



SFUSD High School Culture/Climate Survey Data Analysis

February 8, 2021

Prepared by volunteers

Executive Summary

• Motivation

- The hate speech incident at Lowell in January and the resultant pain felt by Black Lowell students are deeply upsetting for all of San Francisco.
- Many within the Lowell community were surprised and saddened to see the Board of Education propose a fast-track permanent change to merit-based admissions at Lowell in rapid response to this incident, with no research or analysis to support the change in policy.
- The rationale listed in support of the Board's [proposal](#) to change Lowell admissions includes the assertions that: (1) the Lowell admissions process has created a school that does not reflect the diversity of the SFUSD student population, and (2) this lack of reflection of the SFUSD's diversity has led to a culture problem particularly problematic at Lowell.
- Working independently, several Lowell parents discovered that SFUSD collects annual Culture/Climate survey data for each high school. This represents standardized, systemwide data that can be analyzed to understand better how the culture of each school is perceived by students of various demographic categories.
- Families for SF is presenting an initial analysis of this data. We are sharing this document with the School Board and the broader public to foster greater understanding of demographic data and student experience across SFUSD high schools.
- We would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with the School Board, and the parents who prepared this analysis have indicated they would be willing to volunteer their time to help the School Board further analyze SFUSD data so that policy regarding school culture can be informed by the school Culture/Climate data SFUSD collects.

• Methodology

- All data work done by parents of Lowell students.
- SFUSD Culture/Climate data manually entered into a Google document from the pdf reports at <https://www.sfusd.edu/school-data-reports>.
- Graphs constructed from Google document at: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/e/2PACX-1vQcnbxX3zFpDpNokJDa_bCGD9yveP4154lJ-q1MOMj_X4GvfbFhNN576yTw3hhKPLQUCBNUGL6tLXde/pubhtml#.
- This Culture/Climate analysis focuses on the four demographic categories (African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, White) as defined by SFUSD because of the groups highlighted in [Resolution 212-2A1](#), these had sufficient data for a one-year analysis (2018-2019, the latest academic year available) across most high schools; a more complete analysis should cover all demographic categories over multiple years.

