema o se entierra en vertederos.

Algunos estudiantes de Riverside tienen más en cuenta que otros el impacto global de sus decisiones de vestuario.

Jasmine “Jazz” Griffin, estudiante de primer año, prefiere comprar en las tiendas a hacerlo por Internet.

“Me parece más divertido comprar en tiendas,” afirma Griffin.

“Amí me gustan las dos cosas,” dice Mikayah Simmons. “Cuando vas a la tienda, te emocionas.”

La estudiante de último curso Kris’Ani “Krissy” Hunt prefiere comprar por Internet, ya que las tiendas pueden resultar abruma-

doras.

“Siento que cuando voy a la tienda,” dijo Hunt. “No tienen lo que busco, pero sé que si lo busco en Internet, va a estar ahí.”

Famet y Dre’ma Harris dirigen un club de moda en Riverside. Famet lo describe como un espacio seguro donde los estudiantes pueden hablar de todo lo relacionado con la moda.

En las reuniones del club, los estudiantes repasan diferentes tendencias, subculturas y acontecimientos actuales de la industria de la moda.

“Quería crear un entorno en el que los estudiantes pudieran expresarse libremente y encontrar el significado de algo que mucha gente considera superficial,” dice Famet.

El club se reúne los viernes en el aula 113.

TRADUCIO POR DELIA AGUILAR



was 18% nationally, and in higher-poverty schools, that number was 21%.

After leading Chewning for one year, Key was promoted to assistant superintendent, then worked as the DPS area superintendent for high schools for three years before he retired. As area superintendent, Key worked with many principals across the district.

"[The turnover] is not unique to Riverside," he said. "That is the nature of the job."

Key said that each principal that leaves has their own individual reasons.

"It's a very, very unique situation," he said. "However, being the principal of a large comprehensive high school is challenging."

Looking back, he thinks being a high school principal may have been harder than being a district administrator.

"I still had pressures and stressors, but the high school principals were probably putting in more time than I was," he said. "I think that's something that a lot of times people don't quite understand or appreciate. Even people in the central office don't understand and appreciate how hard the high school principals, the vice principals, and the teachers are [working]."

Key acknowledged that the stress and pressure can result in leaders deciding to take a different route.

"I know firsthand there are

elementary school and middle school principals who don't want to be in high school because of the time commitment," he said.

But the commitment can attract people to the job, too. Broc Dickerson graduated from Riverside in 2004 and came back to be a health and P.E. teacher and wrestling coach. He later got his masters in school administration at NC State, was hired by DSA, and has been working there as an assistant principal for four years.

Dickerson loves his job because he can cast a wider net and impact more students.

"You get the opportunity to work with all students in the entire school, as well as faculty," he said. "The truth is it wasn't really on my radar. I wasn't looking to become an assistant principal."

Dickerson was encouraged by a

past principal, who explained the process of applying to become an assistant principal.

"My internship forced me to leave the school that I was familiar with and go to an unfamiliar place," he said. "You have to intern for a year, and that's the reason I left [Riverside]. I just happened to be hired by the school that I interned at."

Being an assistant principal at DSA has given Dickerson a taste of what leading a school would be like.

"I'm not making that a secret," he said. "I definitely aspire to be principal."

Although he can make a school-wide impact in his current role, Dickerson thinks prin-

cipals can do it on an even larger scale. But he also knows the opportunity would bring pressures and responsibilities that other faculty members don't have to deal with.

"A perfect Riverside example is that neighborhood that's right next to the school," he said. "When I was a teacher, three or four times a week, people from that neighborhood were calling about students walking on their property. Whatever is in your lap as a principal, the buck stops with you."

He also agrees that this added pressure contributes to the high turnover rates, and it is not unique to Riverside.

"You're dealing with the community at a larger scale, not just the parents in your own school. You're dealing with the community that is around your school. You know, even businesses, neighborhoods."

#### A GOOD PROBLEM, TOO

Burnout isn't the only reason principals leave their positions.

Principals who do well leading small schools often move to larger schools. A bigger school brings more students and teachers, but also a higher salary.

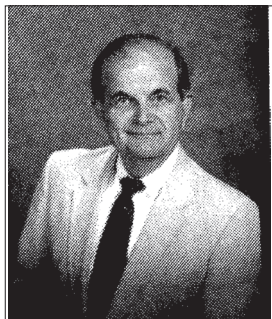
Gloria Woods-Weeks, Riverside's current principal, has held the position since October of 2021. Before that, she was principal at J.D. Clement Early College High School for eight years.

Woods-Weeks, who declined an interview for this story, has been working in education for 30 years. With that amount of experience and being at a school with over 1600 students enrolled, she is making upwards of \$97,239 a

**"I don't think it affects much for students because you don't really know what [principals] are doing. I think teacher changes are a lot more important."**

*- Atticus Kenny, senior*

## Riverside's principals



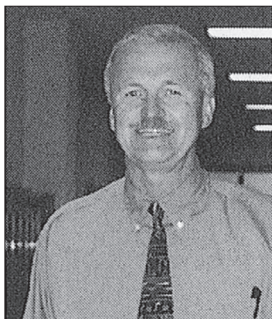
1991-94

William Bachelor



1994-97

Margaret Peebles



1997-2000

George Griffin



2000-04

Patrick Rhodes



2004-10

Jim Key

an annual base salary. A principal with the same amount of experience but at a smaller school of around 400-700 students would make 4% less than that, with an annual base salary of approximately \$93,350.

A significantly larger supplement to these base pay rates is added based on the enrollment at a school as well. This means Woods-Weeks earns a supplement salary of approximately \$62,640 as opposed to the \$44,960 supplement she would receive had she stayed at J.D. Clement Early College High School.

High-performing principals from large schools like Riverside also move to district-level leadership positions.

"Sometimes [principals] have aspirations to do more than be a principal," Dickerson said. "Maybe they want to be a superintendent or be a mentor to principals. We've seen lots of principals come through Riverside who have opportunities to do that."

For example, Key was a principal at Riverside and became an assistant area superintendent with DPS. Pat Rhodes was Riverside's principal from 2000 to 2004 and became superintendent of Orange County Schools. Tonya Williams-Leathers was the principal from 2016 to 2020 and left to be an assistant superintendent in Johnson County.

"When you're really good, it's a natural progression that people want to see you kind of scale up

and do more and more and more," Dickerson said. "Not unlike the assistant principal to the principal should. When they're good, there's pressure to scale up, and often people aspire to do that anyways [because of] financial incentives."

At least half of Riverside's past principals have moved up to district leadership positions. But when they leave, teachers and students still have to deal with the challenges that come with getting a new principal every few years.

English teacher Matt Smith has worked for seven different principals during his 21 years working at Riverside. He said the frequent leadership changes have affected him and his students in several ways.

"It's hard to keep school culture," he said. "If I come into a building that I've never worked in before, and 90% of the people were there last year, and I'm supposed to be their boss, that's a really hard thing to walk into."

"It's difficult to maintain a steady culture when the leadership changes frequently," said Christy Simpson, who has worked in the math department at Riverside for 17 years. "I think it takes the first few years for you to actually get to know the principal and what they want and what their vision is for a school, and then you can actually start making gains towards those things."

"If you could make somebody stay put for, like, 10 years, I think

that would probably be different," Smith said. "You could know the culture and know the people. It's tough to come in and make relationships with 100-something staff and 1800 students. But it's [also] a hard job to do for 10 years."

"When new principals come in, they don't know the faculty as well," said CTE teacher Fenale Brandan, who has worked at Riverside for 20 years. "It's 'hard for a teacher to express themselves about their concerns and needs.'"

#### STUDENT IMPACT

Frequent leadership changes also create challenges for students.

"Bonds are formed with the administrators and the students," said Tavia Webley, who has also worked for seven different principals during her 24 years teaching chemistry and forensics at Riverside.

Webley believes principals can support students in ways that teachers can't.

"Administrators have flexibility in that they're not within a classroom, so they can build relationships with the students greeting them in the morning, making sure that they're okay if different conflicts arise," she said. "There are principals that leave and, because of their time spent at the school and the relationships built with students and faculty, their presence is greatly missed."

"The people who graduated last

year had three different principals in four years," said Smith. "That's a really, really tough thing to navigate."

Senior Atticus Kenney has had six different principals during his K-12 career. Most of the administrative turnover he experienced happened during COVID.

"I don't think it affects much for students because you don't really know what [principals] are doing," Kenney said. "I think teacher changes are a lot more important."

Kenney does, however, think principals being at Riverside for less than four years creates a domino effect that eventually hurts students.

"It impacts teacher culture, which then affects student culture," he said. "It's hard to set a culture at Riverside if you're swapping principals every four years, it would be like swapping a head coach in football every four years - it's hard to have a culture and identity."

Senior Parker Collins agrees.

"They change things around," he said. "We had SMART lunch and then we didn't have SMART lunch. It all depends on how that principal wants to run the school."

"I think it's really hard for teachers and admin to get on the same page, especially with somebody new coming in all the time," Collins said. "There isn't really an established culture between the teachers and administration."

## - A timeline



2010-13

Jackie Tobias



2013-16

Joel County



2016-20

Tonya Williams



2021

Leslie Kinard



2021-

Gloria Woods-Weeks

# Distraction or Tool?

## Screen time's effect on literacy rates may be more serious than we thought



• PHOTO BY SADIE IRBY

A group of students huddle together and hold their phones out. Research suggests increased screen time has a negative effect on literacy.

BY SADIE IRBY &  
DIEGO HERNANDEZ

Don't call Xaviera Colopy an "iPad kid."

According to research published by numerous academic journals, it's a term that describes a generation of children that gets all of their entertainment from an iPad or other forms of technology. But it's also an ongoing joke, popularized on social media, about kids' overreliance on their electronic devices for entertainment.

"I see a bunch of videos of children freaking out because they have to go eat dinner, or something," said Colopy, a freshman.

While she acknowledges that her generation of students spends a lot of time on devices, they still care about other things, too.

"It's just more busy here [Riverside]," she said, "so you don't have as much time

to just sit down and read a book."

Children born in 2010 and later are part of "Gen Alpha," according to Mark McCrindle, who coined the term.

"Currently, it's the youngest generation," writes Olivia Munson in a 2024 USA Today article. "With more than 2.8 million people born weekly, Gen Alpha is projected to become the 'largest generation in the history of the world.'"

That makes most Riverside ninth graders the first cohort of students who have spent their lives looking at more screens than books.

Colopy believes the begin-

ning of Gen Alpha is 2012 rather than 2010, but the change in behavior is real.

"I think that it [technology reliance] affects behavior because I feel like becoming more reliant means that you are also more irritable when you

don't have it and you get angry when people take it away."

However, she also thinks that it is inaccurate to categorize all of Gen Alpha as iPad kids.

"It depends on the parents' teaching style, how they want to raise the kid."

She also thinks the addictive nature of personal devices

could be concerning for the future of education.

"People are not interested in real things, which could lead to a skew of jobs."

### THE DECLINE

Opinions aside, literacy rates are falling.

Literacy is defined by the ability to read and write, so low literacy rates normally have to do with lower reading and analyzing skills, not necessarily complete illiteracy. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) says literacy is "typically measured according to the ability to comprehend a short simple statement on everyday life." Additionally the adult literacy rate represents ages 15 and above, which brings in a huge range of responses. Literacy rate is more of a functional literacy rate.

The current adult literacy rate in the US is 79%, according to the National Literacy Institute. That's down 10 points

**"The first image that comes to my mind is a kid with an iPad like this close to their face."**

**- Althea King**

from 2017.

Screen time plays a role in the change. Social psychologist Jonathan Haidt has written about how devices have increased rates of anxiety, disrupted sleep and decreased attention spans.

“The first image that comes to my mind is a kid with an iPad like this close to their face,” said freshman Althea King as she motioned her hand a couple inches away from her eyes. “Getting an iPad really early and not having the classic childhood.”

King thinks that characterization is an overgeneralization, but does see the behavior shift happening.

“I don’t think that’s everyone, but I feel like it’s getting more and more like that.”

However, she does see the increase of the reliance on technology affecting the education here at Riverside.

“Even myself, I use my computer a lot and at the beginning

of the year,” she said. “When we didn’t have them, it was a lot harder.”

### OPINIONS

King also sees people reading less physical books but still consuming literature online.

“I would say definitely less actual books, and more online but I think it just depends on the person,” said King.

But since English III and AP Lit-

erature teacher Mira Prater started working here in 2008, she has seen a different change in students’ desire to read at RHS.

“I see students are much more interested in reading books,” says Prater. “They have an interest in choosing the books they want to read, less an emphasis on wanting to read, maybe curriculum.”

Prater believes this growth in desire to read also has to do with the values here at

**"The time has come to decenter book reading and essay writing as the pinnacles of English language arts education."**

**-The National Council of Teachers of English**

### Grade Level Proficiency rates by Year (Grades 3-8)

End-of-Grade (EOG)	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Grade Level Proficiency (GLP)				
Reading Grade 3	34.7	38.2	39.3	40.8
Reading Grade 4	36.9	45.2	49.9	45.7
Reading Grade 5	33.0	38.9	43.2	46.2
Reading Grade 6	42.7	42.2	46.4	44.0
Reading Grade 7	39.7	44.9	45.6	45.6
Reading Grade 8	42.8	44.0	47.5	44.8

STATISTICS COURTESY OF DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT DATA PROFILE



• PHOTO BY SADIE IRBY

Kelly Newsome holds a one-on-one meeting on Feb. 25. Newsome regularly meets with teachers and faculty to make sure their curriculum is up to standard.

