

## In the Name of Equity

December 29, 2022

Last year, I [noted](#) complaints by Virginia officials about the [high proportion](#) of Asian students attending Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. These students studied too *hard*, supposedly.

Now we learn that TJ High administrators have been [conniving to prevent](#) students who won National Merit awards, issued for excelling on the [PSAT](#), from being informed of this. Principal Ann Bonitatibus and another official, Brandon Kosatka, have been memory-holing the notifications for years.

***Kosatka told a parent that the idea was to “recognize students for who they are as individuals, not focus on their achievements . . .***

You can't report having won a National Merit award on a college application if you just don't know.

The policy is consistent with the Fairfax County school district's ugly new [Harrison-Bergeronesque](#) ideal of “[equal outcomes for every student, without exception](#).”



Kosatka told a parent that the idea was to “recognize students for who they are as individuals, not focus on their achievements,” a nonsensical proposition. Individuals don't just sit around being themselves; they do stuff. Kosatka also said that the principal didn't want to hurt the feelings of non-winners of the Merit awards by acknowledging winners.

Bonitatibus and Kosatka should be fired — at least. Their job is to help students achieve, not to undercut them.

We'll never rid the world entirely of [resentment against achievement](#) — or, for that matter, the benefits that flow from achievement. But we can teach kids that the proper response to disappointment at doing less than their best is to resolve to do better at the next opportunity.

And to be inspired — *not*, heaven forfend, *demoralized* — by the heights that others do achieve.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.