• Initial Observations

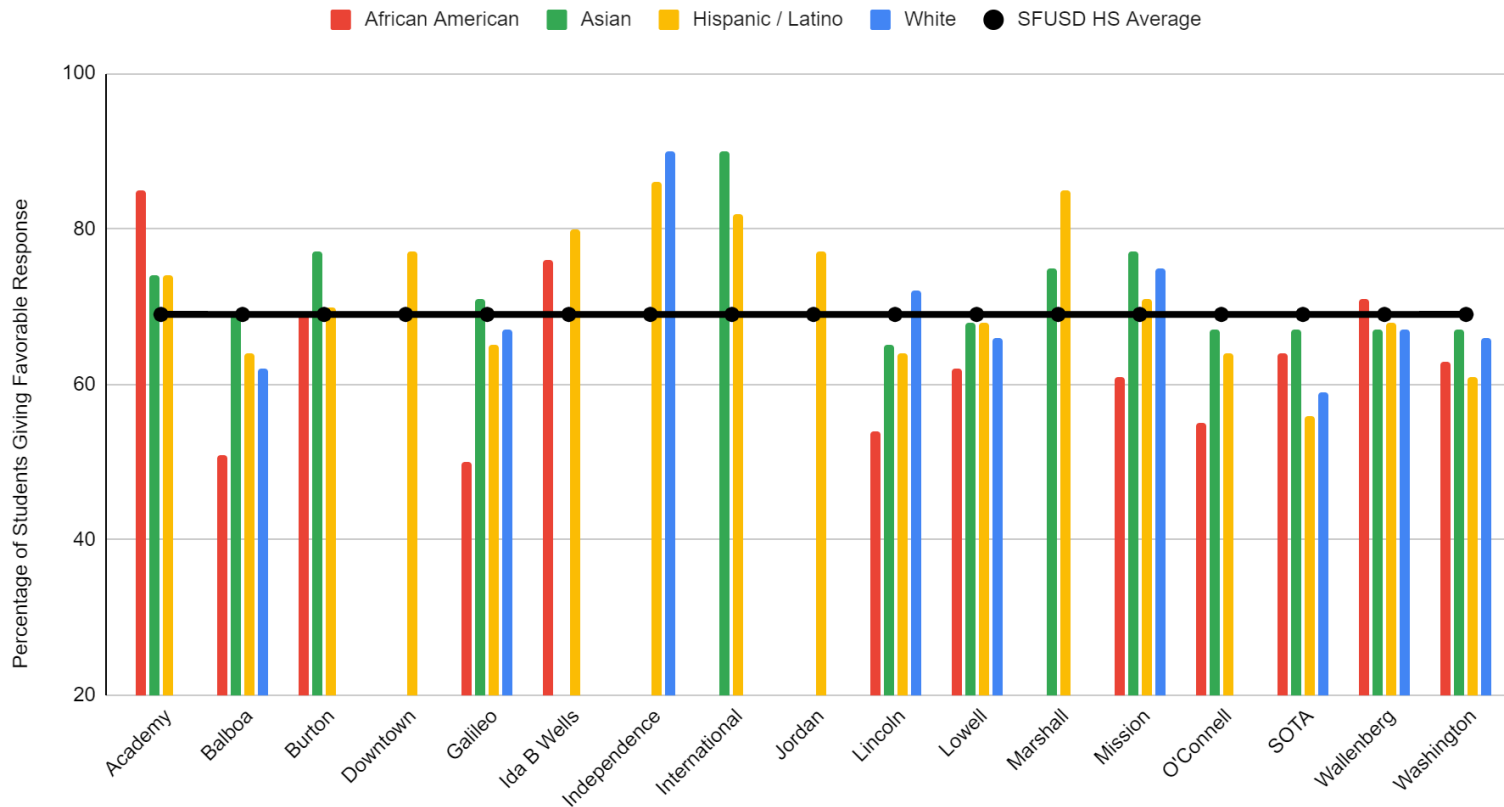
- African American students report Culture/Climate scores that are lower than the SFUSD HS average score at the majority of high schools in all four categories.
- Lowell's Student Culture/Climate scores are relatively close (whether above or below) to the SFUSD HS average score across demographic categories, except for Sense of Belonging as reported by African American students.
- African American students report significantly lower score for Sense of Belonging at Lowell than most other SFUSD high schools; only O'Connell and Galileo score lower.
- Most SFUSD high schools have significant overrepresentation and underrepresentation by demographic category.
- Lowell falls in the middle of overall demographic imbalance.

Climate of Support for Academic Learning: Students and teachers feel that there is a climate conducive to learning and that teachers use supportive practices, such as: encouragement and constructive feedback; varied opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills; support for risk-taking and independent thinking; atmosphere conducive to dialog and questioning and academic challenge; and individual attention to support differentiated learning

Climate of Support for Academic Learning

All SFUSD High Schools; select student subgroups

Academic Year 2018-2019



Observations

- The chart measures percent of student respondents with an overall favorable response
- Little variation among demographic categories at Lowell
- Low scores among African American students at Balboa, Galileo, Lincoln and O'Connell

