



Written by [James Murphy](#) on October 7, 2022

Massachusetts High School Production Seems to Prohibit White Students From Participating

A Massachusetts high school has scheduled a student production that prohibits participation along racial lines. “Lost and Found: Our Stories as People of Color” is set to premiere in January 2023 — with a completely non-white cast.

The [performance](#) is being put on by Theatre Ink — described as “Newton North High School’s Teaching and Working Theatre.” The organization’s audition packet describes the show as “a safe community space for students of color to explore and [sic] express themselves through the performing arts.”



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Created two years ago by an alumnus of the school, the show will be a “compilation of original and published poems, songs, monologues, and scenes,” and the “goal of the process and show is to provide a space for students to express themselves and tell their stories through the performing arts.”

“From hardships to celebrations, people of color have countless stories to tell. Lost and Found will be a reserved safe space for this exploration and for people of color to be vulnerable and support one another,” the packet states.

White students are apparently not allowed, as Theatre Ink states that the show is a “no-cut, cabaret-style show for students of color at North.”

Fox News reports that the website for Theatre Ink has a link directly to the neo-Marxist group Black Lives Matter on its home page.

A parents’ rights group called [Parents Defending Education](#) (PDE) is lodging a [complaint](#) with the Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights, claiming that the production is “in violation of both Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ... and the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.”

The production’s audition packet calls for students of color to try out, share their stories, and learn about other cultures. “We encourage you, even if you haven’t participated in Theatre Ink in the past, to audition, as the show will be a collection of stories from all different backgrounds, cultures, and identities.” Unfortunately for white students, their stories are not welcome.

There may, however, be a carve-out for white students who are LGBTQ, as the sign-up sheet does ask for preferred pronouns.

In addition, the audition packet specifically asks students how they “identify racially/ethnically.”

According to PDE’s complaint:

Newton North High School is sponsoring a performance of a show, “Lost and Found: Our



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Stories as People of Color,” on January 19-21, 2023. The performance’s tag line is “Time and time again, the stories of people of color are swept under the rug and lost. It’s about time we found them.”

The complaint notes that the need for a “headshot” in the audition packet would seem to confirm that the production’s directors are only looking for a certain type:

In addition, the application to register for an audition slot requests a headshot (“You can take a selfie with a phone if you choose”), which appears to reinforce the identity-based nature of this event; furthermore, it asks students how they “identify racially/ethnically.”...

The performance description does not assert that participation in this performance is open to all.

Perhaps this is all a big misunderstanding owing to extremely poorly written sign-up materials for the production.

Or maybe it’s just as the audition packet and performance overview state — a performance endorsed by a public school system in which some students are prohibited from participating because of their race.





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