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Parent Partnerships Are Key to Student Success



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by Shawnta S. Barnes    

[The Center for Universal Education at Brookings](#) recently released survey results about parents' beliefs and goals for their children's education. Almost 25,000 parents across ten countries were surveyed. There were three broad [findings](#):

- Most parents desire a “new” type of education for their child that is interactive and social in nature and supports both their socio-emotional and academic development.
- Teachers play a central role in shaping parent’s beliefs about what makes a quality education.
- Education decision makers must get to know the parents in their jurisdiction to build strong family partnerships and navigate change.

As a parent, who is also an educator, I assert that educators desire these outcomes, too.

“New” Education

Our society is not the same as it was when current students’ parents or grandparents attended school. Since society is not the same, our education system should not be the same. Too many times, instruction looks the same as it did decades ago. This should not be the case.

Currently, we are living through a pandemic. The effects of the pandemic vary, but everyone was impacted. Socio-emotional supports are key. [pullquote position="right"]When students are living through trauma or had a traumatic experience, academics may not be a priority. [/pullquote] Yet, most current educators did not have socio-emotional learning as part of their college education courses. Acknowledging that this gap must be addressed will help students also be academically successful.

Teachers Are Experts

What the pandemic made abundantly clear, with a quickness, is that there was a reason parents chose the career path they chose and not education. Teaching is a calling. And taking a page from church, teaching is not everyone’s ministry.

Parents move into certain school districts, switch their children to a public charter school, or pay tuition to a private school because they believe the school will provide their children with a good education. That good education is provided by effective teachers.

Parents expect they can reach out to their children’s teachers for help. [pullquote]Teachers need to be seen as the experts they are and parents should work with teachers to help their children grow.[/pullquote]

Do You Know Your Families?

The majority of parents care about their children's education and even [have goals and expectations for their children](#). Teachers, administration, and board members should know what these dreams, hopes and aspirations are.

Programs get implemented—and families are confused about why the program was needed in the first place. When this is the case, families do not buy into the program or initiative as a priority. But, when teachers, administrators, and school board members know what parents desire, decisions can be made in alignment with those goals.

School board members are supposed to respect the families. Teachers and administrators are supposed to be serving students and their families. [pullquote]It is hard to serve anyone well without know their priorities.[/pullquote]

Regardless, of the country, it is clear that parents want to work with the school for their children to succeed.

This post originally appeared on [Indy K12](#).

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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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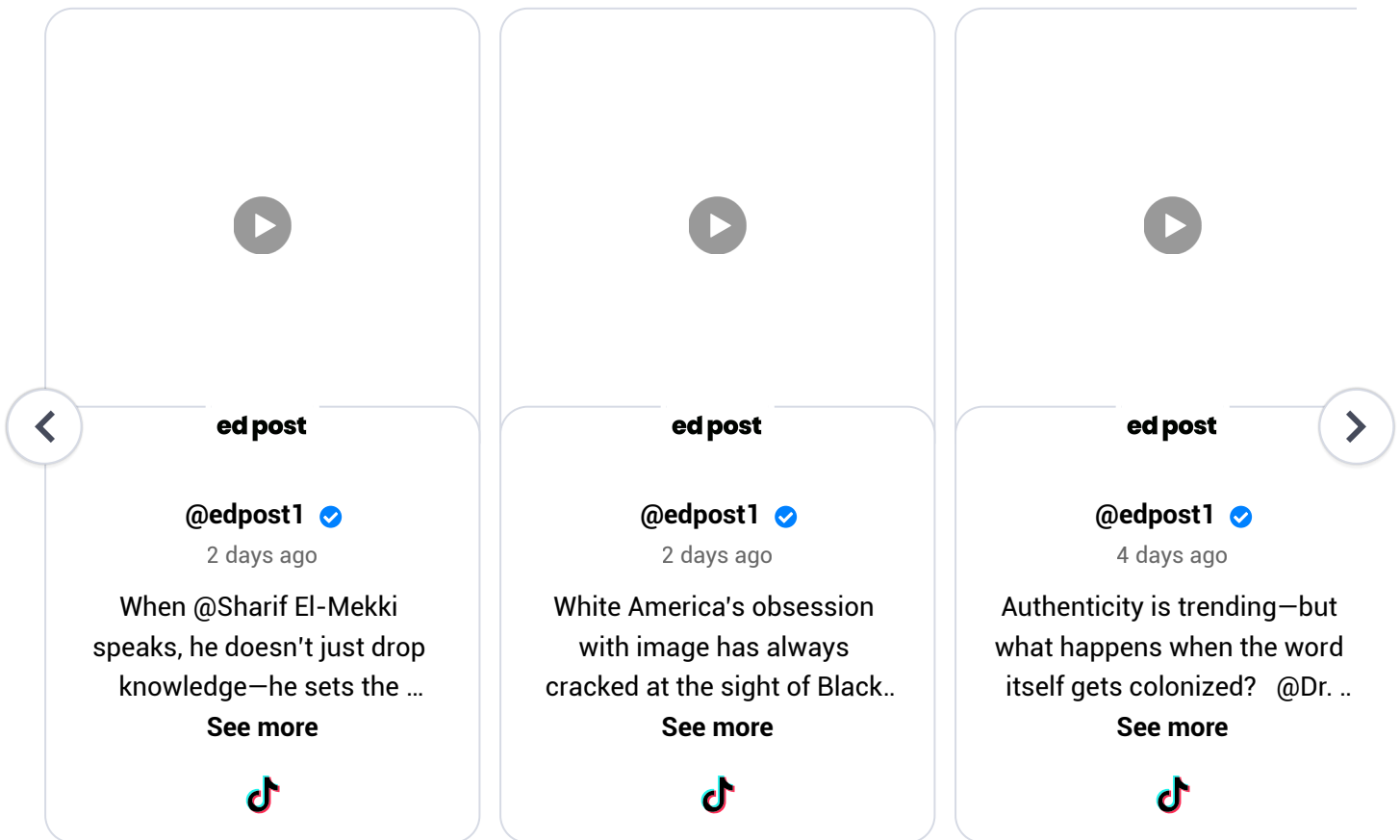
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