

Principal Holds Up Student Election Results Because Winners Not Diverse Enough

There's a big election controversy at a California middle school after the principal discovered that not enough black or Latino students were elected to office.

Principal Lena Van Haren's decision to withhold the results of the student government elections angered parents and students at Everett Middle School in San Francisco.

"It's not okay for a school that is really, really diverse to have the student representatives majority white," she told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "The easy thing would have been to announce the results and move on. I intentionally did not choose the easy way because this is so important."

According to the newspaper, there were no "English learners" among the winners. I'm assuming that's what they're calling kids who don't speak a lick of English these days.

Black and Latino students were underrepresented, as well.

There were no allegations of voter intimidation or voter fraud. There were no reports of hanging chads. And there were no incidents involving ballot boxes that malfunctioned. So what was the problem?

The problem, it appears, is that the principal didn't like who got the most votes. In other words—too many white kids got elected.

For the record, white, Asian and mixed-race students were the highest vote getters, the newspaper reported.

The principal held the election results for more than a

week—and then sent a note to parents about how to have a more representative government.

“This is complex, but as a parent and a principal, I truly believe it behooves us to be thoughtful about our next steps here so we have a diverse student council that is truly representative of all voices at Everett,” she wrote in a message to moms and dads.

So the principal seems to think that boys and girls should vote for representatives based on the color of their skin and not the content of their character?

“I feel like it is disrespectful to all the people who were running,” student Sebastian Kaplan told television station KRON. “The whole school voted for those people, so it is not like people rigged the game, but in a way—now it is kind of being rigged.”

The principal defended her un-American behavior by explaining that she just wanted to promote diversity.

“This is middle school—it’s not a presidential election,” she said. “It was not about hurting democracy or putting diversity over democracy.”

The school district called the entire electoral mess a “learning opportunity.”

And it should be a learning opportunity. I hope Principal Van Haren will immediately enroll in a Civics class and a U.S. Government class.

Meanwhile, school administrators are meeting later this week to consider how to get more non-white kids involved in politics. One idea, the principal suggested, is to just add more student government positions.

Now that sounds like something the federal government would do.

Principal Van Haren told the *Chronicle* that she just wants everyone's voice to be heard. But that doesn't make sense to kids like Sebastian.

"The organizers are saying things like, 'we want everyone's voice to be heard,' but in truth, the voters' voices are not being heard," the seventh grader told KRON.

Sorry, Sebastian. But in today's progressive America—diversity trumps democracy.