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Meet Two Exceptional Students Helping Promote Student Voice at Their School

Kimora and Rakiyah are both members of their Student Voice Committee and have also become great friends.

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Elementary School. They've both been at the school for three years. They're both members of their school's Student Voice Committee. And they're both off to a fantastic start this school year. In fact, eighth grade may be one of their strongest years yet academically and socially.

Their similarities have been the foundation of a successful friendship. Rakiyah sees Kimora as a great friend because she's a great listener and can be very therapeutic. And Kimora says that Rakiyah brings joy to her day by making her laugh even when she's feeling down.

Get to know both of them more below.

What are your interests both inside and outside of the classroom?

Rakiyah: Reading is the subject that sticks with me the most. When I'm in a quiet room and can focus on reading, I feel comfortable and like I can be myself. Right now, we're reading a Black Panther comic book that is difficult but is definitely a good book.

Outside of school, I'm a singer. I like to sing R&B the most and my favorite artist is Jhené Aiko.

Kimora: The subject I like the most would probably be math because I've always been better at math than any other subject. We're currently learning about slope. At first, it was confusing, but now I feel like I understand it because my teacher broke it down in a helpful way.

I like to paint when I'm not in school. I especially like painting animals. My favorite animals are dogs.

If we were to compare your current self with yourself three years ago, how would you be the same and how would you be different?

Kimora: I think I've mostly stayed the same, but I think I've gotten better in certain academic areas. I think I've grown in reading and math as well. One of the things I do is

but I'm much better at handling my stress than I used to.



How is Mahalia Jackson different from previous schools you attended?

Rakiyah: I see this school as a safe space. The teachers are different and the way we communicate at this school is different from my last school—in a good way.

Kimora: I really like this school. It's one of the best schools I've been to. We do a lot of activities such as field trips. The staff listens to our opinions. This focus on student voice is something I didn't really have before.

What is your biggest accomplishment of your eighth-grade year so far?

What advice would you give to future eighth-graders at Mahalia Jackson?

Rakiyah: Never give up. There were moments during my time here when I found school to be very challenging. But I kept going. Now that I'm so close to graduating, I feel like that really paid off. Even when you get stressed out, you always have a support system at the school.

Kimora: There may be hard times when you feel stressed, but you should always think of the positive stuff that's going to come because of your hard work. Everything that you've done is going to pay off in the end, so keep going.





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