Commissioning Lowell High School Black Student Union

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

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

WHEREAS, the African-American population at Lowell has been historically underrepresented, never exceeding three percent for the past fifteen years\(^1\), even though African-Americans make up ten percent of the current San Francisco Unified School District population\(^2\); and

WHEREAS, in November 2015, the Lowell “Senior Pop Polls” survey included a derogatory category of recognition titled “Most Rachet” that was eventually removed by the Lowell Senior Class Board due to complaints from the parents of African-American students\(^3\); and

WHEREAS, in February 2016, the school’s African-American students witnessed, for a week, an unpermitted display case that depicted racist photos ridiculing Black History Month\(^4\); and

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

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

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

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\(^1\) 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.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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