



Be Grateful for Progress

By Educator Barnes – November 25, 2021

I consider myself an education advocate and activist. It is easy to become discouraged in the work of ensuring better outcomes for all children. Some days it seems like one step forward and two steps back. That frustration and anger can consume you. It can lead to burnout, and burnout can turn into hopelessness.

Today, I am asking you to take a moment and think about the impact you have made if you are also an education advocate and activist. These are the moments that will get us through the

hard days. If you haven't faced hard days in this work know that the hard days will come. Gratitude can ground us. It can center us and help us remember why we do this work.

Although I have not accomplished all of my goals in this work, I am grateful to all of the readers who write back to me to let me know how a piece I wrote helped them. On the days when I am feeling down, I can be thankful that the words I wrote helped.

I am also thankful to those of you who have and continue to speak my name in rooms I am not in yet. Because of you, I have made more connections and have expanded my impact to help children locally and in other states outside of Indiana.

To the students who find me on social media or who kept my personal email address and shared how I impacted you, I thank you. I save every email and the handwritten notes I have received. I read them to remind myself that I have made a difference, and I can continue to make a difference.

When I have wanted to quit, my parents and my mentors tell me to pick myself up and remind me of who I am and that I am a child of the Most High. Although my dad transitioned to the realm of the ancestors earlier this year, I hold his words in my heart.

I am thankful to my sisters, my friends, and select relatives who allow me to vent when I need to blow steam and for keeping my vents locked tight like a vault. When you do this work, you need those folks.

Last but not least, I appreciate David McGuire, Andrew Pillow, Keshia McEntire, and Cheryl Kirk, my fellow Indy K12 crew for holding it down with me and letting it be known that all children deserve a great education. Thanks to Brightbeam for letting us amplify our voices.

If I missed you (as the elders say) charge to my head, not to my heart.

Be well. Keep an attitude of gratitude!