



Written by [Larry Elder](#) on March 18, 2021

Top High Schools Scrap Merit-Based Admission; Will the 'Woke' NBA Follow?

San Francisco's Lowell High School is one of the top public high schools in California. Beginning with its 2021 freshman class, Lowell plans to switch from a merit-based admission system to that of a lottery.

How good is Lowell? It ranked 68th nationwide by U.S. News last year.

About the school's reputation for academic excellence, The San Francisco Unified School District website says: "(Lowell) has been recognized 4 times as a National Blue Ribbon School, 8 times as a California Distinguished School, and one time as a Gold Ribbon School. Lowell has been consistently ranked #1 in the Western Region for the number of Advanced Placement Exams given."



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How did students get admitted to Lowell? The SFUSD website still says: "Admission to Lowell is competitive and merit-based, serving students from throughout the city who demonstrate academic excellence and are motivated to pursue a rigorous college preparatory program."

About 60% of the student body is Asian, 18% white and 1.8% Black. This is apparently a problem and explains why the SFUSD recently unanimously voted to admit students via this lottery system.

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According to The Wall Street Journal, the "problem" is Asian American excellence: "One school board commissioner, Alison Collins, has called merit-based admissions 'racist.' The real problem progressives have with Lowell is that too many Asian-Americans are passing the entrance exam."

This brings us to Thomas Jefferson High School of Science and Technology in Fairfax, Virginia, often the top-rated public high school in the country. TJ also plans to drop their admissions test and are debating on how to replace it. The problem? Over 70% of the student body is Asian American. Fairfax County Public School Board Superintendent Scott Brabrand proposed a "merit-based" lottery for 400 of the 500 spots in the school's classes. About that alternative, The Washington Post said: "The lottery proposal spurred controversy from the moment Brabrand introduced it on Sept. 15. He promised it would cause TJ's student body — which is more than 70% Asian and about 20% white, with single-digit percentages of Black and Hispanic students — to more closely resemble the demographics of Fairfax County."

So much for merit. So much for a colorblind society.

Let's assume that Lowell and TJ's competitive merit-based admissions policy resulted in a student-body population that is predominately Black, as is the case with the National Basketball Association. In 2020, the league that prides itself on its racial "wokeness" consisted of 81% Black players and 18% white



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players. In the NFL, in 2019, approximately 59% of players were Black. As to Major League Baseball, UPI, in 2019, wrote: “By 2017, 27.4 percent of MLB players were Latinos, according to the date compiled by the Society of American Baseball Research.” This is roughly 50% more than percentage of the population of Latinos in America.

To correct for these “racial imbalances ” and the “underrepresentation” of some groups, suppose professional sports organizations decided, like Lowell High, to use a lottery system? The new rules would prevent the Black player-heavy NBA, the Black player-heavy NFL and the Latino-heavy MLB from drafting the best college players, provided, of course, they had the misfortune of being born Black or Latino.

In 2012, Pew Research Center polled Asian Americans and asked their reaction to the statement, “Most people who want to get ahead can make it if they’re willing to work hard.” Sixty-nine percent of Asian Americans agreed, as opposed to 58% of the general population. Pew explained: “Compared with the general public, Asian Americans stand out for their success in education and career. Most also believe that the U.S. offers more opportunities and freedoms than their countries of origin. A large majority of Asian Americans believe that hard work pays off and most place a strong emphasis on higher education, career and family.”

Why punish the best college players because “too many” Blacks excel in sports? Why punish Asian American students for the crime of working hard and outperforming others academically?

Ask the San Francisco Unified School District and Fairfax County Public School Board.

Larry Elder is a bestselling author and nationally syndicated radio talk show host. His latest book, The New Trump Standard, is available in paperback from Amazon.com and for Nook, Kindle, iBooks and GooglePlay. To find out more about Larry Elder, or become an “Elderado,” visit www.LarryElder.com. Follow Larry on Twitter @LarryElder. To read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com.

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