

Affirmative Action changes the state of financial aid

With Affirmative Action getting overruled by the Supreme Court, what do we do now?

Colleges and universities may no longer factor race into admissions after the Supreme Court ruled 6-3 to end affirmative action in a consolidated decision handed down June 29, 2023. The end of race-conscious college admissions will have a particularly outsized impact on women and students of color.

Affirmative Action was originally upheld in 2003, but as of June 29, 2023, the Supreme Court overruled Affirmative Action. This ruling puts the Biden-Harris student debt relief plan in danger. [Reuters](#) recently covered the case overruling and the legality of the \$430 billion debt relief.

Affirmative Action refers to the policy aimed at increasing educational and workplace opportunities for underrepresented and marginalized groups, with a focus on demographics that have a historically low representation. In [Fair Admissions v. Harvard](#), the Supreme Court said colleges and universities could no longer take race into consideration as a specific basis for granting admission, putting some students who cannot afford college into a difficult situation.

“Affirmative action was almost like a security that minorities would be able to get into more challenging schools and now the security does not exist, it makes it more challenging for minorities to get into these schools again”, Aleshai Vivanco Ramirez, a junior at DRHS said.

In 1978’s Regents of the [University of California v. Bakke](#), the court determined that affirmative action was lawful, a ruling that it upheld multiple times, including in the 2003 case [Grutter v. Bollinger](#) and in the 2016 case Fisher v. University of Texas. In Fisher v. University of Texas White women claimed they were denied higher education admission because of their race; however, women have generally outnumbered men in higher education because of Affirmative Action.

The court’s conservative majority effectively overturned cases reaching back 45 years and invalidating recent admissions plans at Harvard and the University of North Carolina, the nation’s oldest private and public colleges, respectively.

Many students are now worried about their scholarships being put in jeopardy as many schools that hold ‘diversity’ scholarships are now pulling them from their financial aid programs. Getting rid of race based financial aid is putting many students in a place where they can no longer attend university, and it limits access for students of color, and how they will reach higher education.

With the overruling of Affirmative Action, schools are now required to take into account other factors than just race.

“I write today to underscore that Bucknell’s long-standing commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, in myriad forms, is a cherished institutional value,” university president John Bravmen said. “Bucknell remains steadfast in our goal of creating and nurturing a campus community that reflects our society and respects all identities, and will continue to pursue a diverse student body aligned with yesterday’s ruling.” Many schools in light of the overruling will still try to maintain a diverse student body. This was stated in an email sent by the president of Bucknell University.

According to [CNN](#), in another lawsuit responding to the elimination of Affirmative Action, Espinoza-Madrigal’s group, who represents three different groups against Harvard University, said, “If we’re going to eliminate preferences, we need to eliminate all of them. Just because you know how to fence doesn’t mean you deserve a spot.” Harvard is facing this lawsuit because of supposed discrimination against students and a favor toward students that come from wealthy donors and alumni. “The lawsuit, filed by the Lawyers for Civil Rights group on behalf of the Chica Project, the African Community Economic Development of New England, and the Greater Boston Latino Network, alleges the students who receive that preferential treatment are “overwhelmingly White,” and make up as much as 15% of admitted students.” CNN said.

Many schools are now required to change their admissions and their guidelines for accepting students.

“Before they changed the requirements students had the ability to show their talents and have the security that being, for example, first generation would allow, now that's gone.” Emilia Wsol, an IB diploma junior at DRHS said.

In [Time Magazine](#), Chief Justice John Roberts said that for too long universities have “concluded, wrongly, that the touchstone of an individual’s identity is not challenges best, skills built, or lessons learned but the color of their skin. Our constitutional history does not tolerate that choice.”

However, according to the [New York Times](#), “Affirmative action mattered a great deal for very few and very little for most.” The authors go on to explain that, “Even with affirmative action in place, most students of color did not go to elite colleges, and last week’s ruling does nothing to change that. The current opportunity to bring racial equity to American higher education lies in a collective re-commitment to the quality and success of more accessible institutions.”

Essentially what both the *New York Times* and *CNN* are saying is that even when Affirmative Action was in place, students of color were not getting into these institutions at a higher rate just

because of their race. However, the decision will likely reduce students of color at universities, many statistics show that they were not there to begin with.

These news sources are not saying that schools are ending diversity, they are just saying that schools are only accepting students that have it all, universities are admitting students that have evidence of a good academic background, financial standings, clubs, activities, and a good work ethic. A student needs to have it all to get into a good school now, and just having one attribute will not be good enough any longer in the economic climate that we exist in today.



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