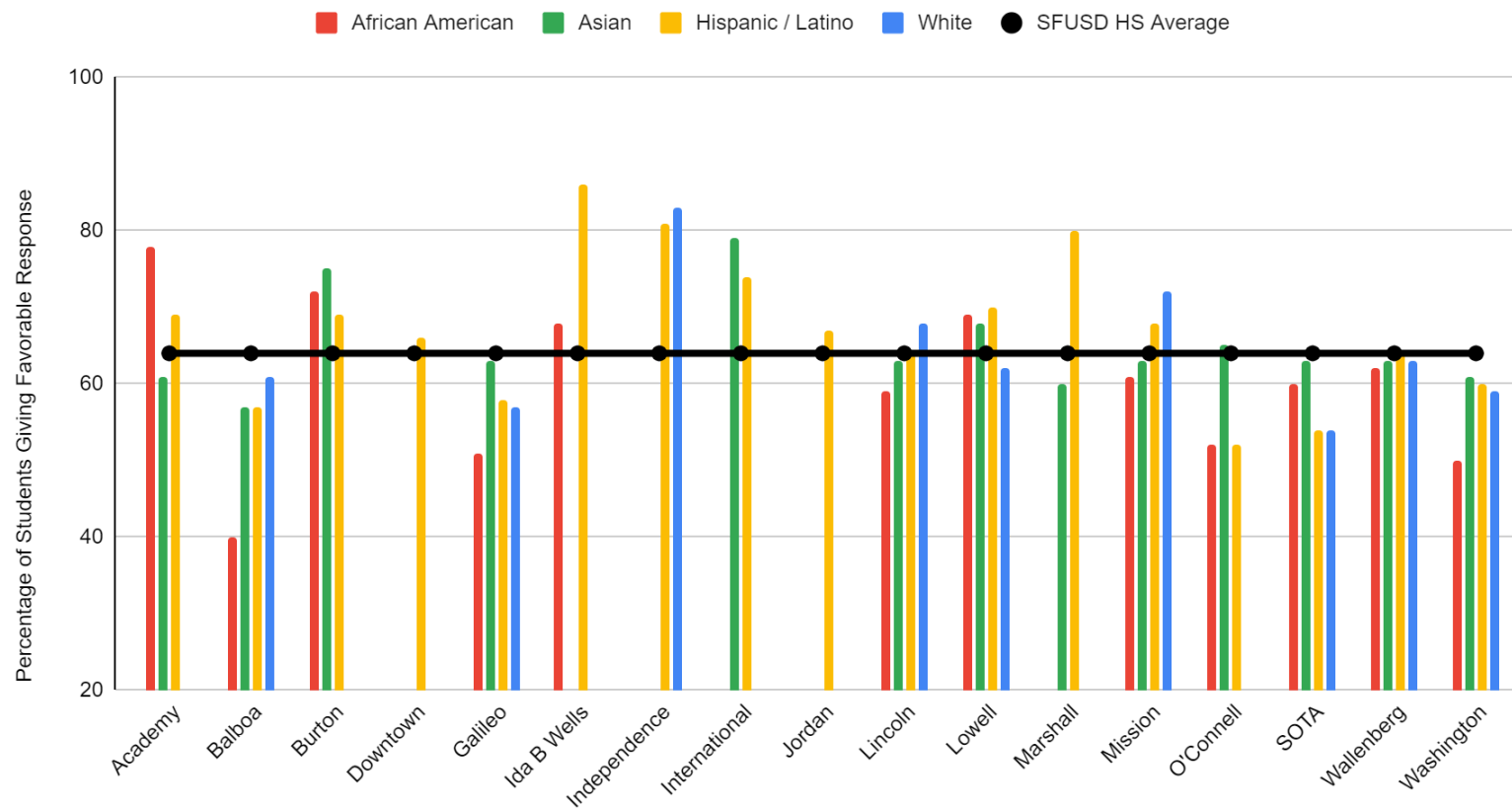
Note: Some demographic categories for certain schools not present in SFUSD source documents because SFUSD does not publish data for subgroups with fewer than 21 students

Knowledge and Fairness of Discipline, Rules and Norms: Clearly communicated rules and expectations about student and adult behavior, especially regarding physical violence, verbal abuse or harassment, and teasing; clear and consistent enforcement and norms for adult intervention

Knowledge and Fairness of Discipline, Rules and Norms

Academic Year 2018-2019

All SFUSD High Schools; select student subgroups



Observations

- The chart measures percent of student respondents with an overall favorable response
- Little variation among demographic categories at Lowell
- Low scores among African American students at Balboa, Galileo, O'Connell and Washington