## Equity Issues

Based on statistical evidence from the National Center for Education Statistics, students of color are dramatically more affected by the falling literacy rates than white students.

Kelly Newsome, Riverside's teaching and learning coordinator, also sees how bias and racial inequalities have affected students here at Riverside.

“You would have to look at the breakdown of the classes and kind of see where the emphasis is put,” said Newsome. “I think there are a lot of internalized biases that impact how we teach our students of color and how we assume they can work.”

Based on 2024 statistics, Durham Public schools is made up of 37.1% Black students, 35.2% Hispanic students, 19.5% White students, and 8.1% other races or two or more races.

“Although Riverside is majority non white students, there is a lack of the same resources for those students and a lack of push for those students,” said Newsome. “We’re not pushing them to read as much because the assumption is that they can’t.” “So we dumb down the education, if you will, we’re not teaching them on grade level,” she said.

This is reflected in recent statistics (shown left) in elementary and middle schoolers within DPS.

“So that definitely plays a huge role in the illiteracy issue that we’re having at this school, and I think that might go nationwide as well.”

Riverside.

“We have a school culture here where, at least in English and literature, we encourage students to read whatever they want,” says Prater. “It doesn't matter if it's a graphic novel or if it's a historical fiction text, but I have seen students, standard, honors, and AP, feel like they have a choice in what they want to read and I've seen that desire grow.”

A 2022 New York Times article titled “It's ‘Alarming’: Children Are Severely Behind in Reading,” highlights the nationwide reading crisis within schools, resulting in almost a third of children in the youngest grades failing to meet standard on reading benchmarks.

This drop in reading scores is reported to have happened in 2022, but The News & Observer published an article in 2025 that reported no significant change in NC's scores since 2022, which were its lowest in 20 years.

Much of the data coincided with students across the country doing school online due to quarantine rules during the Covid-19 pandemic.

“I think the pandemic had a number of effects on education, but kids are so much more connected to their phones; it forced all of us to be on our phones so much more,” says Prater. “Once students can disengage from their phones then I do see them paying attention to their work and performing like typically students have, but it does take quite a bit of effort to get kids off their phones.”

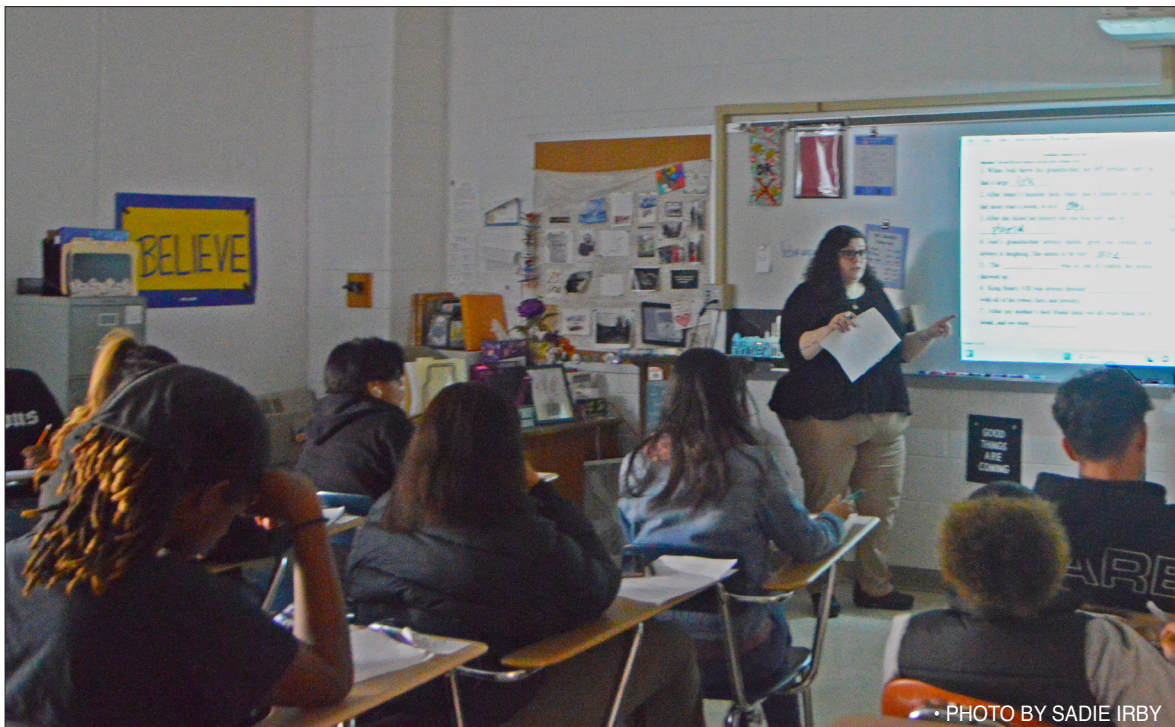


PHOTO BY SADIE IRBY

Mira Prater teaching an English 3 class. Prater has worked at Riverside since 2008 and regularly utilizes technology within her class.

Prater isn't the only teacher to notice the prevalence of phones in the classroom. The National Council of Teachers of English released a statement in 2022 about literacy “expanding.”

“English language arts (ELA) educators at all levels must help learners develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for life in an increasingly digital and mediated world,” the statement reads. “The time has come to decenter book reading and essay writing as the pinnacles of English language arts education.”

Though grasping high schoolers' attentions can be hard, technology has also broadened horizons when it comes to consuming literature.

“A lot of [education] now is technology based,” says freshman Tia Wurster. “A lot of teachers have online stuff so the computers being gone has definitely

changed things.”

“I see that more students are more willing to read on their phone or their kindle, and are more comfortable with that method of reading, whereas I can't read digitally,” said Prater. “I need a physical book in my hand. I would

prefer essays printed out instead of me reading them on a computer, so I am very much antiquated in that method.”

Academic journals recognize a new wave of e-book consumers, but evidence shows little to no difference in students reading comprehen-

sion when consuming literature physically or digitally. Rather than comprehension differences, the effects favor traditional reading over digitally reading when texts are relevant to students “professional discipline.”

Prater, who is currently reading Haidt's book, *The Anxious Generation*, recognizes the issues regarding discipline within her classroom, due to the distractions that technology can create.

“By allowing students to use a device to consume literature, that does not take away the temptation for them to quickly click over when they get notification from Instagram or a text, and so I feel like they're going to be more disrupted when consuming,” says Prater. “So yes, I do think that that [reading using technology] is a hindrance to their consumption and understanding of literature.”

**"I see students are a lot more interested in reading books."**

**-Mira Prater**



• GRAPHIC BY TULA WINTON

# “Nostalgia is back”

More and more teens are picking digital cameras over phones

BY TULA WINTON, EM-METT FLYNN, & SOFIA ALVAREZ PEDRAZA

Zoe Cordell is a part of the 68% of teens aged 15-17 who are active on Instagram. However, when it comes time to make a new post, she doesn't reach for her iPhone. Instead, she opts for a 2018-edition digital camera.

She's not alone either, many teens will agree that the aesthetics of digital cameras plays a large role in their appeal to younger generations.

“That's the thing with digital cameras, even if the photo quality isn't that good, people don't care because it feels vintage,” Cordell said.

Taking pictures with a phone is simple and fast, but can fail to capture what the moment really feels like. On outings, she noted that people often ask to use her camera to take pictures of them, preferring the grainy look of a photo captured on digital cameras rather than the hyper-clear

quality from an iPhone.

Cordell knows that her phone is more convenient. “But the camera... just captures things in a new eye,” she said.

Popularized by the media of the late 90s and early 2000s, digital cameras appear to be making a comeback. Instantly recognizable for their grainy images and devil-red eyes, many people are ditching their iPhones and reaching for their parents' camcorder.

Many teens just getting into digital photography are using the same cameras their parents used to record their first steps.

It's that nostalgia, despite the vast availability and convenience of iPhones, the old-school, Sony brand, heavy, silver blocks are returning to the spotlight.

GrandView Research proves this upward trend in the digital camera industry, with a 4.8% compound annual growth rate prediction from 2024 to 2030, growing the market from its current valuation at 7.72 billion

to nearly 10 and a half billion. Compound annual growth rate measures the average yearly growth of an investment over a designated time period.

This increase in digital camera usage is not only proven by nationwide statistics, but also by changes that have been observed at a local level.

Chris Johnson, a manager at Southeastern Cameras, a camera company based in Carrboro, has noted the upward trend in purchases of older cameras.

Southeastern Cameras recently purchased extra film processing machinery.

“Reinvesting in film processing was a risk, but it came back, thankfully,” Johnson said.

His company was able to make use of the growing popularity of digital cameras with younger customers.

Johnson believes people love the older styles of digital cameras over new because the imperfections add character. Vintage compact digital cameras often have smaller sensors than

current iPhone cameras, causing the photos to appear more grainy or pixelated. However, this does not discourage users, but rather serves as another appeal of the cameras.

This can largely be attributed to the rise in popularity amongst younger generations, primarily Gen Z, as they stray from the sharp crisp looks of phone cameras.

Junior Evelyn Walters is just one of the Gen Z's who appreciate this look.

“I like the lighting from digital cameras more, it's more of a soft, yellow light rather than bright white,” said Walters.

In an interview with NPR in December 2024, professional photographer Casey Fatchett reiterated that this different look contributes to Gen Z's use of digital cameras.

“There's so much processing that goes on in your phone that you don't have any control over,” Fatchett said. “So I think that there is a yearning among young people for photos that look real,



( Left ) Jeremy Roach gets ready to take a free throw during a 2024 game between Duke and Wake Forest at Cameron Indoor Stadium. ( Right ) A group of Riverside students pose for a photo in January 2025. Both photos were taken on a digital camera.



especially of themselves. So there's a feeling there that you can't get from your cell phone camera.

Fatchett also told NPR that thanks to Gen Z, digital cameras have taken off. He said that another factor of appeal is due to a desire for less edited photos. A digital photo may appear less "sharp" than a photo taken from a cell phone and this haziness can be reminiscent of the past.

Digital cameras also don't have the same storage options as phones and know-

ing each shot takes up immense storage space makes users know each shot has to count.

There is more significance in both the action of taking the picture and the result, so the experience itself is more valuable and intentional.

Fatchett explained the effect this has.

"Your brain thinks about it differently...like 'I only have x

number of photos that I can take, so I want to capture something that really matters to me," he said.

On the other hand, for the billions of cell phone owners, taking a picture is as simple as tapping a single button and boom, a

high-quality photo is now stored in the phone's camera roll, which has made the device a staple of everyday life. Despite this convenience, Gen Z is starting to favor digital cameras, as the different look is

reminiscent of the past.

"Nostalgia is back," says Tiffany Zhao, co-founder of Zebra IQ, a company that helps brands appeal to Gen Z consumers, in an interview with *Fast Company*.

"Those images make us feel nostalgic," freelance reporter Elizabeth Gulino told NPR. "And I think people are chasing that."

However, this resurgence

cannot be solely attributed to a generational movement of nostalgia. Gen Z is exceedingly active online, averaging 4.8 hours a day on social media, according to the American Psychological Association.

Naturally, the amount of time spent consuming content from other people can have a prolific impact on teens, especially in the way they choose to present themselves online.

At an age when brains are especially impressionable, teenagers are likely to present themselves online in a way that mimics those they see on social media. So when influencers such as Bella Hadid and Emma Chamberlain post photos featuring digital cameras to their millions of followers, Gen Z viewers are inspired to do the same.

Both women have posted with a PowerShot ELPH 360 hs point-

and-shoot, which Chamberlain told *Teen Vogue* is her favorite.

In response, the camera has flown off of shelves, selling out at Best Buy, Amazon, and the US Canon store.

This example is just one of the many instances in which Gen Z is influenced by what they see online. 68% of children aged 15-17 are active on Instagram, according to the Pew Research Center.

"People do these digital camera dumps on TikTok or Instagram," Cordell said, "and there's at least like twenty comments depending how viral it is, maybe thousands of comments saying 'what camera is this?' Some of us are very influenced by what we see online,

if you see a TikTok Shop ad or whatever, you're gonna want to buy it."

Gen Z  
averages 4.8  
hours a day  
online.  
  
- American  
Psychology  
Association

"Some of us are  
very influenced  
by what we see  
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it."  
  
- Zoe Cordell

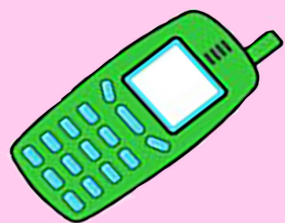
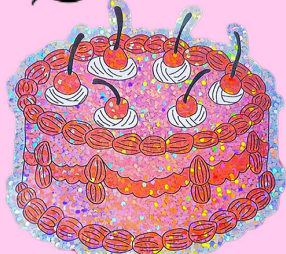
# "It's just a tool for empowerment,"

## how drag found a home in Durham



• GRAPHIC BY ISABELLE ABADIE

# Juicy Couture



As you drive down broad street, approach your turn in the parking lot slowly, as it is easy to miss.

