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# Hey Shawnta! How Do I Build a Relationship With My Child's Teacher When We Only Connect Through Remind?



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by Shawnta S. Barnes [f](#) [X](#) [in](#) [✉](#)

When my sons were in elementary school, we received communication in various ways. We received it through the folder in my sons' backpacks, email, phone calls, [Class Dojo](#), [Bloomz](#), and via [Smore](#) newsletter. Honestly, it was a bit overwhelming. There was plenty of information, but it was shared through too many avenues.

During the second half of their elementary experience, their school district switched to [ParentsSquare](#) for communication. Teachers were told to communicate using the app. Although this streamlined information, at times, it didn't seem personalized. There would be mass messages to all the parents in the class, which was needed, but responding in an app is not as personalized.

## Find Out How the Teacher Prefers to Communicate

To ensure my sons' needs were being met, I asked their teachers what their preferred mode of communication was. Even though district leadership says teachers should only use a certain

app, many teachers still prefer phone calls and emails. If the teacher prefers an app like [Remind](#), then I suggest that you ask better and more specific questions when communicating with the teacher about your child.

## Ask Targeted, Specific Questions

If you ask simple questions —“how is my child doing?” — you may receive simple responses. Instead, target an area of concern and ask a question about it. For example, “Is my child reading at grade level? If not, what can I do to support my child at home?” Specific questions tend to get specific answers.

## Check In On a Regular, Predictable Basis

You could think about checking in once a month. After a while, the teacher will begin to expect to hear from you.

## Communicate Your Needs

Last, if you don't have the capability to use an app at home, communicate that to the teacher or principal and see what accommodations they will make for you.

Happy connecting with your child's teacher!

# Shawnta S. Barnes

Shawnta (Shawn-tay) S. Barnes, also known as Educator Barnes, is a married mother of identical twin boys. She navigates education from not only the educator's perspective but also the parent's perspective. She has been an educator for nearly two decades. Shawnta works with K-12 schools, universities, & education adjacent organizations through her education consulting business Blazing Brilliance. She is an adjunct college professor, supervises student teachers, Indy Kids Winning Editor-in-Chief, Brave Brothers Books Co-founder, & CEO, and Brazen Education Podcast host. She holds five education licenses: English/language arts 5-12, English to speakers of other languages P-12, library/media P-12, reading P-12, and school administration P-12, and she has held a job in every licensed area. Previously, she has served as a school administrator, English teacher, English learners teacher, literacy coach, and librarian. She won the 2019 Indiana Black Expo Excellence in Education Journalism Award. In 2023, she completed her doctorate in Literacy, Culture, and Language Education with a minor in Learning Sciences. She is an urban gardener in her spare time and writes about her harvest-to-table journey at [gardenershicole.com](https://www.gardenershicole.com). To learn more about Shawnta, visit [educatorbarnes.com](https://www.educatorbarnes.com).

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