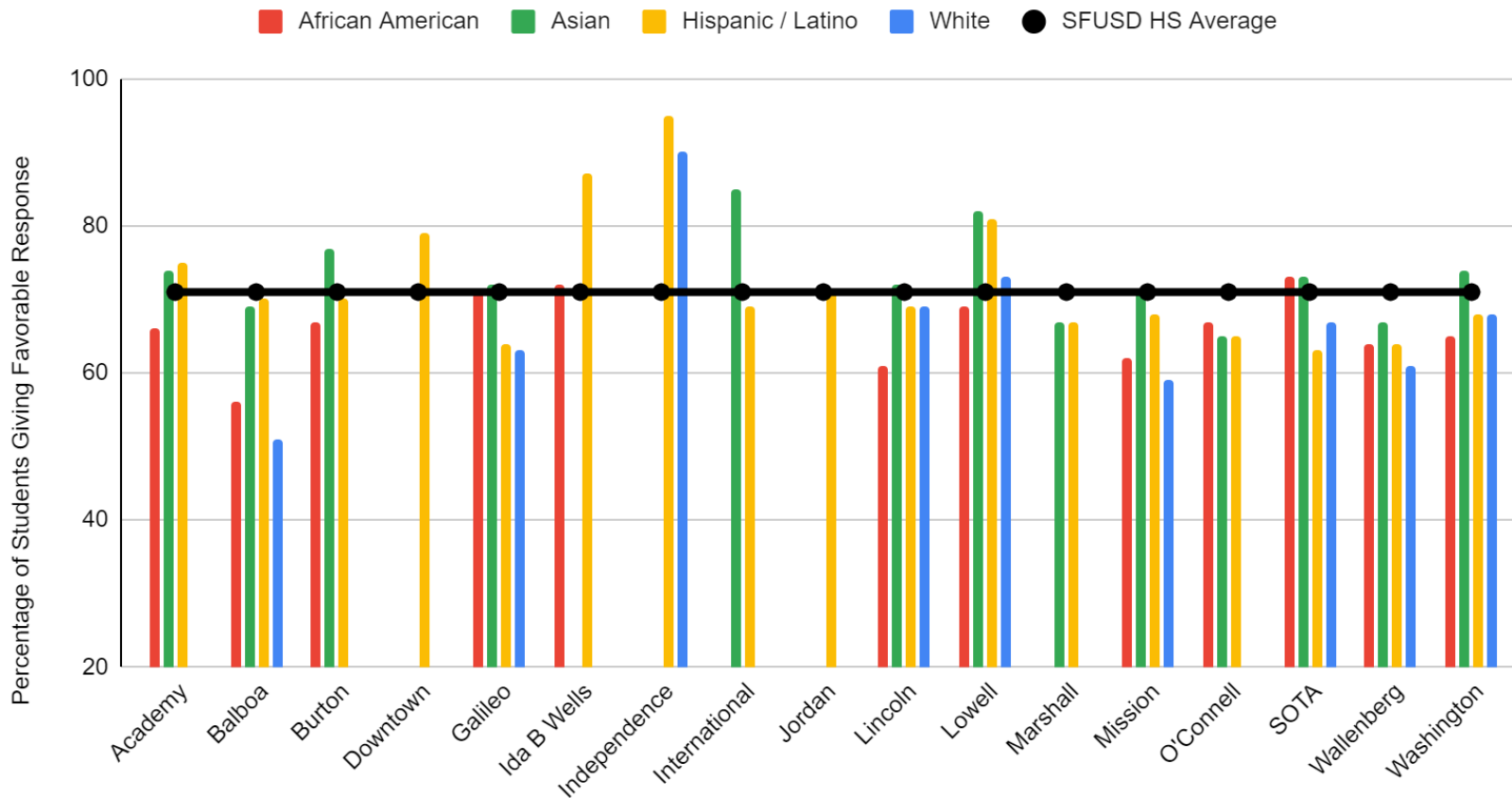
Note: Some demographic categories for certain schools not present in SFUSD source documents because SFUSD does not publish data for subgroups with fewer than 21 students

Sense of Safety: Students and adults report feeling safe from verbal abuse, teasing, or exclusion by others in the school

Sense of Safety

Academic Year 2018-2019

All SFUSD High Schools; select student subgroups



Observations

- The chart measures percent of student respondents with an overall favorable response
- Students appear to feel relatively safe at Lowell compared to many SFUSD high schools, although African American students report the lowest sense of safety among demographic subgroups at Lowell with scores slightly below the SFUSD HS average
- Low scores among African American students at Balboa
- Sense of Safety is the only Culture/Climate category where there is no school at which the score for African American students is significantly above the SFUSD HS average

