



## Parents Should Take Time to Have Their Children Reflect on the School Year

May 25, 2021 by Educator Barnes

The end of the last school year and this school year has been like no other. It is especially important for parents to do a pulse check and check-in with their children at the end of the school year. My twin sons' last day of school was last Thursday ... they did start school at the end of July if anyone is wondering why they are out of school so soon.

This school year, my husband and I decided to have our sons learn remotely for the entire school year. The first semester went well. We hit a rough patch during the third quarter. The Saturday before winter break ended, my dad unexpectedly had a heart attack and passed away. My sons have had all four grandparents their entire life. This was the first time they had someone this close to them die. My sons became distracted, would not talk in class even when directly called, and started missing assignments. During the first semester, they had all As and Bs, but at the end of the third quarter, one of my sons' math grades had slipped to a C, and they both had As that slipped to Bs. We regrouped. I hired one of my teacher friends as a math tutor, and found more opportunities to check in with my sons.

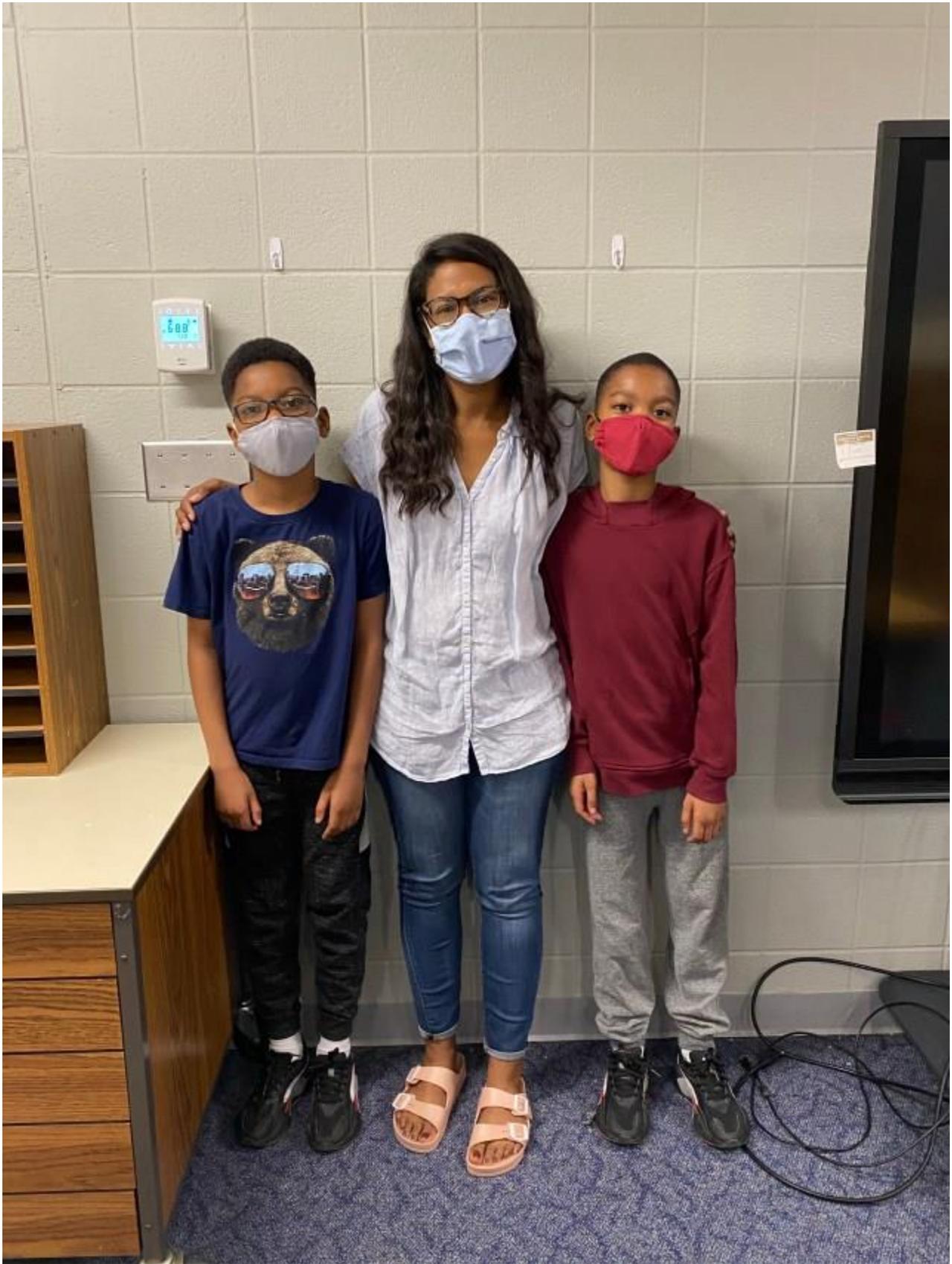
I picked up their report cards from school yesterday. They both had As in every subject for the fourth quarter except for social studies where they both earned a B. Even though I am proud that my son raised his math grade from a C to an A, I still had concerns. There is more to school than grades. We did a final check-in with our sons at dinner. This is what we asked:

1. What are you most proud of from this school year?
2. What is an area you wish to improve in for the next school year?
3. What are some fears you have about the next school year?
4. How can we support you more?

Feel free to use these questions and even add to them. This gave us insight into how they were feeling, and it is okay as an adult to ask your children how you can support them more. They are people with feelings and thoughts that should be validated as long as they are reasonable. For example, we vetoed the more honey buns request.

Last, we wanted them to thank their teacher, whose picture we share of them with her with her permission. Writing a letter to thank their teacher was another opportunity to think about the year. This year was hard for students and teachers. It is important to let teachers know the impact they had.

Once the school year ends, sit down and talk to your children, and make it a habit every school year. If you have time, have them write a thank you note to their teachers, too.



Dear Mrs. Lamkin,

Thank you for being my teacher this school I really appreciate it. Thank you for doing fun activities during class like the hand shake greeting or Go Noodle they're super fun. Also thank you for teaching me new ways to do math or new ways to multiply. Another reason I think you're a great teacher is because you read good books like Lemonade War and The Tiger Rising.

from James Barnes  
to Mrs. Lamkin

Dear Mrs. Lanekin,

I like that you're my teacher because I can easily understand the math, writing, and reading strategies you taught me. I also like that you're my teacher because if I don't understand something in the lesson you always answer my questions. That is why I like that you're my teacher.

From,

Jeremiah

From,

Jeremiah