



Real New Year's Resolutions from a Black Female Educator

By Educator Barnes – December 31, 2019

The end of the year is only the middle of the school year for educators, but it is still a good opportunity to make some resolutions for the remainder of the school year. Here are mine as we enter 2020:

1. Teach colleagues how to respect boundaries.

When I left work, I put on my vacation out of office message on my email that states, "School is not in session due to winter break. I will reply to your email upon my return on Monday, January 6, 2020." I also verbally stated I would be unavailable, but I was still contacted via text. No, no one died. I have two options,

ignore or respond. I chose to ignore the message until January 6, 2020, because I set the boundary that a break is time away to relax and to be fully present with my family. If I respond, I'm showing that I don't mean what I say and that it is okay to violate my boundaries. Moving into 2020, I am committing to holding fast to teaching other people what my boundaries are and holding them to respecting them.

2. Show more appreciation.

I was raised by strict parents who expected us to be intrinsically motivated. When I told my parents about my friends receiving money for good grades, I was told, "Why should we pay you for doing what is expected?" It's funny how systems from your childhood follow you into adulthood. As an administrator, I believe we should not have to jump through hoops to motivate teachers to do what is expected; however, I can show my appreciation and gratitude. I'm going to commit to this next year.

3. Stop wasting my time explaining myself to male educators.

This was the most frustrating aspect of 2019. I'm all for explaining the why so people can understand; however, there is a difference between asking about the why to understand and questioning the why because you are trying to challenge my expertise. I'm trying to figure out how you are questioning me when you came to me for help. I wish I could say it was just white male educators, but it was not. Black male educators were just as bad. I don't have time for this in 2020. Male educators, don't come to me asking for help in 2020 if you can't handle what I have to say. I'm going to say, "Boy, bye." That's what you are, a boy, if you are threatened by a strong black female educator.

4. Put my children before my students.

I'm a mother first. I have to be more present with my children. I dropped the ball this school year, and I need to do better. I plan to attend at least one field trip in 2020. I also plan to take off another day to spend with them. I might eat lunch with them or pick them up early. I want them to know that they will always come first.

Educators, what are you leaving behind in 2019? What are your 2020 resolutions?