

THE RACIST WAR ON ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE: REP. JAMAAL BOWMAN'S CONTRIBUTION

Part II

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This is the second of a two-part series. To read Part I, click [here](#).

Part I of this series focused on the war on testing that is being waged by those who claim to be helping minority students, but are in fact keeping them from succeeding. These same persons want to dumb-down disciplinary measures, creating an untenable condition in the classroom.

Those educators, politicians and activists who are responsible for this development have such low expectations of minority students, especially African Americans, that it smacks of racism. They simply refuse to treat blacks as equals. They have sunk so low that they are no longer satisfied with lowering the bar—they want to do away with it altogether.

If there is one politician who epitomizes this vision of education it is Rep. Jamaal Bowman of New York. Most Americans know nothing about him, with the notable exception of the irresponsible prank he pulled off last fall: he intentionally set off a false fire alarm in the Cannon House Office Building. He was duly censured by the House for committing this criminal act.

Bowman took office in 2021 and fast became a member of the “Squad”; they are the most radical left-wing members in

Congress. He made campaign promises when running for office in 2020 that were so extreme that even he had to walk away from some of them. [Note: What follows can no longer be found on his campaign website or his congressional one.]

Bowman is an enemy of school testing, not just standardized tests. He says those who believe in testing are part of a “test-and-punish regime,” one that stigmatizes students, teachers and schools that don’t pass the grade. He also doesn’t want to punish unruly students. “Instead of punitive discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions,” he advises, “let’s invest in restorative justice and trauma-informed pedagogy and care.” So when violence breaks out, bring in the therapy dogs.

Bowman listed 20 reforms that should be implemented in the elementary and secondary schools. We need more social workers and counselors, and less police officers. The professional talkers, he says, are best suited for dealing with students who refuse to go to school. This is his plan to “decriminalize truancy.”

Students should be required to spend “at least 60 minutes of gym/and or recess per day.” He does not say how much time should be spent on reading, writing, math and science.

Bowman wants to reform higher education as well. He wants free schooling in the public colleges and universities. Students should also be given grants to cover their living expenses. “This can be largely funded through raising taxes on Wall Street and a wealth tax.” For some reason, he did not apply his policy to Hollywood moguls or professional athletes.

The same wealthy Wall Streeters should also have to pay for all student loan debt. He does not say what is to be done about all those students and parents who shelled out hundreds of thousands of dollars for their loans.

Should private colleges and universities also be tuition free?

No. He says they shouldn't even be allowed to exist. "Ban for-profit colleges." Did you hear that Harvard?

What makes Bowman's utopia so rich is that he wants to kill all charter schools, knowing full well that they are the best public school hope for minority students. Moreover, he ran a successful charter school before becoming a congressman.

In 2009, Bowman was the founding principal of Cornerstone Academy for Social Action Middle School in Manhattan; it was part of an educational initiative launched by New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Like most charter schools, it quickly earned a stellar record. Bowman credited "High expectations" as the reason he succeeded.

So why would Bowman now want to drive charter schools out of business? Why would he want to force black kids to go to lousy public schools? Moreover, if having high expectations for black students worked well in his charter school, why the shift to low expectations now?

We know that the teachers unions give lavishly to Democrats who want to destroy charter schools, but if that is enough for Bowman to take the low road and sell out his fellow African Americans, then he has obviously become their enemy.

When Bowman was born in 1976, he lived in the East River Houses in East Harlem, more popularly known then as Spanish Harlem. I taught down the block from those units at that time, working with African American and Puerto Rican students in a Catholic school. My students were a model of academic excellence. One reason why they succeeded is because I demanded much from them.

There is nothing more racist than to treat blacks as second-class citizens, expecting little from them. But that is the way liberals treat them, including black radicals like Jamaal Bowman.

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