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A Look at the Top Ten Percent Plan Debate

May 13, 2009

Texas policymakers are considering whether or not to water-down the Texas Top Ten Percent plan. The Top Ten Percent plan has expanded access to Texas' top universities to more diverse students and to more high schools. The measures under consideration would place caps on the number of top students who would be guaranteed admission. This would cut the number of automatic admissions by as many as 15,000 students and impact all high schools in Texas.

The Top Ten Percent Plan is Working

The Texas Top Ten Percent Plan is doing what it was intended to do, helping to increase the number and diversity of students applying for and enrolling in Texas colleges and universities. It also has helped more students get admitted into the state's best universities, and increased the number of high schools that are sending their students to the state's top institutions.

A Small but Influential Group of People are the Ones Who are Asking for Changes

A small number of influential families and schools in wealthy areas whose students do not make it to the top 10 percent of their graduating class think that their children are more deserving of college admission to the state's top universities than "other people's children" and "other" schools. They have joined forces with UT Austin, whose complaint about the Top Ten Percent Plan is that too many of the top students are taking up too many admission spaces, giving the university less power to make those decisions on its own, using whatever criteria a few university officials prefer.

There Are Ways to Address Current Concerns Without Destroying Our Progress or Breaking Promises to High-Achieving High School Students

The current proposals to decrease the impact of the Top Ten Percent Plan's all require limiting the number of Top Ten Percent students who can be offered automatic admission. This is the wrong approach. There are more reasonable ways to give UT Austin the admission slots that it is demanding.

For example, UT Austin could admit more students. Policymakers have invited Texas colleges and universities to request the resources they would need to serve additional students. Our state needs more college graduates. Once enrolled in college, Top Ten Percent students are more likely to graduate than their peers.

More Information is Available Online

Go to http://www.idra.org/Education_Policy.htm/ to learn more. You also can see how many students from your high school could be denied automatic admission.