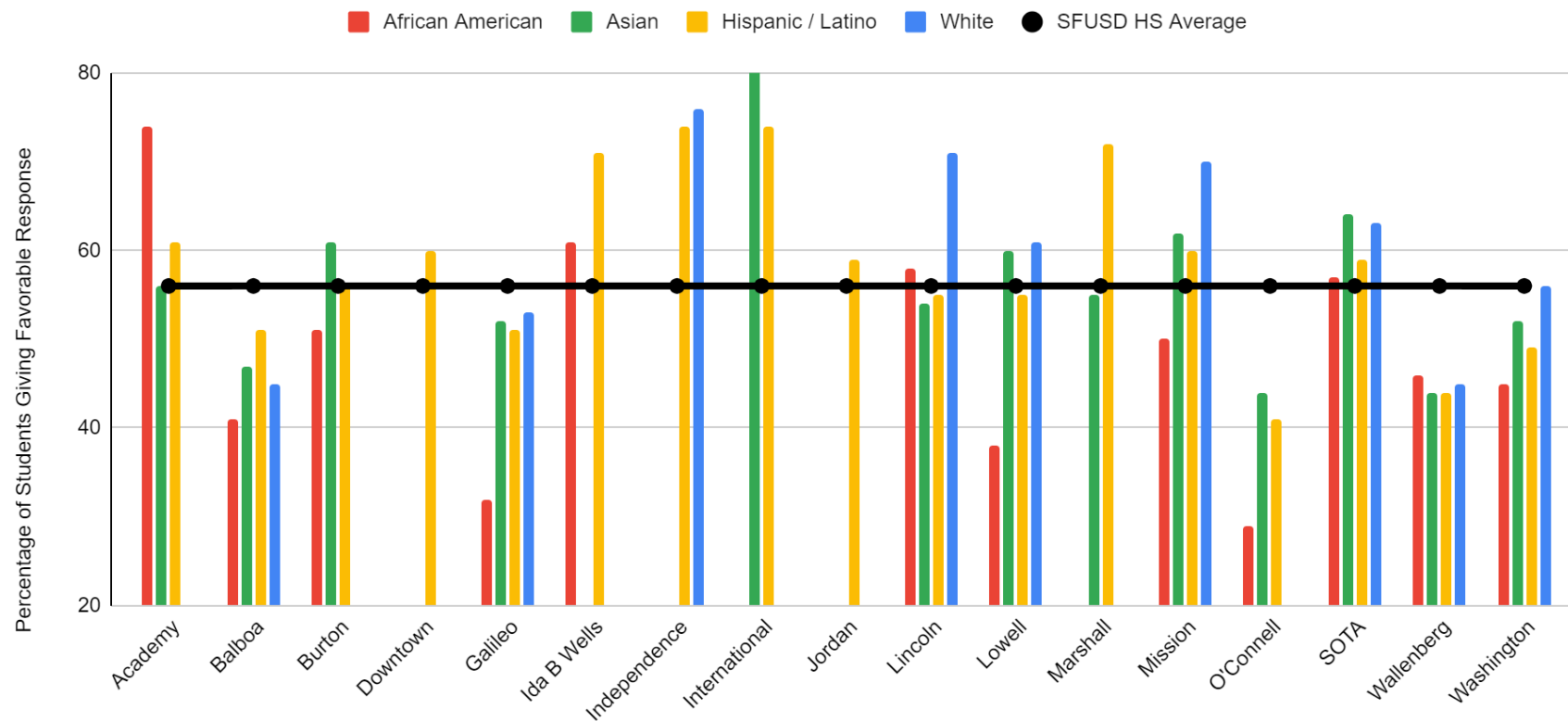
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Sense of Belonging (school connectedness): a positive sense of being accepted, valued, and included, by others (teachers and peers) in all school settings. Students and parents report feeling welcome at the school

Sense of Belonging (Connectedness to School)

Academic Year 2018-2019

All SFUSD High Schools; select student subgroups



Observations:

- The chart measures percent of student respondents with an overall favorable response
- Sense of Belonging has the lowest mean score across all high schools of the four culture categories
- Sense of Belonging appears to be the culture category with the greatest deviation from the mean across high schools
- African American students at Lowell report much lower sense of belonging than other demographic categories
- Significantly low scores among African American students also notable at Balboa, Galileo and O'Connell
- Low scores among African American students also at Wallenberg, Washington and Mission (especially compared to other demographic categories)