The parking lot is small and there are two buildings on either side. The building on the right has a LGBTQ+ flag hanging outside and small colorful stickers on the windows. When you walk up to the door you will notice a sign indicating that it is open and to knock loudly or call a phone number to be let in.

If you see someone sitting at the desk feel free to walk in, but do not be surprised if it is quiet and empty up front. Once they greet you, you will sign in on a piece of paper. Write your name, the date, whether or not you have been to the center before, and lastly your sexual orientation or gender identity.

The desk the worker is sitting at has an open space behind it, feel free to walk around to where they are sitting and enter the clothing closet.

You will notice many racks filled with all different types of clothing varying in color, style, and size. Other teens may also be looking through bins of chest binders, and racks of dresses.

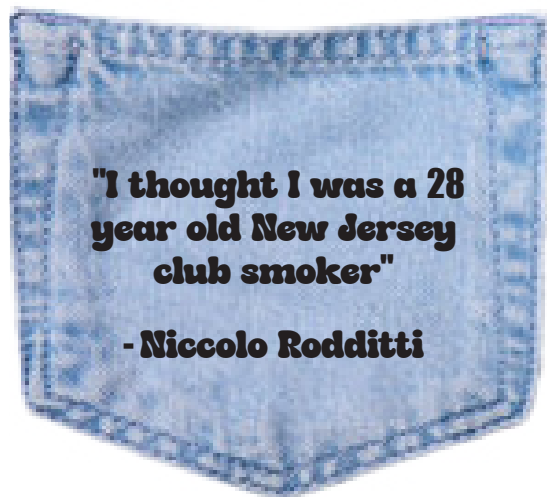
A woman is back there organizing more clothes and bins in the corner. If you look up you will see shelves of labeled containers filled with makeup, jewelry, stockings, socks, and more. Near the closet entrance there are cans of food and boxes of mac and cheese.

Everything in this closet is free to take. When you walk down the hallway you will notice meeting rooms, they are probably filled with adults discussing new legislature and having heated and emotional conversations about new changes to our country.

Open a door, walk down a staircase and you'll find a large concrete basement. It's a surprisingly big space, given how small the building looks from the outside.

When you first walk in you will see a small memorial with a large

picture of Nex Benedict with the years 2008-2024 underneath their picture. The table behind the memorial is covered in a colorful cloth with artwork and candles, in their memory. To the left there are tables where teens sit, talking, and laughing. Niccolo will tell you that little cliques tend to form where teens just relax



and enjoy their conversations. To the left of the stairs are grey lockers. Each door is labeled with different art supplies like "queer yarn and needle craft" and "writing materials." to the left of Nex's memorial there is a popcorn machine and a large tv that sits on top of red mechanic style drawers. More teens are sitting and listening to music that plays on the tv and engaging in conversations.

## Meet Kali and Niccolo

This small, sacred place is the LGBTQ+ center of Durham.

For some, it's a place to hang out and find friends with similar interests. But for community psychologist, co-director of the Durham LGBTQ+ youth center, bearded queen, and fashion icon, Niccolo Roditti (out of drag) or Kali Fuchis (in drag), it's so much more than that.

Born in Ecuador, Roditti moved to Rhode Island at the age of three. They attended middle and high school in Charlotte

before attending undergrad at NC State.

Roditti majored in psychology and international studies and furthered their education at Vanderbilt's masters program in Nashville.

After graduating college, Roditti found their way into the world of drag after making friends with other queens and eventually being persuaded into doing a show.

Another drag artist, Stormie Daie, used to always ask "when are you getting in drag, when are you going to do it?"

Drag can be a big un-

known to those outside of the community, as it challenges traditional gender and social norms. Roditti emphasizes that drag is many different things to each person and that it does not need to be complicated.

"The best way to look at drag is that it's just a tool for empowerment," Roditti said.

Drag is a creative outlet and can also be a way into the world of sewing, fashion, makeup, thrifting, and other crafts. But for Roditti, it's always been more than just art, makeup, and carefully curated outfits. It's been a way for them to fully understand themselves.

"It unlocked a lot of things for me. One of those things was Kali," they said.

The name Kali Fuchis is a play on the singer Kali Uchis' name, Fuchis in Spanish means "stinky little kid." In indigenous culture there is an identity with a duality of spirits. This allows for expression from both male and female spirits in one person.

This form of expression allowed them to understand what parts of them were being suppressed and acknowledge the feminine energy they felt their

whole life.

"I thought I was a 28 year old New Jersey club smoker," Roditti said.

Roditti describes their family and upbringing as spiritual, herbalistic and Catholic.

"When you feel this duality of spirits you can't necessarily claim both because you didn't grow up in that indigenous culture," they said.

Naming Kali was a great way for them to verbalize and express a side of them in a way that makes sense. Growing up, Roditti idolized female icons from Nicole Richie to Rosalia.

A common conception of drag art and the life of a queen is that it is just a character or a costume only portrayed or worn when working a gig. But Kali is not just around for drag shows or gigs. Kali goes out in everyday life at least once a week, otherwise they describe that they start to become more "dysphoric" and "dissociative."

Roditti feels no need to succumb to societal expectations or norms. They encourage youth to find comfortability in what they are doing and to not let outside media and opinions tear them away from their identity.

"Yeah, you can tell me all of those things, but in my head I'm on a 2004 world tour with Fergie," they said, "that will never change."

## Drag and the LGBTQIA+ Community

According to the Human Rights Campaign, Drag is a performance art that uses costumes, makeup and other tools as an exaggerated form of gender expression and to imagine a more transformational future.

The origins of Drag Queens and shows can be traced back to the late 19th century during a pivotal time for LGBTQ+ individuals in the United States. In the 1880s drag balls were held in Washington DC. These balls were organized as a safe space

for self expression and community. The gatherings became the beginning of Drag culture.

A BBC article titled 'The history of drag and historical drag queens' credits increased recognition of this specific part of the queer community to

protests and movements in the 60's and 70's against police raids at gay bars. The Stonewall Riots of 1969 and the queer student unions formed on UC Berkeley's campus are some of the biggest examples of the evolving demographic.

Additionally, the article credits more of the 21st century drag culture to the first drag race, which aired in 2009: RuPaul's Drag Race. The show allowed contestants to compete in a series of challenges, costume creations, and performances on television.

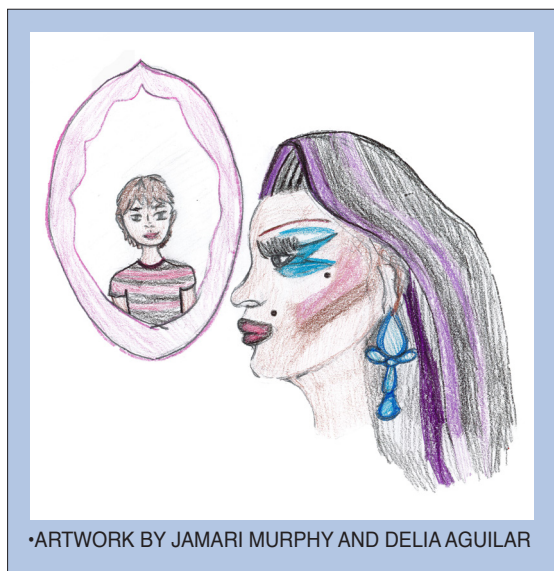
Drag is part of a much larger queer community.

According to Wikipedia LGBTQIA+ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual and more. These are all different terms people use to identify and label their gender identity and sexual orientation. The acronym term purposefully excludes heterosexual or cisgender labels.

Since its increased usage in the 20th century, the term has given people in the queer community a way to separate themselves from traditional sexual orientations as well as give many individuals the confidence they need to present themselves as the most authentic versions of themselves.

The term was first developed in the 1990s by queer activists and started as only LGB. The terminology later shifted to LGBT as transgender people became more accepted in the movement and society in general.

Eventually, the term queer



ARTWORK BY JAMARI MURPHY AND DELIA AGUILAR

became widely used as a more inclusive umbrella term that allowed for more interpretation and experimentation and began to include Drag.

Drag has found a specific space in Durham because of the community's high level of inclusivity compared to surrounding communities like Oxford or Graham Counties.

House of Coxx, a crucial part of Durham's drag community, was established in 2013. Throughout the years the house has organized many events including a weekly 'drag brunch'.

The inclusive environment of Durham draws drag, but it also creates a safe environment for all members of the LGBTQIA+ community to be themselves, even at Riverside.

Riverside senior Quinne Rizzuto is a student athlete, president of Riverside's Democrats Club leader and self-described adventurous person who is passionate about farming.

Rizzuto also identifies as non-binary.

Someone who is nonbinary doesn't associate with either gender. People who are nonbinary tend to go by they/them pronouns or use all pronouns.

Rizzuto's identity goes deeper than gender roles in society. Their identity helps the side of them that is a helper, and extending that to other people.

They see other people in places they once were; trying to figure themselves out and going through

the same processes.

"Obviously I don't know exactly who I am," Rizzuto said. "It's a big question and I don't know if anyone knows exactly who they are, but I think it's a good thing and I think it's why I like going on big adventures, because I get to learn more about myself and spend time with myself."

Quinne is not their birth name. They made the switch in 2020 because it validated themselves.

"Growing up I always liked the name Quinne, and I was like 'oh I'm going to name my kid Quinne and then I realized 'oh that's actually supposed to be me.'"

Without using the words feminine and masculine to describe a sense of style, Rizzuto takes on a more artistic, outdoorsy, earthy vibe in their fashion.

They like fair trade jewelry because when someone compliments the piece, it comes with a story. Their go-to piece in completing an outfit is their converse and a bandana.

"I grew up not knowing what being gay was, not knowing what trans was, I did not know any of these things in middle school... growing up in a very religious family, those kinds of things were not talked about." While the sex of a body is science, the gender roles in society are man made.

While some try to battle these gender norms, it always comes with traditional pushback. The parental rights in education act prohibits teachers in Florida from educating students on sexual orientation and gender identity. The lack of acknowledgement and freedom for students to explore their identities reinforces traditional gender roles.

Rizzuto acknowledges that no matter how they dress it will be taken more masculine or feminine by society. This makes finding outfits that come across as "non-binary" more difficult to find. They worry that certain pieces will come with being addressed by different pronouns. Rizzuto sees fashion as an art, it is unique to each and every person.

"I wish I could dress however I want and not be perceived differently," they said.

**"Obviously I don't know exactly who I am. It's a big question and I don't know if anyone knows exactly who they are but I think it's a good thing..."**  
**- Quinne Rizzuto**

# Beyond the Bulletin

## How does RHS inform its community?

BY AUSTIN WYMORE, VILMA ROLDAN LAZO, ARELA VARELA-ARROYO

On December 18, 2024 school computers were distributed at the Riverside media center after great delay.

Hundreds of students stood confused in lines organized by last names, wondering if they'd be able to keep their computers for the remainder of the year this time, and if they were even safe to use.

"The whole computer process was chaotic and disorderly," said senior Maria Mullaney. "The lines were so unnecessary and long."

Students, teachers, and families didn't find out until the day the computer distribution took place. When the school day started, students who had end-of-course exams (EOCs) were called in first to receive computers with chargers.

"I was among the few students who received a charger when I got my computer," said junior Ana Coreas Vargas. "I'll need it for when I take my Math 3 EOC."

After the students who had EOC's got their computers, the remaining students were called on the by birth month to the media center to pick up their computers.

"I put it in the trunk of my car," said senior Donna Soriano Sandoval. "I limited touching the computer due to rumors of bed bugs living inside of it. I don't plan on using it since I have my own."

Like Soriano Sandoval, many students had already begun bringing their home laptops to school to replace the missing chromebooks for doing schoolwork.

"I didn't get a computer because I already have one where I do all of my school work and assignments," said senior Franklin Rivas Prudencio. "I don't feel like carrying two computers around."

As the Chromebook distribution went on, Riverside ran out of computer chargers. Numerous students were left with a dead laptop and no way to charge it.

"We had to talk to the district," said media coordinator Tara Gold. "They did not have [additional] chargers for us."

Students were confused and frustrated by the lack of information.

"Why would you give out computers that won't turn on, and without chargers to students who actually need functioning computers to complete assignments?" said senior Karina Velazquez.

The school is still working through the charger shortage. Students believe the school may have been able to avoid unnecessary strife if students had been more aware of the distribution situation.

### COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Schools require strong, multi-faceted communication. Without it, students, families, faculty and staff can miss out on important information, updates, and context. It can also lead to confusion, frustration, and rumors among students.

Riverside's communication system involves a variety of channels online and off. The daily announcements cover information regarding student opportunities, celebrating accomplishments, and important daily information like testing info.

"On Mondays we send out information, like cell phone reminders, what teachers need to be doing, their hall duties, what they need to be doing when grades are due, when report cards need to go out, so they're getting frequent reminders, even at the beginning of the week," said assistant principal Tammy Patterson.



Lenny The Pirate answers an important phone call from administration. Phone messages is one way RHS shares information.

Administrators also contact parents via email or phone call for personal information about their students.

Teachers receive emails with relevant information to them and their students about school events.

"I listen to the announcements during second period," said Coreas Vargas. "I also listen to the phone calls Woods-Weeks sends out."

"I find out important school events and announcements by emails, students, and other teachers," said social studies teacher Gabrielle Minnick.

