



Are Asians Considered White?

Asians Are Not An Advantage to White People's Success Academically

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Photo Credit: Sam Balye

ASIAN STUDENTS ARE NOW academically classified as “white” in a Washington school district to even out the data for disappointing results from the white students.

In a 2020 article by NextShark, Carl Samson quotes the North Thurston Public Schools (NTPS) officials, “One of the outcomes we are working towards in this goal is to have an increased growth rate of underperforming groups eliminating achievement and opportunity gaps.” Now that the “underperforming” students of color are excelling, the white students are now considered “underperforming” because their academic results were not admirable. By putting the two together, the graph “evened out” the data from the students of color as shown in the original article.

Ashley Kim, a Korean American states, “I, personally, feel like the decision the Washington school district made was one that was founded in the perpetuation that Asian folks are not individuals of color. It feels disrespectful, irrational, and confusing ... there is a danger in lumping student success and removing credit to certain communities.” By taking away student success, it also takes away future opportunities for those students affected by this sudden change.

Elizabeth Peura, who has European roots in German and Poland shares, “It bothers me that enough people in this world still hold such generalizations based on race that would allow something like this to get enacted. It just proves time and time again that we still

have a ways to go in regards to our perception and understanding of people different from ourselves.” Why are people of color still looked down on but lifted up for the benefit of others, especially for white people? Choosing Asians to be part of the white community for academic reasons shows the stereotypical mindset of

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the Washington school district’s officials. The graph in NextShark’s article clearly shows how well the other students of color are doing because the gap between them and the “white/Asians” are not that far apart. To take away the Asian students’ right to be proud of their color and to excel in their education journey is unfair.

However, though NextShark’s article merges Asian and White students, one of the best Ivy League Schools does not want to combine, but rather basically remove the waitlist for all Asian applicants. In a 2019

article by Forbes, Harvard took that opportunity away from students wanting to enroll but get rejected, just like the Washington school district and how the students of color experienced, as quoted in the article, “persistent opportunity gaps.” Asian students are wanted to equalize the data between Whites and students of color but are rejected from the Ivy League because their personality was not what Harvard was looking for.

Evan Gerstmann, Senior Contributor of Forbes quotes, “They must be aware of the various stereotypes of Asian Americans as ‘grinds’ and math geeks who lack personality. The burden should be on Harvard to prove that such stereotypes are not at play here.” Many Asian students are skyrocketing in their education and yet whether they may or may not have a plain personality was the deciding factor in whether they are accepted or rejected from Harvard.

Kim adds, “It is important to not merge Asian students with white students academically because accurate data is necessary. It removes the experience of Asian students and removes any opportunity to share their stories and their triumphs... Asian folks are still individuals of color and are fighting an uphill battle for equitable treatment and opportunities.” The Washington school district and Harvard were discriminating. These unfortunate events discouraged the Asian students during that time but the people behind them will have learned from this and will be more successful and proud of their ethnicities.