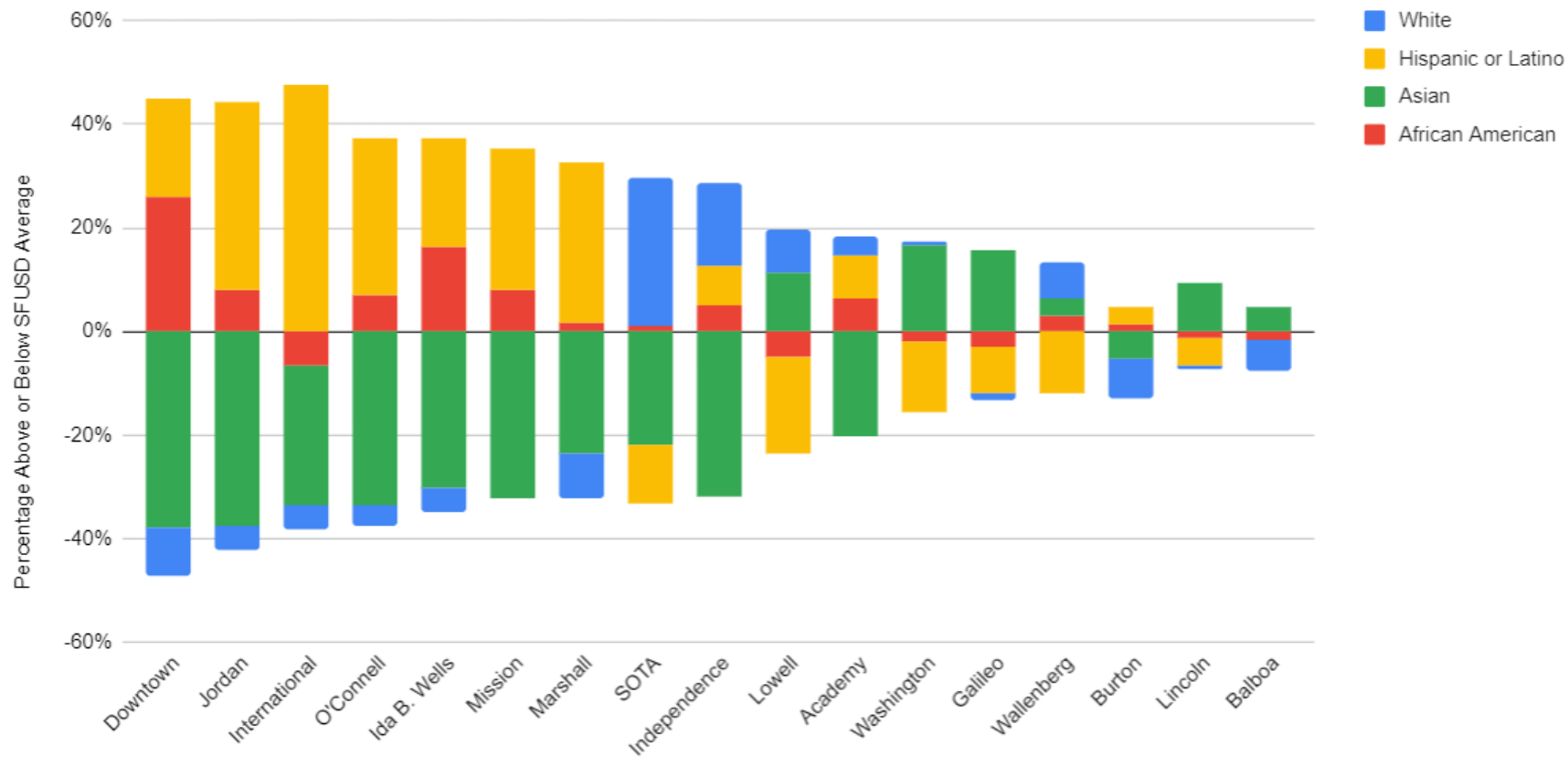
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Demographic Category Breakdown for SFUSD High Schools: Same Four Categories as Culture/Climate Survey Analysis

Academic Year 2019-2020

Each SFUSD High School Has Significant Overrepresentation and Underrepresentation of Demographic Subgroups

Subgroup size at school minus subgroup size in SFUSD, sorted from most unbalanced to least (Positive numbers indicate over-representation)



Observations:

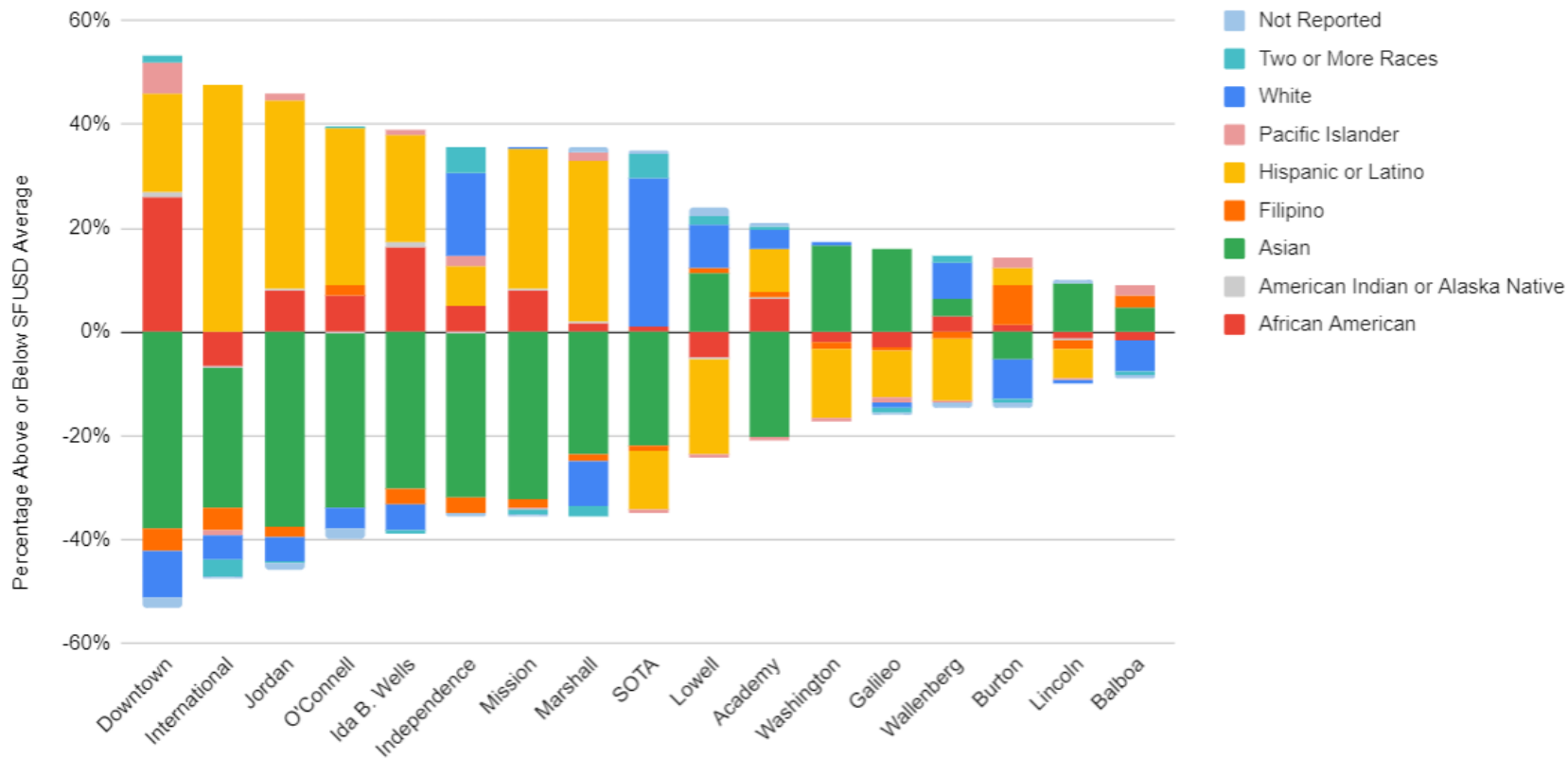
- The chart measures the number of percentage points each high school is higher or lower per demographic category relative to student representation across all SFUSD high schools
 - Example:* The red bar for Lowell is at -5% because African Americans comprise 6.8% of all SFUSD high school students but only 1.8% of all students at Lowell
- The schools are sorted in descending order, left to right, from most imbalanced to least imbalanced
- Most SFUSD high schools have significant demographic imbalance
- Lowell's demographic imbalance falls in the middle of all SFUSD high schools

Demographic Category Breakdown for SFUSD High Schools: All Categories

Academic Year 2019-2020

Each SFUSD High School Has Significant Overrepresentation and Underrepresentation of Demographic Subgroups

Subgroup size at school minus subgroup size in SFUSD, sorted from most unbalanced to least (Positive numbers indicate over-representation)



Observations:

- This chart is the same as on the previous page, except that it includes every single category reported by SFUSD
- This chart gives a complete picture of the demographic representation of each SFUSD high school relative to all students at all SFUSD overall
- Most SFUSD high schools have significant demographic imbalance
- Lowell's demographic imbalance falls in the middle of all SFUSD high schools