"I find out about important events through the school announcements during second

period and on the RHS website," said Mullaney.

"Any and everything you need to know about Riverside, is updated on our web page," Patterson said. "We take pride in that."

Chromebook distribution tested each channel repeatedly.

Jenna Wine and Gold are Riverside's media coordinators. They were among the first people who found bedbugs in Chromebooks when the school year started.

"We found bedbugs on August 21 when we were going to count to see how many chromebooks we didn't have," said Wine. "That's when we noticed they were crawling around."

"We opened up the back of the computers and found bedbugs and

PHOTO BY SAUL JANIÁK-STEIN

## LOCKDOWNS & EMERGENCIES

roaches,” said Gold. “We found the computer which had the nest of bugs we think the outbreak had originated from.”

On Wednesday, Sept. 4, students picked up their school-issued laptops in the media center. Around 4 p.m., an announcement broadcast over the intercom asked all students to return them at the end of the school day, as they exited the building. Principal Gloria Woods-Weeks later sent out a voice message to parents, assuring them that the school was taking every precaution to handle the situation and followed up with emails with similar information.

After multiple rounds of fumigation and cleaning, the media center staff, with the help of district IT professionals, distributed clean chromebooks to students after months without them.

Even after they were deemed clean, the school’s leadership team was hesitant to redistribute chromebooks to students.

“We wanted to wait, because we had all voted to do Chromebook carts,” said Wine. “[Then] we found out that we couldn’t do carts.”

Wine and Gold believe the decision to give them back to students wasn’t the most ideal considering the school’s circumstances, especially since there aren’t enough chargers for every student.

“IT is going to the district to request money for chargers for Chromebooks because every school doesn’t have enough stuff,” said Wine. “We’re just, of course, in the worst situation.”

Riverside communicated to teachers by sending out an email mentioning that there would be a chromebook distribution for students on Dec. 18. Teachers got emails on Dec. 16. and 17. However, most students and parents didn’t find out until the day-of.

“I had no clue about the distribution until I heard the first announcement made publicly about Chromebook distribution,” said Rivas Prudencio. “It was for people who had tests at the end of the semester.”

At the beginning of fourth period on Sept. 30, immediately after a scheduled fire drill, Woods-Weeks announced over the loudspeaker that the campus was on lockdown.

Students huddled in classroom corners, wondering what was going on as police officers searched the school room by room. 20 minutes later, parents, students, and teachers found out all at once that it was real.

Woods-Weeks sent out an email to parents, informing them that the school was under lockdown while law enforcement investigated “a report of someone who may be in possession of a firearm on campus.”

After the lockdown, which was Riverside’s first since 2019, many students and teachers were confused and wanted more information.

“We didn’t know if it was a drill or if it was real,” said civics teacher Kayla Beckett. “Whatever the case may be, we were very confused about what exactly happened in the first place.”

“There were teachers still teaching...some teachers didn’t know during the lockdown because their intercom didn’t work. Some teachers don’t have keys to their classrooms. That’s not the teacher’s fault,” said orchestra teacher Sara Moore.

“A lot of the time I don’t hear

about something that happened at Riverside until a few days later.” said senior Deja Thompson.

Since Sept. 30, lockdown announcements have been handled more seriously by faculty and students alike. Riverside went into lockdown again on Feb. 14 and 18. Loudspeaker announcements left less ambiguity to whether or not students should treat it as a real threat.

“My french teacher (Mr. B) moved the whole tv in front of the window, he took it seriously,” said Junior Honesty Jones.

Part of assistant principal Jasmine McKoy’s job is to review safety protocols and discuss it at important staff meetings.

“If an unwanted incident happens, we call our SRO’s to review the situation and monitor campus while we investigate the issue,” she said. “When there is an incident like this, we send a message to Riverside families explaining the situation.”

“We can’t let anybody in during a lockdown,” said Patterson. “They’re not always happy with that, but it’s for the safety of the school community.”

## BUS INFORMATION

Communicating information to the school community is one of the many parts of a school administrator’s job. McKoy is one of Riv-

erside’s four assistant principals who, along with Woods-Weeks, make sure important information reaches faculty, staff, students and families.

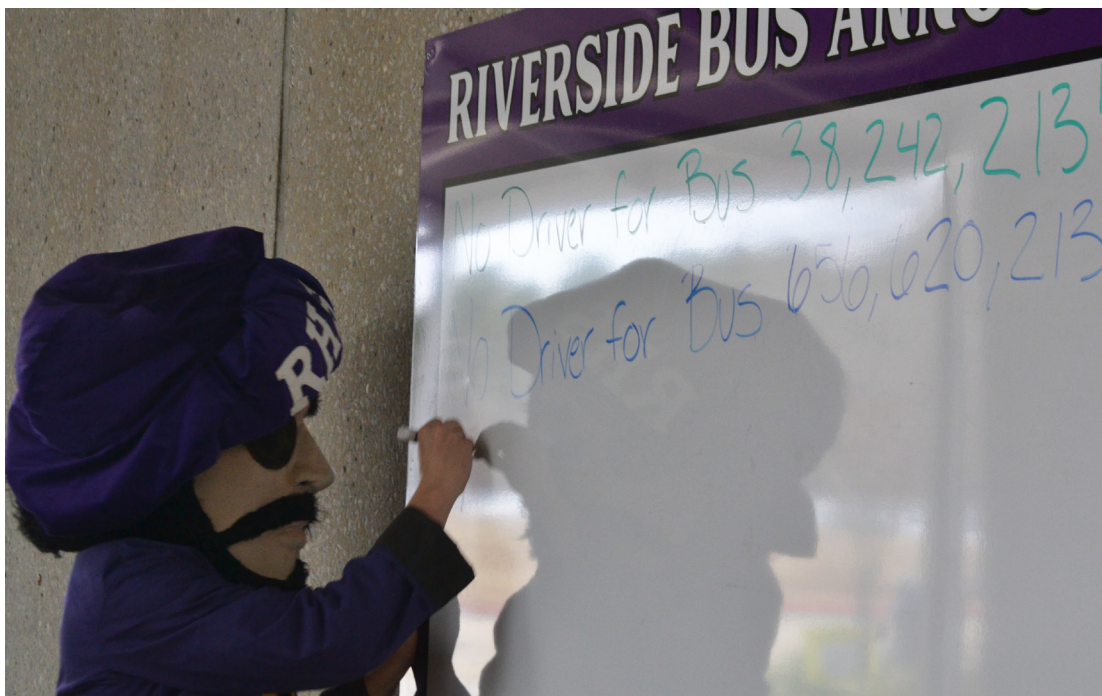
McKoy is in charge of communicating transportation changes or delays, along with various other responsibilities like dealing with students’ concerns and attending important meetings.

“I make sure students are where they need to be during school hours,” she said. “I am also the person who shares bilingual information to the Riverside community about bus transportation.”

Communicating student transportation has been more difficult this year than in the past. Due to driver shortages, bus routes have not run consistently. It’s forced the district and individual schools to share information daily with students and families about cancelled and delayed routes.

DPS sent out a message in November that informed families about rotational bus services. It was originally supposed to last from Dec. 2 to Dec. 20, 2024 but was later extended to Jan. 17.

“With rotational bus service, bus routes operate on a staggered schedule with students assigned to ride,” the DPS website stated. “Families will be responsible for transporting their students to and from school one day each week. This temporary change will help



Lenny writes bus change announcements on the board at the front of the school. • PHOTO BY VIOLET DAVIS

ensure routes are covered equitably across the district.”

Rotational bus service was designed to simplify the communication to families about late and cancelled transportation to and from school. It also changed how bus information is communicated by introducing the idea of bus schedules that change each day.

One of the most important tools DPS uses to communicate transportation updates with the community is Edulog, a mobile app that allows students and parents to track their respective school bus in real time.

The app shares alerts about arrival and drop off times. It's free, and most Riverside bus-riders use it.

In addition to the traditional communication channels, McKoy also posts daily bus information on a large white board outside the front office so students know which buses are running, delayed or not available.

## IMPROVEMENTS AND SOLUTIONS

McKoy believes the current methods Riverside uses to share information with students and families are adequate.

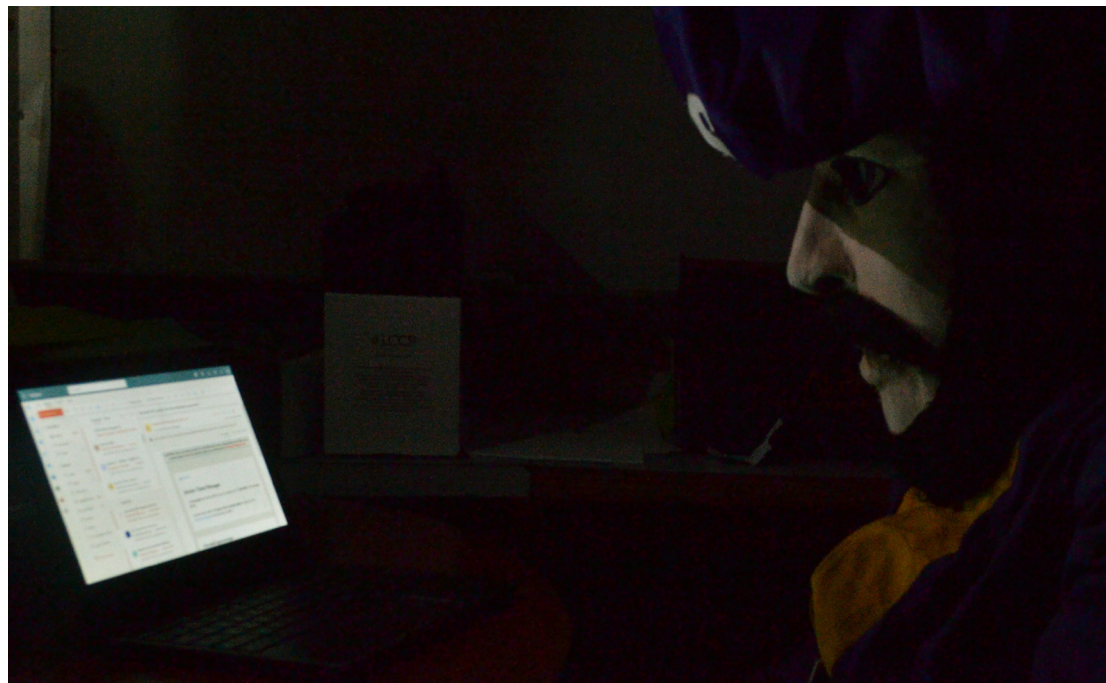
“I think the effectiveness of communication is pretty good,” she said. “It is only a downfall when we have incorrect demographics or incorrect contact information from parents.”

However, many students disagree. In a survey conducted by The Hook on Instagram in December, 84% of 64 student responders said that they feel that information and announcements fail to reach students and parents effectively.

“We use email, Canvas, and Google Voice, as well as all social media platforms,” McKoy said. “We use those forms of communication when needed to inform people in our community.”

“I think that communication is as effective and inclusive as it can be,” said English teacher Emily Ericson. “I really like the messaging app that is used to let families know about bus information. It lets people know about the bus schedules and when buses weren't running.”

But students and teachers did



Lenny checks his email for important school announcements and opportunities. School leaders send information via email to both faculty and Riverside families.

• PHOTO BY SAUL JANIAC-STEIN

identify ways it could be improved.

Students expressed frustration that campus safety updates are shared with teachers and parents, but not the kids in the building.

“When we have lockdowns or fights, I feel that keeping them a secret when we have suspicions about them isn't the best thing to do,” said Thompson. “Communicating with the school about the situation as soon as possible is a good idea. It will allow us to be more vigilant.”

Including languages other than Spanish in verbal and written translations would also help more people get important information.

Riverside is one of Durham's most diverse schools. Many of its 1,900 students come from other countries and are still learning English. Most of the students in the school's English as a Second Language (ESL) program come from families from Hispanic and Latino countries, but not all.

“There are 786 students at Riverside who are english-second-language (ESL) students now or were in the past,” ESL teacher Julie Farkas wrote in an email to *The Pirates' Hook*. “My own

records include about 30 different languages that are spoken at home from students who are currently identified as English Language Learners.”

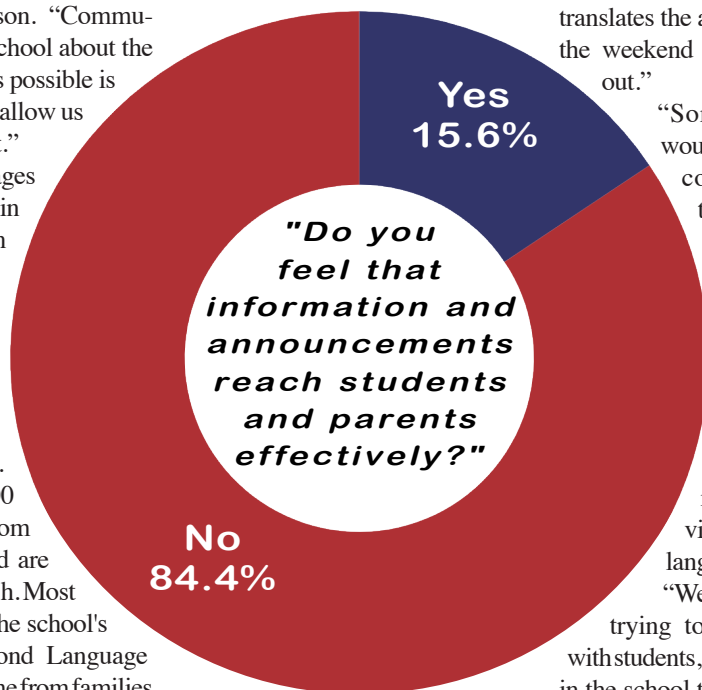
Spanish, Arabic, French, Punjabi, Tagalog, and Russian are the most common languages spoken by students at Riverside who are

translation, Riverside often relies on bilingual staff members to share information in a timely manner.

