



Teachers Should Bring the Same Energy of Informing Parents about Academics as They do about Discipline

By Educator Barnes - January 12, 2020

Recently, I came across a tweet that resonated with my beliefs. @CocoCurls1517 [tweeted](#):

Teachers be quick to use all sources of getting in contact w you to tell you that your child is misbehaving in class, but lack that same effort to tell you that your child didn't score well on a quiz/test or not comprehending the learning material

This is problematic. As an educator, I know that behavior and academics are linked. Sometimes a student misbehaves because of academics. The student would rather misbehave and be asked to leave the room instead of staying in the room and struggling through an academic task. The behavior is actually work avoidance.

Furthermore, behavior should not be the only reason a teacher should contact parents. Parents should be contacted about school events, opportunities to volunteer, and academics. Parents and teachers must have a strong relationship. It is hard to build a strong relationship with teachers when all parents hear from the teacher is how bad their child is behaving.

I have identical twin boys. News flash: they are not perfect. They misbehave and have been in trouble. They even have fought each other, twice. Each time, it was over a library book...don't even get me started about that. There have been years when they were in separate classes when one of their teachers would constantly email or call my husband or me. We have even had our entire contact list called which includes four grandparents and my aunt. Yet, when I reached out about academics, all I heard were crickets. That's unacceptable.

A couple of years ago, at the National Association of Black Journalists conference in Detroit, I was a panelist for "the Importance of Educating Our Black Children." I spoke about this situation. I knew my son was in the wrong reading group, and the teacher continually ignored my requests to reassess my son and move him. After getting the principal involved, it was confirmed that I was right. Unfortunately, it was the end of the school year. I was fighting for my son to be moved to a higher literacy group since the beginning of the second semester, instead, the teacher continually contacted me at least weekly about behavior. She did care about my child's academics.

Ultimately, parents send their children to school to learn. If teachers aren't bothering to keep parents in the loop about academics outside of parent/teacher conferences and report card time, they are going to have a hard time gaining buy-in or respect when they call about academics. Before teachers contact parents, they need to think about what their communication with parents entailed. Has there been any positive communication? Has there been any communication about academics? If there is not a variety of communication, that is a problem, and it makes it hard for parents to trust and support the teacher.