



A Stolen Education

By Educator Barnes - March 13, 2019

If you know anything about the fight for educational equity in this country, you know that many people feel like the school system is rigged. Yesterday, we had proof. An FBI investigation revealed that some wealthy and high-profile parents, such as Lori Loughlin and Felicity Huffman, paid large sums of money to ensure their children gained entry into various colleges and universities.

Maybe the most surprising part about this scheme is the parents got caught because educational equity advocates know that some parents have used their connections and power to give their children an advantage as early as preschool. This could involve moving into an expensive neighborhood that ensures students within a certain radius of a highly coveted school will be enrolled. It could be using connections to get insider information to gain entry into a magnet school for their children.

The ones that suffer the most are students, who are typically poor and/or of color, who don't have the resources or the connections to game the system. When advocates stand up and point out the inequities in the system, they are bombarded with policies and excuses about why the system is the way it is which is to say we are not changing how we operate.

The worse part of this story is the belief gap of wealthy parents. Typically when we talk about the belief gap, we are referring to teachers not believing children of color or children from impoverished backgrounds can learn. Isn't it worse if your parents do not believe you can learn and pay your way through life? This is how we end up with supposedly qualified candidates not able to do a job. They have the right credentials, but they might not have earned those credentials.

What angers me the most is these spots were given away and not earned. You have students working hard to gain entry to colleges and universities. These hard-working students are the ones that are supposed to be there, not students who had someone else take their exams or change their answers afterward. Maybe this scandal can be used for good. Maybe when parents point out that there seems to be an issue with who is able to get into certain schools, whether that is K-12 or at the post-secondary level, maybe the powers that be will listen and take action.