“[ESL graduation coach Karen] Keim and [front office assistant Nancy] Sosa handle translation and communicate with Spanish speaking families,” said assistant principal Will Okun. “Ms. Keim translates the announcements over the weekend before they're sent out.”

“Some improvements would be to have good communication between students and AP's so the students don't feel left out,” said Coreas Vargas. “An example would be translating important messages in different languages and making interactive videos in their native language.”

“We put a lot of time into trying to share information with students, stuff that's happening in the school that's not necessarily happening within the classroom,” said Okun. “We're always open to ideas on how to improve, so if students have ideas on how we can better share opportunities, information, and celebrations, we want to know about it.”



currently learning

“The [school] communications are originally sent out in English,” said McKoy. “The same communications are also translated in Spanish.”

While the district can assist with

# Más allá del boletín

## ¿Cómo informa RHS a su comunidad?

POR AUSTIN WYMORE, VILMA ROLDAN LAZO, ARELA VARELA-ARROYO

TRADUCIDO POR FEDERICA CEDENO

El 18 de diciembre de 2024, se distribuyeron computadoras escolares en el centro de medios de Riverside después de una gran demora.

Cientos de estudiantes se pararon confundidos en filas organizadas por apellidos, preguntándose si podrían conservar sus computadoras durante el resto del año y si realmente serían seguras para usar.

“El proceso completo de las computadoras fue caótico y desordenado,” dijo la estudiante de último año María Mullaney. “Las filas eran tan innecesarias y largas.”

Los estudiantes, maestros y familias no se enteraron hasta el mismo día de la distribución de computadoras. Cuando comenzó el día escolar, los estudiantes que tenían exámenes finales (EOCs) fueron llamados primero para recibir computadoras con cargadores.

“Fui una de las pocas estudiantes que recibió un cargador cuando me dieron la computadora,” dijo la estudiante de penúltimo año Ana Coreas Vargas. “Lo necesitare cuando tome mi EOC de Matemáticas 3.”

Después de que los estudiantes con EOCs recibieron sus computadoras, los estudiantes restantes fueron llamados por mes de nacimiento al centro de medios para recoger sus computadoras.

“Lo puse en el maletero de mi carro,” dijo la estudiante de último año Donna Soriano Sandoval. “Limité tocar la computadora debido a los rumores de que tenía chinches dentro. No planeo usarla ya que tengo la mía.”

Al igual que Soriano Sandoval, muchos estudiantes ya habían

comenzado a traer sus laptops de casa a la escuela para reemplazar las Chromebooks perdidas para hacer tareas escolares.

“No recibí una computadora porque ya tengo una donde hago todo mi trabajo escolar y mis tareas,” dijo el estudiante de último año Franklin Rivas Prudencio. “No me gusta la idea de cargar dos computadoras.”

A medida que continuaba la distribución de Chromebooks, Riverside se quedó sin cargadores. Muchos estudiantes quedaron con computadoras apagadas y sin forma de cargarlas.

“Tuvimos que hablar con el distrito,” dijo la coordinadora de medios Tara Gold. “No tenían [cargadores adicionales] para nosotros.”

Los estudiantes estaban confundidos y frustrados por la falta de información.

“¿Por qué dar computadoras que no encienden, y sin cargadores a estudiantes que realmente necesitan computadoras funcionales para completar tareas?” dijo la estudiante de último año Karina Velázquez.

La escuela aún está lidiando con la escasez de cargadores. Si los estudiantes hubieran estado más informados sobre la situación de la distribución, la escuela podría haber evitado los conflictos innecesarios.

### Canales de Comunicación

Las escuelas requieren una comunicación fuerte y multifacética. Sin ella, estudiantes, familias, docentes y personal pueden perderse información importante, actualizaciones y contexto. También puede generar confusión, frustración y rumores entre los estudiantes.

El sistema de comunicación de Riverside involucra una variedad de canales, tanto en línea



• FOTO POR SAUL JANIAC-STEIN

Lenny el Pirata recibe un mensaje de texto de Riverside.

como fuera de línea. Los anuncios diarios cubren información relacionada con oportunidades para los estudiantes, celebrando logros e información diaria importante como detalles sobre exámenes.

“Los lunes enviamos información, como recordatorios de teléfonos celulares, lo que los maestros deben hacer, sus tareas en los pasillos, lo que deben hacer cuando las calificaciones deben entregarse, cuando los informes de calificaciones deben enviarse, para que reciban recordatorios frecuentes, incluso al inicio de la semana,” dijo la subdirectora Tammy Patterson.

Los administradores también se comunican con los padres por correo electrónico o llamada telefónica para compartir información personal sobre sus hijos.

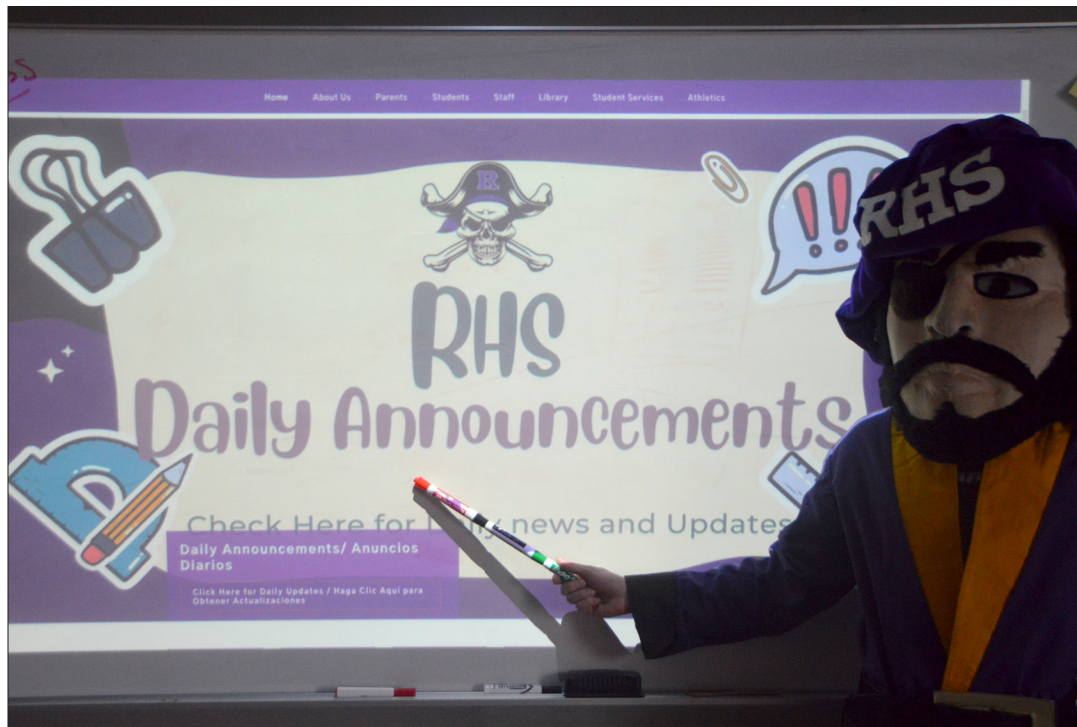
Los maestros reciben correos electrónicos con información relevante para ellos y sus estudiantes sobre eventos escolares.

“Escuchó los anuncios durante el segundo período,” dijo Coreas Vargas. “También escuchó las llamadas telefónicas que Woods-Weeks envía.”

“Me enteré de eventos y anuncios importantes por correos electrónicos, estudiantes y otros maestros,” dijo la profesora de estudios sociales Gabrielle Minnick.

“Me enteré de eventos importantes a través de los anuncios escolares durante el segundo período y en la página web de RHS,” dijo Mullaney.

“Todo lo que necesitas saber sobre Riverside se actualiza en nuestra página web,” dijo Patterson. “Nos enorgullece de eso.”



Lenny presenta los anuncios diarios en clase. Los anuncios tienen información sobre oportunidades, logros y más.

• FOTO POR SAUL JANIAC-STEIN

La distribución de Chromebooks probó repetidamente cada canal de comunicación.

Jenna Wine y Gold son las coordinadoras de medios de Riverside. Fueron de las primeras personas que encontraron chinches en las Chromebooks cuando comenzó el año escolar.

“Encontramos chinches el 21 de agosto cuando íbamos a contar cuántas Chromebooks no teníamos,” dijo Wine. “Ahí fue cuando notamos que estaban arrastrándose.”

“Abrimos la parte posterior de las computadoras y encontramos chinches y cucarachas,” dijo Gold. “Encontramos la computadora que tenía el nido de insectos de donde creemos que originó el brote.”

El miércoles 4 de septiembre, los estudiantes recogieron sus laptops proporcionadas por la escuela en el centro de medios. Alrededor de las 4 p.m., un anuncio emitido por el intercomunicador pidió a todos los estudiantes devolverlas al final del día escolar, cuando salían del edificio. La directora Gloria Woods-Weeks luego envió un mensaje de voz a los padres, asegurando que la escuela estaba tomando todas las precauciones para manejar la situación y luego envió correos electrónicos con información similar.

Después de varias rondas de fumigación y limpieza, el personal del centro de medios, con la ayuda de profesionales de tecnología del distrito, distribuyó Chromebooks limpias a los estudiantes después de meses sin ellas.

Incluso después de que se consideran limpias, el equipo directivo de la escuela dudaba en redistribuir las Chromebooks a los estudiantes.

“Queríamos esperar, porque todos habíamos votado para hacer carritos de Chromebooks,” dijo Wine. “[Luego] nos enteramos de que no podíamos hacer carritos.”

Wine y Gold creen que la decisión de devolverlas a los estudiantes no fue la más ideal considerando las circunstancias de la escuela, especialmente porque no hay suficientes cargadores para todos los estudiantes.

“El departamento de TI va al distrito para solicitar dinero para los cargadores de Chromebooks porque no todas las escuelas tienen suficiente material,” dijo Wine. “Nosotros estamos, por supuesto, en la peor situación.”

Riverside se comunicó con los maestros enviando un correo electrónico mencionando que habría una distribución de Chromebooks para estudiantes el 18 de diciembre. Los maestros recibieron correos electrónicos el

16 y 17 de diciembre. Sin embargo, la mayoría de los estudiantes y padres no se enteraron hasta el mismo día.

“No tenía ni idea sobre la distribución hasta que escuché el primer anuncio público sobre la distribución de Chromebooks,” dijo Rivas Prudencio. “Era para las personas que tenían exámenes al final del semestre.”

## Bloqueo

Al comienzo del cuarto período el 30 de septiembre, inmediatamente después de un simulacro de incendio programado, Woods-Weeks anunció por el altavoz que el campus estaba en bloqueo.

Los estudiantes se agruparon en las esquinas de las aulas, preguntándose qué estaba pasando mientras los oficiales de policía registraban la escuela habitación por habitación. 20 minutos después, padres, estudiantes y maestros se enteraron todos al mismo tiempo que era real.

Woods-Weeks envió un correo electrónico a los padres, informándoles que la escuela estaba en bloqueo mientras las autoridades investigaban “un informe sobre alguien que podría tener un arma en el campus.”

Después del bloqueo, que fue el

primero de Riverside desde 2019, muchos estudiantes y maestros estaban confundidos y querían más información.

“No sabíamos si era un simulacro o si era real,” dijo la profesora de cívica Kayla Beckett. “Cualquiera que fuera el caso, estábamos muy confundidos sobre lo que realmente ocurrió.”

“Había maestros que seguían enseñando... Algunos maestros no sabían durante el bloqueo porque su intercomunicador no funcionaba. Algunos maestros no tienen llaves para sus aulas. Eso no es culpa del maestro,” dijo la profesora de orquesta Sara Moore.

“A menudo no me entero de algo que ocurrió en Riverside hasta unos días después,” dijo la estudiante de último año Deja Thompson.

Desde el 30 de septiembre, los anuncios de bloqueo se han manejado con más seriedad tanto por el profesorado como por los estudiantes. Los anuncios por el altavoz dejan menos ambigüedad sobre si los estudiantes deben tratarlo como una amenaza real.

“Mi profesor de francés (Sr. B) movió toda la televisión frente a la ventana, él lo tomó en serio,” dijo la estudiante de penúltimo año Honesty Jones.

Otra parte del trabajo de McKoy es revisar los protocolos de seguridad y discutirlo en reuniones importantes con el personal.

“Si ocurre un incidente no deseado, llamamos a nuestros SROs para revisar la situación y monitorear el campus mientras investigamos el problema,” dijo. “Cuando ocurre un incidente como este, enviamos un mensaje a las familias de Riverside explicando la situación.”

