



**THIS TEACHER SAYS, “YOUR MOMMA NEEDS  
TO TALK TO ME NOT THROUGH YOU.”**

Educator Barnes – 7/16/18

There is a [picture of five-year-old Cardi B](#), with her hand on her hip that has been turned into what I will call, “my momma said” memes. I have to admit I found them funny until I came across one that said:

Teacher: “There are no hall passes so you can’t go to the bathroom.”

Me: “Well my momma said if I gotta use it I can just walk out”

This meme reminded me of all the parental information I have received from students I have had in my class.

“My momma said you don’t pay this cell phone bill so you can stop telling me what to do with my phone.”

“My momma said if you call her one more time she gonna come up here and show out.”

“My momma said this work you assigned is stupid so that’s why I didn’t do it.”

“My momma said she isn’t buying any more school supplies, so if you want me to get your work done you better give me a pencil.”

“My momma said you can call her if you want to but she doesn’t answer the school’s number.”

While these memes are funny, there’s a darker message to them.

### **Your child is disrespectful.**

That’s a loaded statement, but it is true. When I was a child, I wouldn’t have even thought to fix my lips to make one of those statements. My mother made it clear that if I had a problem with the teacher, that I should keep my mouth shut in class, tell her about it when I got home, and let her handle the situation. For example, when I was in 7th grade, I had a Social Studies teacher that not only told me that my mom misspelled my name but she ‘corrected’ the spelling of my name on my work before she returned it to me with the final grade. I had a whole bunch of choice words and statements that I wanted to say to this older white lady, but I followed my mom’s directive. After I told my mom about the situation, she assured me that I wouldn’t be having any more problems. My mom called my teacher and the teacher stopped ‘correcting’ my name. Even to this day, I don’t know what my mom said to my teacher because as she told me, “You worry about your business and let me handle grown folks’ business.” There is a place and time and a proper way to handle situations. Thinking that it is okay for your child to go off on the teacher is not okay; it is disrespectful and unacceptable.

### **You are interfering with the teacher and student relationship building.**

Schools rarely switch students to another class. When parents place negative thoughts about the teacher in their child’s heads at home, it makes for a long school year. If the child is in elementary school, he or she will be frustrated all day long. If the child is in secondary and is switching classes, this class will be dreaded each day. Students have a difficult time learning or being willing to learn from a teacher when they don’t like the teacher. Students many times won’t even attempt to build a relationship with the teacher if their parents don’t like the teacher. For example, I’m a parent and I did not like the first kindergarten teacher one of my son’s had. She eventually quit and was replaced by

an awesome educator, but my son never knew my husband and I did not like his first kindergarten teacher. We knew it would make school more difficult for him.

### **Teachers have rules and procedures for a reason.**

Believe it or not, students don't always tell their parents the entire story. Parents jump to conclusions without all of the information and make statements based on half the story that signifies to the child it is okay to return to school and be disrespectful, out of line, and out of order. Maybe it is important for you to know that every time we are about to write as a class your child has to magically go to the restroom. Maybe it is important for you to also know that your child forgot to mention we were having a safety drill and no one could go anywhere at the time. In addition to helping children grow academically, teachers have to maintain an orderly atmosphere for all students and keep them safe. This means a student may not get his or her way, but the teacher has to do what is best to maintain an optimal learning environment.

### **How do I respond?**

As my students know, I don't like my instructional time wasted with foolishness or students getting out of pocket. This is what I say, "What Mrs. Barnes won't do is have a conversation with you right now about what your momma said." Then I reiterate the procedures and redirect the student. Of course, I call the momma and if it is one of those momma's who doesn't answer the school's number, I leave a message. If the number is out of service, I document that I called.

Teachers, just want respect. They want parents to work with them and it doesn't help the school/home partnership when one party is tearing down the other to the student.