



## Barnes' Education Holiday Wish List

December 19, 2022 by Educator Barnes

I'll be 40 next year, and I really hope that before I go into retirement mode some time in the future that many of the wishes I list below become a reality. I don't want my children to become adults that have to fight the fight for their children that I am fighting now for them and students across the state now. If I could wave a magic wand, this is what I want.

**Wish #1** – Every school would have a library with a librarian who understands the importance of access to a wide variety of books.

Before this mess with banning books, I was disappointed by the fact that all students do not have access to a place full of books, as we like to call it, a library. If a school had a library, there was no guarantee there was a librarian. I know this will take funding and ensuring more

educators obtain library/media licenses to become librarians, but I think this is an investment that needs to take place.

**Wish #2** – There should be a pause on new charter schools in Indiana.

I already know some people have exited this piece after reading that. For those of you who have stuck around, here is why. Yes, I am unapologetically pro-school choice. However, many of the charter options in Indiana are trash. Why add more chaos to the fire that is brewing? To make a larger dumpster fire? Having slightly better gains according to skewed and misinterpreted highly selective data touted by the people who support charter schools is not a reason to create more. Listen, if the gains were significant, they would be touted by people outside charter school supporters. A friend once said to me, “There is no putting the genie back in the bottle,” in reference to charter schools. I agree with that. There is no need to make wishes for more when the promise from the existing ones fell short. As a Black parent, I want more than slightly better outcomes for Black children, so miss me with that suspect statistical proof.

**Wish #3** – School districts are transparent about curriculum adoption procedures and involve more parents.

It should not have taken Emily Hanford’s Sold a Story Podcast to get parents to wake up and realize that they know little about the curriculum being used to teach their children. Gone are the days when we can blindly trust the school. Yes, I believe most school districts are trying, but as parents, we have to be more involved to ensure that schools choose research-based curricula.

**Wish #4** – I want joy to return to school.

Since the pandemic ended ... well there wasn’t an announcement ... but you know what I mean, schools have gone back to the same ‘ole drill and kill. Administrators went from giving teachers bonuses and handing out grace to expecting teachers to burn the midnight oil and not respecting their professional expertise. I did grow up to be a teacher, so I might be biased, but when I was a kid, school felt fun, especially elementary school. I can’t tell you any of my scores on standardized tests because they weren’t a big deal. I learned, and I had fun. I want that for all kids.

After you read all of the Indy K12 wish lists, let us know what you would add.