



Moms Fighting Fiercely for Education

By Educator Barnes – May 9, 2021

I was a childless educator when I entered the profession. Although I did not have children, I believed I was a strong advocate for ensuring children have the proper education and the supports they needed to finish school, become productive citizens, and add value to our society. Once I became a mother, my advocacy accelerated to levels I did not anticipate it would reach. I could not accept failure as an option for my children or anyone else's children.

Although I know all women who are mothers have not carried a child in their womb, that experience was impactful for me. Becoming pregnant with twins as a 5'2" woman who weighed around 120 pounds at the time was not on my bucket list of items to accomplish. I struggled with infertility for years, and the only treatments that were successful was the one that gave me my identical twin boys. All treatments before and after they were born failed. On top of that, the pregnancy was rough. I spent two months on bed rest at home and two in the hospital. Still, they were born at 30 weeks and 2 days despite my best efforts.

My doctor told me many times this wasn't true, but I felt like I had failed my sons because they were born so early. I wanted to do right by them and make sure all aspects of their lives had a positive impact and that included school. I found myself paying more attention to what was communicated from their teachers, how it was communicated, and the gaps in the education system. When I felt the system, the school, or the teacher failed them, I pushed back. I presented evidence and demanded change.

The advocacy of my children impacted how I advocated for other people's children. I began asking myself, "If I was that child's mom, would I want to know about that?" Shortly after my sons entered preschool, I transitioned to a literacy coach position. I pushed teachers to collaborate with parents more and share information such as their students' reading levels and skill gaps. I also found myself having accountability conversations with colleagues asking them to do better for our students, and I even provided resources to help them do that.

The education profession is mostly female and many of those females are mothers. This duality is an extra bonus because it allows us to look at situations through multiple lenses ... maybe that is why some of us get called mom by our students.