

to former president George W. Bush's efforts after Katrina. Obama worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and its workers to start helping affected areas the day after the

today's problems with an effective federal government and a practical view of what lies ahead. Then we can start to solve the many environmental problems we have caused, before it's too late.

are unemployed. American manufacturing needs to become what it once was. The government has placed too strict emis-

climate is falling apart, while less than 4.5 percent of the world's population resides in the United States?

editorial

Looking for the true diversity at OPRF

Liberal and Diverse: two words often associated with OPRF and its student body. Indeed, OPRF is home to students of varying religions, races, ethnicities, cultures, genders, and socioeconomic status.

Unfortunately, society's stereotypes on race, education, and socioeconomic status along with the way students segregate themselves indicate that OPRF's diversity is irrelevant and the school might not cultivate as liberal of a culture as originally imagined.

Despite all the people of varying backgrounds, OPRF seems to give in to society's rhetoric that students are either black or white, or AP or college prep, leaving little wiggle room for those who fall in between. Administrators, teachers, students and parents have all subtly hinted at, and have further facilitated, such polar societal stereotypes through discussion on AYP standards,

the achievement gap, and even simple discussions in core classes such as English. The two groups are further separated through the types of classes and activities each group seems to pursue.

The problem presents itself even more outside of the classroom. In the lunch room, student organizations, the main entrance after school and walking through downtown Oak Park, it is clear that these students have naturally segregated themselves.

And why wouldn't they? If students are segregated within the school, through fault of society, the school, or themselves, they're going to uphold the same friendships and mindset after high school, scarcely venturing out of their comfort zone to interact with those who are different from them.

To solve the achievement gap and prevent such segregation, OPRF needs to adapt a more integrated approach that

will intertwine the lives of all sorts of students, both in and out of the classroom, and think beyond simply what society says we should.

Both the school and community need to find a way to get students not only willing, but interested and excited in exposing themselves to different lifestyles as opposed to hibernating in their own little worlds.

We can only solve such problems through knowledge of how the "other half" lives and by realizing that we're not so different after all; college prep and AP students could realize what they're capable of if they competed against each other, as opposed to beating themselves up over not meeting impossible standards.

This would in turn allow students to foster a greater sense of acceptance that could lead to not only more friendships, but more meaningful ones as

well. This would give students a greater appreciation for the education they're being provided.

Motivation and eagerness to learn would increase along with test scores and those who really are either underachieving or struggling, regardless of race or what level classes they're taking, would find the help that they need instead of living up to pitiful stereotypes.

So before anyone begins to brag about statistical data on race percentages in the school, more emphasis should be placed on integrating students in a way that is beneficial for everyone instead of placing OPRF on a pedestal against other schools in the Chicago and area. Overall, what matters most is students' success in the classroom and in the real world: not bragging rights on a tourist map.

QUICK FACTS:

Rising sea levels make coastal storms like New York's more destructive. Previously considered a once-in-a-century event, it could now occur once per decade. Coastal flooding will cause millions to relocate.

Courtesy of Epa.gov