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Abstract

American schools, specifically in poorer communities, are essentially factories for prison inmates. An institution that sucks in Black victims through public K-12 education at alarming rates is the same system that spits out a disproportionately high number of poor, underprivileged, and lower-class Black victims into a so-called “fair” society. Black teens and children are deemed unfit for school and college from the start and are ultimately directed toward a path of unemployment or low-wage trade jobs if they are able to escape the correctional system. The social impacts that occur due to the school-to-prison pipeline include but are not limited to higher unemployment rates, lower income, lack of representation, housing restrictions and limitations on loans, and the overall lack of motivation toward educational achievement and connection with academic institutions. Disparities are often blamed on outside factors like families, communities, and cultural differences, rather than the disparities and deficiencies within the American school system for Black children. Each year, an estimated 600,000 people make the difficult transition from prison back to the community and suffer significantly through various roadblocks. I argue that Black youth and adults face a significantly harder transition back and the social impacts as consequence of the school-to-prison pipeline are detrimental for Black communities and America as a whole. If we ignore the discipline gap, we will be unable to close the achievement gap.

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