

1 [Commending Lowell High School Black Student Union]

2 **Resolution Commending Lowell High School's Black Student Union for their courage,**
3 **excellence, and leadership in speaking out against the discrimination experienced by the**
4 **school's African American students.**

5 WHEREAS, Lowell High School is a nationally recognized and revered public institution for its
6 academic rigor and excellence; and

7 WHEREAS, the African-American population at Lowell has been historically underrepresented,
8 never exceeding three percent for the past fifteen years¹, even though African-Americans make up ten
9 percent of the current San Francisco Unified School District population²; and

10 WHEREAS, in November 2015, the Lowell "Senior Pop Polls" survey included a derogatory
11 category of recognition titled "Most Ratchet" that was eventually removed by the Lowell Senior Class
12 Board due to complaints from the parents of African-American students³; and

13 WHEREAS, in February 2016, the school's African-American students witnessed, for a week,
14 an unpermitted display case that depicted racist photos ridiculing Black History Month⁴; and

15 WHEREAS, the Lowell Black Student Union, in response to the above incidents and numerous
16 other insensitive situations in their daily lives at school, dedicated their time and energy to compile a
17 list of demands aimed at improving the experience of all African-Americans at Lowell; and

18 WHEREAS, among the demands listed include a diverse staff, mandatory ethnic studies
19 classes, mandatory cultural sensitivity trainings, a full-time African-American recruitment officer and an
20 African-American Community Center at Lowell; and

21 WHEREAS, co-president Tsia Nicole, co-president Jackie Scott and vice-president Chrislyn
22 Earle led the Black Student Union to take action and encouraged their supporters to do the same; and

¹ CA Dept. of Education Educational Demographics Unit, "School Enrollment by Ethnicity," in *CDE DataQuest*.

² SFUSD, "Student Ethnic Representation," infographic.

³ Li, "Finding Equity, Part 1."

⁴ Schmidt, "Black History Month controversy."

1 WHEREAS, the Lowell Black Student Union organized a walkout on behalf of Lowell’s African-
 2 American students to raise awareness about the microaggressions and cultural insensitivity that
 3 African American students experience⁵; and

4 WHEREAS, they submitted their demands to the Lowell High School administration and San
 5 Francisco Unified School District in an effort to galvanize real change at school; and

6 WHEREAS, they found the courage to speak up about the unfair treatment they received
 7 despite having been ignored when they previously did so; therefore be it

8 RESOLVED, that the 2015-2016 San Francisco Youth Commission does hereby honor and
 9 commend Lowell High School’s Black Student Union for their exceptional leadership and bravery in
 10 standing up and demanding better treatment of African-Americans at Lowell; and further be it

11 RESOLVED, the Youth Commission supports and applauds Lowell’s African-American
 12 students for continuing to excel in all aspects of their lives and for continuing to strive towards systemic
 13 improvements in their communities.

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 18 Chair, Luis Avalos-Nunez
 19 Adopted on March 21, 2016
 20 2015-2016 San Francisco Youth Commission

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⁵ Schmidt, “WATCH: The Black Student Union’s demands.”