“No podemos dejar entrar a nadie durante un bloqueo,” dijo Patterson. “No siempre están contentos con eso, pero es por la seguridad de la comunidad escolar.”

## Transporte Escolar

Comunicar información a la comunidad escolar es una de las muchas tareas del administrador escolar. La subdirectora Jasmine

McKoy es una de las cuatro subdirectoras de Riverside que, junto con Woods-Weeks, aseguran que la información importante llegue al profesorado, personal, estudiantes y familias.

McKoy se encarga de comunicar los cambios o retrasos en el transporte, así como otras responsabilidades como tratar con las preocupaciones de los estudiantes y asistir a reuniones importantes.

“Me aseguro de que los estudiantes estén donde deben estar durante el horario escolar,” dijo. “También soy la persona que comparte información bilingüe a la comunidad de Riverside sobre el transporte escolar.”

Comunicarse sobre el transporte escolar ha sido más difícil este año que en el pasado. Debido a la escasez de conductores, las rutas de autobús no han sido consistentes. Esto ha obligado al distrito y a las escuelas individuales a compartir información diaria con los estudiantes y las familias sobre las rutas canceladas y retrasadas.

DPS envió un mensaje en noviembre que informaba a las familias sobre los servicios de autobuses rotacionales. Originalmente se suponía que duraría desde el 2 de diciembre hasta el 20 de diciembre de 2024, pero luego se extendió hasta el 17 de enero.

“Con el servicio de autobuses rotacionales, las rutas operan en un horario escalonado con estudiantes asignados a montarse,” dijo el sitio web de DPS. “Las familias serán responsables de transportar a sus estudiantes hacia y desde la escuela un día cada semana. Este cambio temporal ayudará a garantizar que las rutas sean cubiertas de manera equitativa en todo el distrito.”

El servicio de autobuses rotacionales fue diseñado para simplificar la comunicación con las familias sobre el transporte tarde o cancelado hacia y desde la escuela. También cambió la forma en que se comunica la información sobre los autobuses al introducir la idea de horarios de autobuses que cambian cada día.

Una de las herramientas más importantes que usa DPS para comunicar actualizaciones sobre el transporte a la comunidad es Edulog, una aplicación móvil que

permite a los estudiantes y padres seguir su autobús escolar en tiempo real.

La aplicación envía alertas sobre los horarios de llegada y bajada. Es gratuita, y la mayoría de los estudiantes que usan autobuses en Riverside la utilizan.

Además de los canales tradicionales de comunicación, McKoy también publica diariamente la información sobre autobuses en una gran pizarra blanca afuera de la oficina principal para que los estudiantes sepan qué autobuses están funcionando, retrasados o no disponibles.

### Posibles Mejoras

McKoy cree que los métodos actuales que Riverside utiliza para compartir información con los estudiantes y las familias son adecuados.

“Creo que la efectividad de la comunicación es bastante buena,” dijo. “Solo es un inconveniente cuando tenemos datos demográficos incorrectos o información de contacto incorrecta de los padres.”

Sin embargo, muchos estudiantes no están de acuerdo. En una encuesta realizada por The Hook en Instagram en diciembre, el 84% de 64 estudiantes encuestados dijeron que sienten que la información y los anuncios no llegan de manera efectiva a los estudiantes y padres.

“Usamos correo electrónico, Canvas, Google Voice, así como todas las plataformas de redes sociales,” dijo McKoy. “Usamos esos medios de comunicación cuando es necesario informar a las personas de nuestra comunidad.”

“Creo que la comunicación es tan efectiva e inclusiva como puede ser,” dijo la profesora de inglés Emily Ericson.

“Me gusta mucho la aplicación de mensajería que se usa para informar a las familias sobre el transporte escolar. Permite que la gente sepa sobre los horarios de los

autobuses y cuándo los autobuses no están funcionando.”

Pero los estudiantes y profesores identificaron formas en que se podría mejorar.

Los estudiantes expresaron frustración de que las actualizaciones de seguridad en el campus se comparten con los maestros y los padres, pero no con los estudiantes en el edificio.

“Cuando tenemos bloqueos o peleas, siento que mantenerlos en secreto cuando sospechamos sobre ellos no es lo mejor,” dijo Thompson. “Comunicar con la escuela sobre la situación tan pronto como sea posible es una buena idea. Nos permitirá estar más vigilantes.”

Incluir idiomas además del español en traducciones verbales y escritas también ayudaría a que más personas obtengan información importante.

Riverside es una de las escuelas más diversas de Durham. Muchos de sus 1,900 estudiantes provienen de otros países y aún están aprendiendo inglés. La mayoría de los estudiantes en el programa de inglés como segundo idioma (ESL) provienen de familias de países hispanos y latinos, pero no todos.

que se hablan en casa de estudiantes que actualmente están identificados como aprendices del idioma

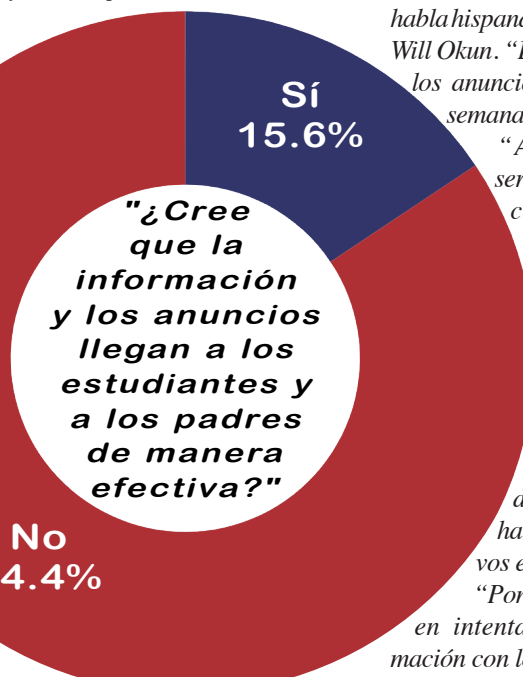
inglés.” El español, árabe, francés, punjabi, tagalo y ruso son idiomas comunes hablados por los estudiantes de Riverside que actualmente están aprendiendo inglés.

“Las comunicaciones [de la escuela] se envían originalmente en inglés,” dijo McKoy. “Las mismas comunicaciones también se traducen al español.”

Aunque el distrito puede ayudar con la traducción, Riverside a menudo depende de miembros del personal bilingüe para compartir información de manera oportuna. “[La entrenadora de graduación de ESL Karen] Keim y [la asistente de la oficina principal Nancy] Sosa manejan la traducción y la comunicación con las familias de habla hispana,” dijo el subdirector Will Okun. “La Sra. Keim traduce los anuncios durante el fin de semana antes de enviarlos.”

“Algunas mejoras serían tener una buena comunicación entre los estudiantes y los APs para que los estudiantes no se sientan excluidos,” dijo Coreas Vargas. “Un ejemplo sería traducir los mensajes importantes en diferentes idiomas y hacer videos interactivos en su idioma nativo.”

“Ponemos mucho tiempo en intentar compartir información con los estudiantes, cosas que están sucediendo en la escuela que no necesariamente ocurren dentro del aula,” dijo Okun. “Siempre estamos abiertos a ideas sobre cómo mejorar, así que si los estudiantes tienen ideas sobre cómo podemos compartir mejor oportunidades, información y celebraciones, queremos saberlo.”



“Hay 786 estudiantes en Riverside que son estudiantes de inglés como segundo idioma (ESL) ahora o lo han sido en el pasado,” escribió la profesora de ESL Julie Farkas en un correo electrónico a The Pirates’ Hook. “Mis registros incluyen alrededor de 30 idiomas diferentes

For students like sophomore Sam Murphy, browsing social media is an impulse that's hard to resist, even when they have more important things on their plate.

"I don't even mean to open it," Murphy says. "Sometimes I'm just like, 'Why not?'"

Murphy, who's a member of Riverside's swim team and student council, uses the most popular platforms.

"I spend like two to three hours on TikTok a day," she explains "I use Snapchat for 30 minutes a day and 20 minutes on Instagram."

Her behavior is common among others her age. According to the American Psychological Association, teenagers spend an average of 4.8 hours a day on social media.

Though it may seem harmless at the moment, over time the habit can become addictive and ultimately lead to other forms of addiction, too.

"Over 93% of teens use social media, which is approximately 37 million teenagers in the USA alone," writes Leon Chaddock, CEO of Sentiment, a tech platform that integrates messages from multiple social media sites."

Riverside is no exception, and while high rates of social media use is good for businesses like Chaddock's, it can also lead to addiction.

"This isn't a slight against my students, but y'all have become so addicted to your phones," said AP Computer Science teacher Mike Dibble. "Part of the reason is social media, whether that's checking something or checking if you've received a message.

This year, Riverside implemented a new cell phone policy designed to keep students off of their devices during class time. Teachers are trying to regain focus from their students that had been stolen from social media in the past years.

"I've been trying to make sure [social media] gets cut down on, at least in the class-

room experience," said Dibble.

Some students have taken the detachment from social media into their own hands. Senior Iris Blanton-Parke has deleted most social media from her phone.

"The little contact I've had with social media has been very damaging to my mental health and so I'm perfectly fine with not having it," said Blanton Parke. "Looking at people's bodies or their lives, it's very picture perfect."

To understand the significance of TikTok, it's important to look at its precursors. According to a 2019 Our World in Data article, social media began in the late 20th century but only really became popular in the early 2000's. With the rise of MySpace and Facebook, teenagers were introduced to a new, easier way of communicating with friends, family and even strangers.

The beginning of short form content started with Vine in 2013. After amassing roughly 200 million users, it was the

most downloaded video sharing app and platform of its time.

Then in September 2016, a new platform was created by Chinese company ByteDance. Going by the name Musical.ly, which later turned into TikTok, it quickly became the most downloaded app of all time after amassing 4.92 billion downloads and counting.

TikTok introduced the world to a highly addictive "For You Page" with short form videos that are specially curated for each viewer.

Sophia Petrillo, in an article published in the Brown Undergraduate Journal of Public Health titled "What Makes TikTok so Addictive?" argues that the curation of personalized content was a key reason its popularity exploded.

"The global audience is heavily skewed towards younger generations, with almost half of its users under age 34," writes Petrillo. "Teenagers make up nearly one-third of accounts"

"I've actually studied this,"

Dibble said. "It's something that can be very addictive, and it raises the dopamine levels in people's brains with short form content. That's why, more often than not now, the whole reason TikTok works is because you get that little bit of dopamine from something that happens really fast, and then you move on to the next thing."

TikTok is so addictive because it uses random reinforcement by rewarding users with increased dopamine levels. It targets individuals' brains by lessening viewers attention spans without them even knowing it.

"Recent studies indicate variable health effects depending on the severity of the addiction," writes Petrillo, "and increased social media use predicts more significant health consequences.

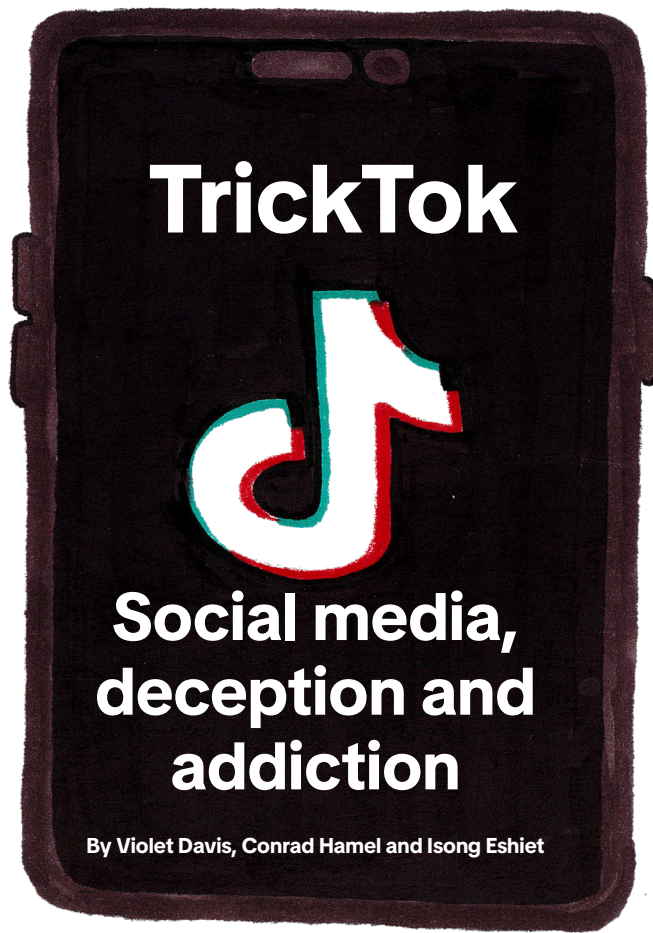
In a Verywell Health article titled "Reverse 'TikTok Brain' With These 8 Dopamine Boosting Tips," Asmae Fahmy explains the brain science behind social media addiction.

"While dopamine is essential for motivation and goal directed behavior, an excess of rapid, shallow dopamine hits—like watching TikTok videos—can erode your capacity for extended focus," Fahmy writes.

According to BlueCrest Recover Center, an addiction treatment center in New Jersey, social media can have even worse effects than just declining your overall focus and can even impact substance abuse.

