

ROCKVILLE HIGH SCHOOL ANONYMOUS LETTER EXCHANGE - MARCH 23, 2017

On Thursday, March 16, 2017, two ESOL 1 students were arrested and charged with raping another student. On March 22, media reported threats to the school. On March 23, students in ESOL 4 came to school and wrote about what they were feeling. Students in AP English Language read and responded individually to their letters.



*Written by an ESOL 4 student:*

I think that the rape was a horrible thing in our school. But all people have to know that not all Latinos are the same. Some Latinos came to this country for more opportunities and to have a better life, despite all of these problems. Some teachers know us and they know how we are. It's not fair that just for the actions of two people, others are blaming all Latinos and discriminating against us. I hope that people's thoughts change and that they just see all of our good things.

*Written in response by an AP Lang student:*

Hi, I don't know you but I am so sorry you and the Latino community are being targeted. America is meant to be a nation with an accepting, diverse community. It's unfortunate that even in the present day we still have racist, ignorant people. No matter what anyone says you and the Latino community deserve as much respect as anyone else.

You should be proud of your culture and where you come from and those two people do not represent who you are. Whether you are in the United States legally or not, you deserve an education and someday I know you will do great things.

Don't let ignorant people get you down about who you are. I hope someday soon we will not have to deal with racial discrimination.

Thank you for being Rockville strong!

*Written by an ESOL 4 student:*

*I feel like it is unfair cause most of the people make things that Hispanics or immigrants do bigger than they are. And they don't call it like it used to be - just two people. They turn what we do into a race thing.*

*Written in response by an AP Lang student:*

*I completely agree. Everyone has blown the issue way out of proportion. The issue has nothing to do with the race of anyone involved, Hispanic or not. People were just looking for an excuse to bring up the topic of race and immigration. You are looking in the positive direction of the situation and are staying strong. Continue to do so and you will succeed in life. Stay strong, and stay Rockville strong.*

*Written by an ESOL 4 student*

*I'm feeling scared, sad, uncomfortable, angry, and mad. My suggestions are to check every backpack in the morning to see if someone has a gun and have more security and police outside of the building. I don't wanna come to school today because of the rumors and threats. NOT all the immigrants are bad. We only want to succeed in America. Help use to feel safe. I know you are trying but I'm still scared and I don't want to come to school anymore. I disagree about what happened last Thursday because of course I do. Now because of what these boys did, Americans, African-Americans, EVERYONE is blaming us and that's NOT fair. I love America and I love RHS and I pray to GOD for everyone. It doesn't matter if people don't love us. I'm still praying for them and for you.*

*Written in response by an AP Lang student*

*Dear person who wrote this,*

*As a Hispanic girl who was born here and lived here all my life, I can't say I fully understand what you are feeling. But all I can say is do not let what people think of us Latin/Hispanic affect you or your education. I understand it must be scary thinking that people hate us and want to harm us. The best thing we can do as a Hispanic community is rise above all the talk that it's the illegal immigrants fault. There is so much more that those people don't see. We are a great people and our parents came to America for us to have a better life than they did in their country. Yes, there could possibly be more that this school can do but they are still trying to keep all of us safe. People fear the unknown (what they they don't understand/know) and they don't understand us and our culture. They have focused on all the bad about us and our culture. But if we know none of it is true then that is all we need to have faith in that there is more good in this world and school.*

Written by an ESOL 4 student:

In this situation, I feel bad. Other people look at the immigrants like we are all criminals. So this is effecting the whole school.

Written by another ESOL 4 student:

All I can say is that no one has the right to judge someone else without knowing the truth.

Written in response by an AP Lang student:

I understand and agree. Nobody should be judged on something that someone else did. We are part of the whole of Rockville High School. Us, the Latinos/Hispanics should come together as one and show the community that we are not like everyone else. We are Rockville strong Latinos.

*Written by an ESOL 4 student:*

*I feel really bad about the sexual violation, the rape, that happened at the school last week because this was done by two Latino people. I think that this is not good for us because I am a Latino person in this school. American citizens have a bad concept about us because they think that we are bad people here.*

*Written in response by an AP Lang student:*

*I agree with you about how you feel. It does not mean that all Latinos are bad people, of course NOT. I am Latina too and I feel proud of my culture. American citizens know that not all Latinos are bad people. You know who you are and you can feel proud about yourself.*

Written by an ESOL 4 student:

I feel kind of bad because some people are blaming all Hispanics. They don't just judge the two Hispanics that that did it. They are talking like all Hispanics should get out of here. I feel bad because I think it's not our fault.