"Social media can expose people to drugs or alcohol," its website states. "Social media addiction can also contribute to feelings of sadness, depression, and social isolation which can all lead to an increase in substance use."

One such substance use is vaping. Vaping is relatively new to the scene as a delivery system for nicotine. After many studies have proven that cigarettes contain harmful carcinogens that can lead to or even cause cancer, the popularity of smok-



• ARTWORK BY TULA WINTON

ing cigarettes and combustible tobacco has steadily dropped from the 1960's to the 2010's, according to the Pew Research Center.

But for many would-be cigarette smokers, vaping has taken its place. According to a 2024 study titled "Tobacco promotion restriction policies on social media" published by the National Library of Medicine, advertisements for nicotine products like disposable vapes and other oral nicotine products were rampant on social media.

According to a 2024 National Institute of Health study, social media sites have some parameters in place for ads targeting minors.

"11 sites that are popular with youth in May 2021: Discord, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit, Snapchat, TikTok, Tumblr, Twitch, Twitter and YouTube," the study's authors write. "Nine of the 11 sites prohibited paid advertising for tobacco products.

This has limited the amount of direct company advertising but these rules still lack to regulate promotion of nicotine products on social media. While helpful, the authors concluded it doesn't go far enough by concluding that,

"Few addressed more novel strategies, such as sponsored/influencer content and few had age-gating to prevent youth access," they write.

While social media and vaping are very different hobbies, both

have a similar effect on the brain. Nicotine delivered by a smoke or aerosol has a similar dopamine delivery system as scrolling. They both provide small hits of dopamine back-to-back. And the hits, combined with millions of dollars spent lobbying to keep restrictions loose on their products, have fueled both industries' rise in recent years.

By buying up companies that have taken the nicotine scene by storm such as Juul and Zynn, large parent companies like JPMorgan make it easy for lobbying in legislation to take place, according to Opensecrets.org, a tracking site for money in U.S. politics and its effect on elections and public policy.

Opensecrets also claims JPMorgan spent over 8 million dollars on lobbying just in the year of 2012.

JPMorgan isn't the only one that is guilty of spending money on lobbying. TikTok's parent company, ByteDance, spent well over \$4 million on government lobbying just within the first half of 2023, according to Opensecrets.

Despite lobbying, state and local governments have intervened. In 2024 North Carolina won more than \$40 million in a settlement with Juul. Former attorney general, and current governor, Josh Stein sued the company for targeting teens.

On January 17, 2025, the US Supreme Court upheld a law that banned

TikTok in the United States since ByteDance, its China-based parent company, didn't sell it to an American company. Although the ban only lasted a few hours, Junior Gerogi Armstrong

was devastated by the affects,

"I was upset," Armstrong said. "I'm on there scrolling for hours and I just don't have anything to do now. I think I opened the app like 50 times when it first got banned and

it kept telling me I can't use it."

She concluded that even though there are other apps, Tiktok is her preferred go-to.

"It's the algorithm that really does it kind of just gives you exactly what you want."

Junior Darryn Johnsons had a similar opinion.

"It was kind of boring," he said. "Tiktok is funny, but like Instagram reels are just boring. Instagram is a hit or miss."

With the app back up, Johnson says he's relieved to have the app back to fill his freetime.

"I use it mainly before I go to sleep. I'll be scrolling and just doze off.

Even with President Donald Trump's agreement with the company to keep it online for the time being, people who have never downloaded it or deleted the app no longer have it available to them on the app store.

In the couple of hours the app was banned, Armstrong decided to delete it thinking it would be banned forever. When asked how she felt about potentially never having it again she responded,

"I'm really upset, really unhappy. I sound like a screenager, but I really like the app."



"I don't even mean to open it... Sometimes I'm just like, why not?"

- Sam Murphy, sophomore

# Lenny's New Look

*More Riverside students are  
choosing dual enrollment  
than ever before*

BY LUCINDA DORRANCE, JAMARI MURPHY & AIDAN GANTER

As Riverside students scrambled to finish their semester, senior Peter Gutay was relaxing at home.

Gutay takes all but one of his classes at Durham Technical Community College (DTCC), which follows the college's calendar, not Durham Public Schools'. He took final exams on Dec. 6, then had 5 weeks mostly off for winter break, going to school for only one class a day during the weeks leading up to break.

"After exams, I was free from school really early," said Gutay. "It gave me time to work on applications and other things without worrying about classes."

Gutay is one of 105 Riverside students dual-enrolled at DTCC. An advanced educational program, in cooperation with Durham Technical Community College, it allows students to take college level courses for transferable credit.

The program began at Riverside, and DPS, in 2011 with hopes of better preparing students for college and fostering future interests, many of which will be applicable to future college degrees.

"I think Durham tech classes will probably help me prepare for college," said senior Rio Reposo, who is dual enrolled this year.

In addition to earning college credit, dual enrollment also ex-

poses students to advanced classes, such as AP equivalent courses or other electives and classes not offered at Riverside. High school students will sit among college students and adult learners who have worked in various careers for many years.

"You get to work with a lot of people that you wouldn't really work with otherwise," said senior Landon Whittington, who is taking several courses at Durham Tech.

"I have a class where I've got a 15 year old and a 68 year old in the same room," said Delong.

"It's that experience," said Tevin Jones, Riverside's DTCC liaison. "They're taking actual col-

lege classes, taught by college instructors. They're in classes with other college age students, so they're getting that experience now, so if they choose to go to a four year school after, they'll already have that taste of college life."

Jones has worked with Riverside and several other high schools since 2020. His job is equal parts counselor, advisor and coordinator as he gets students interested and



• GRAPHIC BY  
JAMARI MURPHY

eventually dual enrolled.

As stated on the DTCC website, the program offers three significant advantages: cost effectiveness, an accelerated path to more degrees and a seamless path to learning beyond high school.

The website describes how dual enrollment allows students to take initiative in their futures, earn credits and save money by taking college courses at a substantially lower rate.

"This opportunity allows students to accelerate their college education while reducing the cost of tuition," the website writes.

This may allow less financially advantaged students to obtain degrees and credits and open more advanced classes to those who would otherwise not be able to afford them at a four year college, as the cost of education through dual enrollment is significantly lower than taking the same classes at a traditional college.

The cost effectiveness of dual enrollment lies in the college credits students can earn while

still in high school. Where dual enrollment offers free tuition and comparatively minor expenses in transportation and materials, the average cost of a college course at a traditional two and four-year colleges cost hundreds and thousands of dollars, respectively.

Through dual enrollment, students can earn that credit with no tuition costs, and it's transferable to most colleges in the state, apart from several private schools, such as Duke, Davidson, and Wake Forest.

"The more credits a student takes, the more money they can potentially save in the future," said Jones. "Some will end up saving tens of thousands of dollars and that's a huge deal to a lot of people."

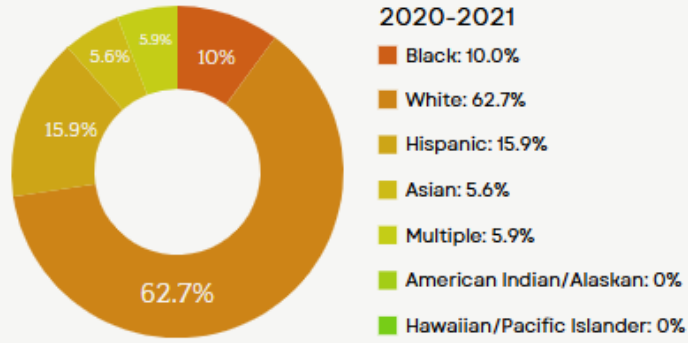
The monetary accessibility of these classes contributes to the inclusivity of this program, as it provides college level classes and credits to a wider range of those who may be unable to afford the tuition of other colleges.

"The free tuition is helpful for students who may be deterred from going to a four year school," said Jones. "It can help some students who may have ruled out college because of finances...and that finance part does, or potentially can impact certain groups more

**"You get to work with  
a lot of people you really  
wouldn't otherwise."**

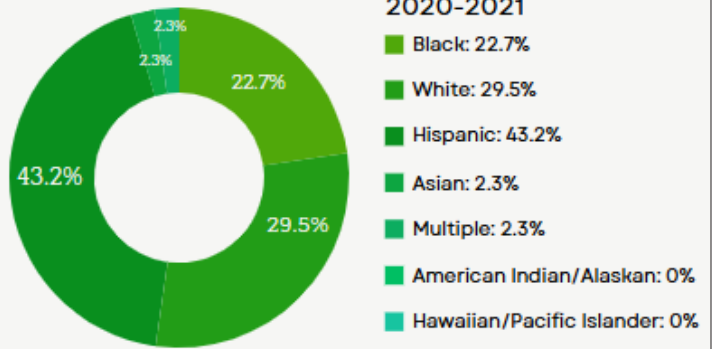
*- Landon Whittington,  
Senior*

## RIVERSIDE AP CLASSES ENROLLMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY



Source: CRDC

## RIVERSIDE DUAL ENROLLMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY



Source: CRDC

than others. I think it helps attract more students to dual enrollment.”

“Some people don’t even have money for community college and classes, so it does kind of help out that it’s free in high school,” said senior Tam DeLong, who is interested in a welding career and taking classes at Durham tech to earn his apprenticeship. Welding would have been difficult to obtain without the opportunity of dual enrollment, at least until after high school.

Not only do the credits often transfer to other universities, but the presence of dual enrollment classes on a transcript is viewed very positively by college admissions, giving these students an edge during the application process, too.

“Dual enrollment provides a seamless path to university or other higher learning institutions, giving students a competitive edge in college admissions” the DTCC website states.

This opportunity can lead to a greater preparedness for post-high school education, as students will be introduced to the diverse arrangement of students in college environments and have more experience in communication with their fellow students and professors.

As many AP students know, AP exams are a polarizing experience, sometimes blocking a student from earning their credit. In the DTCC curriculum, however, a grade of 70% minimum equates to an earned credit.

This simplified credit system encourages many students to

substitute their AP classes with those at DTCC, broadening the range of students who enroll in this program.

“At Durham Tech, you’re almost guaranteed to get the credit,” said junior Ben Slade, who chose to dual-enroll instead of taking several AP classes. “At Riverside, if you take an AP, you have to get a certain grade, and different colleges require different scores.”

To earn a credit for a class, dual enrollment students must pass the class with at least a C average. For many, that’s more appealing than taking AP classes, which may count for college credits by certain colleges for lower, but passing scores.

“If the final grade is an A, B or C, then you get the credit...and it can transfer as a college credit,” said Jones. “Say [a student] didn’t do the best but they got a C, they know they got college credit, and college credit that can transfer.”

DTCC also offers a wider as-

sortment of advanced classes than Riverside, including STEM and Technical pathways for students, as well as equivalent AP classes.

“They may find a path that aligns with their career goals [at DTCC],” said Jones

“There’s more opportunities because there’s a wider selection of classes,” said senior Callista Robinson, who has chosen to take statistics at Durham tech instead of at Riverside. “Some students may be more confident taking dual enrollment classes, rather than AP classes at Riverside.”

“Durham Tech is very accommodating,” said DeLong. “It gives a lot of pathways...It has stuff for everyone and can help a lot of people out.”

The combination of free tuition, student-friendly policies for earning college credits and exposure to higher education has created a more inclusive environment than traditional advanced academic programs. A 2022 Pirates’ Hook

investigation found that students of color were underrepresented in advanced high school classes, both in Durham and nationally.

“Diversity is definitely different there,” said senior Parker Collins, who is taking several asynchronous classes and calculus in-person.

that there are more women than men dual-enrolled.

“We do have PLTW students who do dual enrollment to supplement their engineering courses,” he said. “But [we also] have a lot of students in that program who maybe do trades like automotive, welding and HVAC. That does attract students who weren’t thinking of AP courses.”

But ultimately, it’s the opportunities to do what they want after high school that students mentioned the most.

“I feel like it’s helped a lot,” said DeLong. “It’s put me on to some employers, and I’m making a lot more money than I used to make.”

## Want to learn more about dual enrollment?



Durhamtech.edu/dual-enrollment

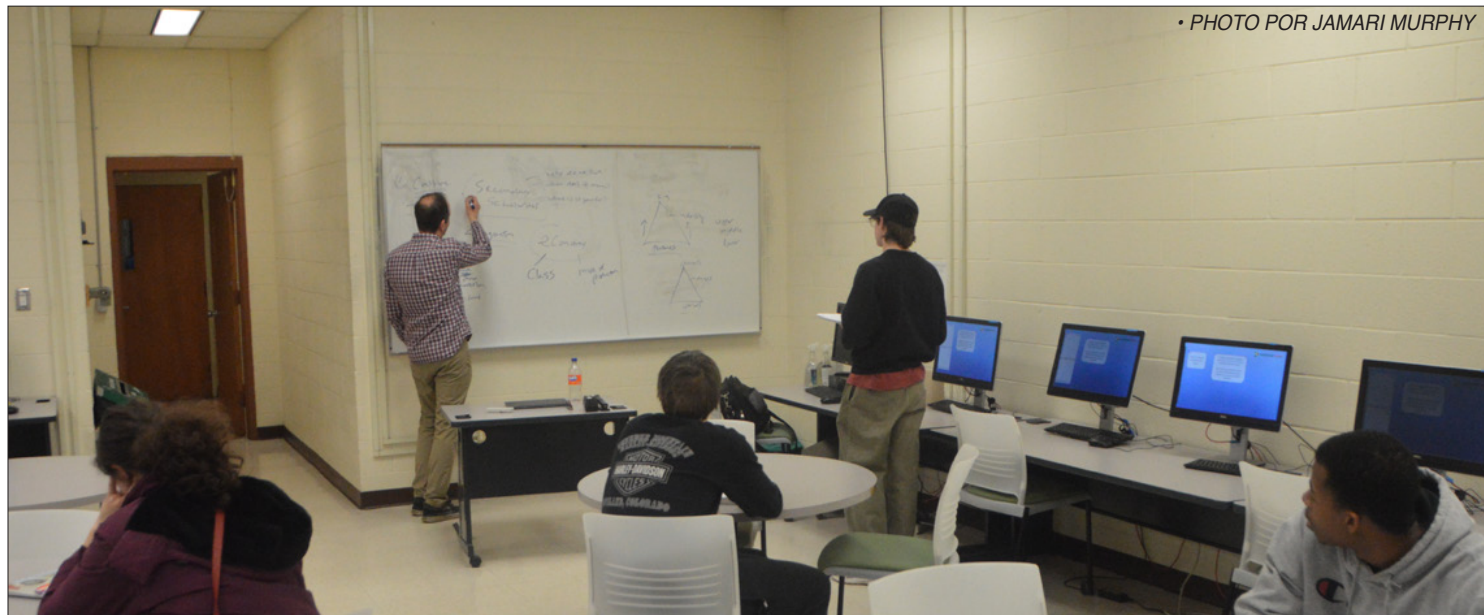


• PHOTO COURTESY OF DTCC

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# El Nuevo Look de Lenny

Más estudiantes de Riverside están eligiendo la inscripción dual mas que nunca.



• PHOTO POR JAMARI MURPHY

Estudiantes en un salón de clases en Durham Tech. Uno de los muchos estudiantes de RHS asistirá a través del programa de inscripción dual.

POR LUCINDA DORRANCE, JAMARI MURPHY Y AIDAN GANTER

Mientras los estudiantes de Riverside se afanaban por terminar el semestre, Peter Gutay, de último año, se relajaba en casa.

Gutay toma todas sus clases menos una en el Durham Technical Community College (DTCC), que sigue el calendario del colegio, no el de las escuelas públicas de Durham. Hizo los exámenes finales el 6 de Diciembre, y luego tuvo 5 semanas, en su mayor parte, libres para las vacaciones de invierno, yendo a la escuela sólo a una clase al día durante las semanas previas a las vacaciones.

“Después de los exámenes, me libré de la escuela muy pronto... me dio tiempo para trabajar en las solicitudes y otras cosas sin preocuparme de las clases,” dijo Gutay.

Gutay es uno de los 105 estudiantes de Riverside con doble-inscripción en el DTCC. Un programa educativo avanzado, en cooperación con Durham Technical Community College, permite a los estudiantes tomar cursos de nivel universitario para obtener créditos transferibles.

El programa comenzó en Riverside, y DPS, en 2011, una vía para que los estudiantes amplíen su

educación mediante la expansión a nuevas clases en un nuevo entorno.

Como se define en el sitio web de Durham Tech “La doble inscripción abre muchas puertas, ofreciendo una ventaja en la educación superior, mientras que todavía en la escuela secundaria.”

Esto para la universidad y fomentar futuros intereses a través de la selección de concentraciones y cursos de requisitos que ofrece, muchos de los cuales serán aplicables a futuros títulos universitarios.

“Creo que las clases de tecnología de Durham probablemente me ayudarán a prepararme para la universidad,” dijo el estudiante de último año Rio Reposa, quien espera tomar clases de inscripción dual este año. Uno de los muchos que esperan que la matrícula dual les ayude a avanzar en su educación.

Además de obtener créditos universitarios, la matrícula doble también expone a los estudiantes a clases avanzadas, como cursos equivalentes a AP, u otras optativas y clases que no se ofrecen en Riverside. Los estudiantes de secundaria se sentarán entre estudiantes universitarios y estudiantes adultos que han trabajado en diversas carreras durante muchos años.

“Tienes la oportunidad de trabajar con un montón de gente con la que realmente no trabajarías de otra manera,” dijo el estudiante de último año Landon Whittington, que está tomando varios cursos avanzados en Durham Tech.

“Tengo una clase en la que conviven en la misma habitación una persona de 15 años y otra de 68,” explica Delong.

“Es esa experiencia,” dijo Tevin Jones, enlace de Riverside con Durham Tech. “Están asistiendo a clases universitarias reales, impartidas por profesores universitarios. Están en clases con otros estudiantes de edad universitaria, por lo que están recibiendo esa experiencia ahora, por lo que si deciden ir a una escuela de cuatro años después, ya tendrán ese sabor de la vida universitaria.”

Jones ha trabajado con Riverside y varias otras escuelas secundarias desde el año 2020. Su trabajo es a partes iguales de consejero, asesor y coordinador, ya que consigue que los estudiantes se interesen y finalmente se matriculen en el programa dual.

Como se indica en el sitio web de DTCC, el programa ofrece tres ventajas significativas: rentabilidad, un camino acelerado a más grados y un camino sin fisuras para el aprendizaje más allá de

la escuela secundaria.

El sitio web también describe cómo la doble matriculación permite a los estudiantes tomar la iniciativa en su futuro, obtener créditos y ahorrar dinero cursando estudios universitarios a precios sustancialmente más bajos.

Esta oportunidad permite a los estudiantes acelerar su educación universitaria al tiempo que reducen el coste de la matrícula.

Esto puede permitir a los estudiantes menos favorecidos económicamente obtener títulos y créditos, abriendo estas clases avanzadas a quienes de otro modo no podrían permitírselas en una universidad de cuatro años, ya que el coste de la educación a través de la doble matrícula es significativamente inferior al de tomar las mismas clases en una universidad tradicional.

La rentabilidad de la matrícula dual reside en los créditos universitarios que los estudiantes pueden obtener mientras aún están en el instituto. Mientras que la matrícula dual ofrece matrícula gratuita y gastos comparativamente menores en transporte y materiales, el coste medio de un curso universitario en una universidad tradicional de dos y cuatro años cuesta cientos y miles de dólares, respectivamente. A través de la matrícula dual, los

estudiantes pueden obtener esos créditos sin costes de matrícula, y son transferibles a la mayoría de las universidades del estado, aparte de varias escuelas privadas, como Duke, Davidson y Wake Forest.

“Cuantos más créditos toma un estudiante, más dinero puede ahorrar potencialmente en el futuro,” dijo Jones. “Algunos terminarán ahorrando decenas de miles de dólares y eso es algo enorme para mucha gente.”

La accesibilidad monetaria de estas clases contribuye a la inclusividad de este programa, ya que proporciona clases de nivel universitario y créditos a una gama más amplia de los que pueden ser incapaces de pagar la matrícula de otras universidades.

“La matrícula gratuita es útil para los estudiantes que pueden ser disuadidos de ir a una escuela de cuatro años,” dijo Jones. “Puede ayudar a algunos estudiantes que hayan descartado la universidad por motivos económicos... y esa parte económica afecta, o puede afectar, a ciertos grupos más que a otros. Creo que ayuda a atraer a más estudiantes a la doble matriculación.”

“Algunas personas ni siquiera tienen dinero para la universidad de la comunidad y las clases, por lo que es una especie de ayuda a cabo que es libre en la escuela secundaria,” dijo Tam Delong, de último año, que está interesado en una carrera de soldadura y tomar clases en Durham tecnología para ganar su aprendizaje. La soldadura habría sido difícil de obtener sin la oportunidad de la

doble-matrícula, al menos hasta después de la escuela secundaria.

No sólo los créditos a menudo se transfieren a otras universidades, pero la presencia de clases de doble matrícula en una transcripción es visto muy positivamente por las admisiones universitarias, dando a estos estudiantes una ventaja durante el proceso de solicitud, también.

“La matrícula dual proporciona un camino sin fisuras hacia la universidad u otras instituciones de enseñanza superior, dando a los estudiantes una ventaja competitiva en la admisión a la universidad,” afirma el sitio web del DTCC.

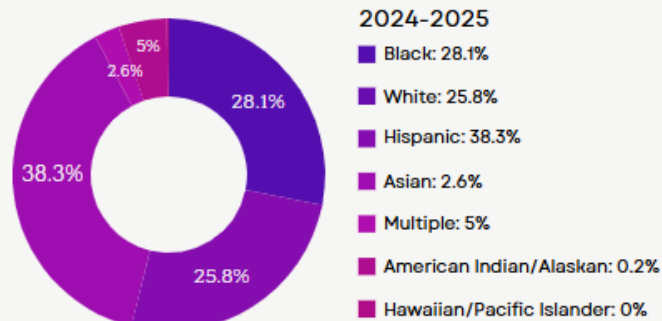
“Ofrece un puente entre la educación secundaria y la postsecundaria” afirma el sitio web del DTCC, “dando a los estudiantes una muestra de la vida universitaria y académica antes de comenzar oficialmente su viaje de educación superior.”

Como muchos estudiantes AP saben, los exámenes AP son una experiencia polarizadora, que a veces bloquea al estudiante de obtener su crédito. Sin embargo, en el plan de estudios del DTCC, una nota mínima del 70% equivale a un crédito obtenido.

Este sistema simplificado de créditos anima a muchos estudiantes a sustituir sus clases de AP por las de DTCC, ampliando el abanico de estudiantes que se matricularán en este programa.

“En Durham Tech, tienes casi garantizado obtener el crédito,” dijo el estudiante de tercer año Ben Slade, que optó por la doble matrícula en lugar de tomar varias clases AP. “En Riverside,

## RIVERSIDE ENROLLMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY



Source: DPS

si tomas un AP, tienes que obtener cierta calificación, y diferentes universidades requieren diferentes puntajes.”

Para obtener un crédito por una clase, los estudiantes de matrícula dual deben aprobar la clase con al menos una media de C. Para muchos, eso es más atractivo que tomar clases AP, que pueden contar para créditos universitarios por parte de ciertas universidades por calificaciones más bajas, pero aporatorias.

“Si la nota final es A, B o C, entonces se obtiene el crédito... y se puede transferir como crédito universitario,” dijo Jones. “Digamos que [un estudiante] no hizo lo mejor pero obtuvo una C, saben que obtuvieron crédito universitario, y crédito universitario que puede transferirse.”

Un surtido más amplio de clases avanzadas que Riverside, incluyendo STEM y vías técnicas, para que los estudiantes se especialicen en su interés en un campo, o tomen clases AP equivalentes.

“Pueden encontrar un camino que se alinee con sus objetivos profesionales [en DTCC],” dijo Jones.

“Hay más oportunidades porque hay una selección más amplia de clases,” dijo el senior Callista Robinson, que ha optado por tomar las estadísticas en Durham tecnología en lugar de en Riverside. “Algunos estudiantes pueden estar más seguros de tomar clases de inscripción dual, en lugar de clases de AP en Riverside.”

“Durham Tech es muy complaciente,” dijo Delong. “Ofrece muchas vías... Tiene cosas para todos

y puede ayudar a mucha gente.”

La combinación de matrícula gratuita, políticas favorables a los estudiantes para la obtención de créditos universitarios y la exposición a la educación superior ha creado un entorno más inclusivo que los programas académicos avanzados tradicionales. Una investigación de Pirates' Hook de 2022 descubrió que los estudiantes de color estaban infrarrepresentados en las clases avanzadas de secundaria, tanto en Durham como a nivel nacional.

“La diversidad es definitivamente diferente allí,” dijo el estudiante de último año Parker Collins, quien está tomando varias clases asincrónicas y cálculo en persona a través de la inscripción dual.

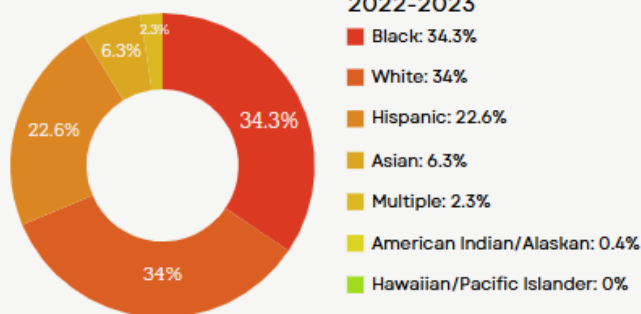
“Tenemos estudiantes PLTW que hacen matrícula dual para complementar sus cursos de ingeniería,” dijo. “Pero [también] tenemos muchos estudiantes en ese programa que tal vez hacen oficios como automoción, soldadura y HVAC. Eso atrae a estudiantes que no pensaban en cursos AP.”

Pero en última instancia, son las oportunidades de hacer lo que quieren después de la escuela secundaria que los estudiantes mencionaron la mayoría.

“Creo que las clases de Durham Tech probablemente me ayudarán a prepararme para la universidad,” dijo Reposá.

“Siento que me ha ayudado mucho. Me he puesto en contacto con algunos empleadores, y estoy ganando mucho más dinero que antes,” dijo Delong.

## DURHAM TECH ENROLLMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY



Source: EDNC

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