Written by an AP Lang student in response:

I completely agree. It's not fair for society to judge all Hispanic students for the actions of two rapists. People shouldn't judge an entire race because of the incident. Just stay strong and continue to be a great student. All the chaos will cool down eventually.

*Written by an ESOL 4 student:*

*I think we need more safety to prevent the weapons, drugs and every kind of violence in this world. I want to leave those bad things behind. America should be safe.*

*Written in response by an AP Lang student:*

*I agree with the fact that we do need more safety with the issues that we have and the actions that we take. Therefore, we, the new and uprising generation, should make a to the use of weapons and drugs for unnecessary reasons.*



*Written by an ESOL 4 student:*

*I feel sad about what is happening at Rockville High School because all people think that Latin people are dangerous. I just suggest that we all are not the same and some students, as I do, want to be professional. And we also study hard. So, I think we all students from Rockville High School should be together and stronger. Also we should support each other as a family.*

*Written by an AP Lang student in response:*

*I agree that we should be acting as a family and we can accomplish that by coming together as one school, one small community. I think that at this point, most, if not all students want to be professional and move on from the media and slowly reach a universal understanding that we can move on as a family.*

*Written by an ESOL 4 student:*

My feelings are sad because I see a lot of discrimination against Latinos just because two students did something bad. That could happen anywhere, in any country, by people of any race - not just by Latinos. Because I know a lot of cases of Black and White people that did rapes. I don't know why they are including all of us. If two students decided to do something bad, they have to be judged for their crimes and not include all of us. We are different. We are not the same. We have different thoughts. Nobody is the same. Each person is different.

*Written in response by an AP Lang student:*

*Dear whomever,*

*I am so sorry that you as well as many others think everyone is discriminating against Latinos for what occurred at our school. I want you to know and understand something; that there are people out there who don't discriminate against Latinos, I being one of them. I am sorry that there are people that are hurting you, insulting you, and punishing you for something that you didn't even do all because of the way that you look. What occurred here was not your fault or was not the fault of you or anyone else just because you are Latino. It was the fault of two guys who committed an awful crime. I hope that this gives you the answer that you were looking for.*

*Written by an ESOL 4 student:*

I think people are saying that Rockville High School is not good. But they are wrong. They are from other schools so they don't know how Rockville is. I think Rockville High School is strong and also better than other high schools.

*Written in response by an AP Lang student:*

Rockville is strong and ready to heal and move past this horrible tragedy that happened. To do that, we need the support of everyone, especially the Latino/Hispanic community. I would like to personally apologize for the hateful comments and remarks coming from those who don't know you or our school. We are happy you're here! We have just as much respect for you now as we did before this tragedy, maybe more and we are proud to have you here at Rockville High School. You have my full support if you need it.

*Written by an ESOL 4 student:*

*In my opinion, I think that the media shouldn't spread things about Rockville High School that are completely false. It is reasonable that Rockville High School attracts attention but it does not mean that anyone can make things up and define all Rockville students. Maybe we can define ourselves. And the media and other people should pay more attention to positive things that really make the whole community strong again. Instead of fear and worry, people should stay strong and take action to make America a better place.*

*Written in response by an AP Lang student:*

*I agree that the media has been here excessively and they are taking everything very seriously. Although, I do believe that they have just cause for being here because of what has occurred recently at Rockville. I do agree that defining the whole school based on the actions of a few is wrong and should not occur. As a whole, Rockville needs to stay strong and people need to think before they act. At this point in time, everyone needs to stick together and things will get better.*

Written by an ESOL 4 student:

People outside, parent, students and Rockville HS staff should understand that most of us Spanish students have a dream and a goal to make. No one has the same thoughts and ideas as others. That means that not all Spanish students will do something wrong or stupid that will affect their lives and their families. Some sacrifice themselves working and studying to be a good person and help their family. It is really unfair that all Spanish students have to suffer for others mistakes with discrimination and rejection. Latinos want a good future, just as Americans do. Not all of us will do bad things. Most of us will do great things here and everywhere.

Written in response by an AP Lang student:

It's ok. There are a lot of people that are not close minded. I believe that all immigrants that come here are here to have a better life. I agree with you that just because two people did something wrong, people should not judge a whole group of people. I'm happy that you are here at Rockville. I hope that the discrimination and rejection stops because that shouldn't be tolerated here. Rockville High School should be a safe place for everyone and that includes you. I hope things get better for you and that there are people who care.