

The Equity Early Education Summit

Equality speaks of opportunity for one and all. However, equity brings everyone to that same table of opportunity, but with careful intentional consideration that different accommodations may also be needed to ensure that all attending will be able to participate when they get there.

The same rings truth for our preschool-aged children, particularly minorities, but for all those trying to manage post-pandemic days and its effects. However, individuals like Preschool Support Specialist Fredericka Brown have stepped forward to become a connector herself and one who works to build bridges to bring key community stakeholders in education together. Her mission is to provide the resources that nurture individuals and learning environments that help to educate and preserve our most vulnerable and invaluable resources - our children. People can learn more about serving in the early childhood field and parent leadership. As a mama bear herself, she fiercely advocates for parents to understand their personal rights and power to speak out and up regarding their child's progress or lack thereof.

Her consistent position is "Nothing for us - without us" that speaks to representation and a call to engagement. "Parents should be just as invested in their children's academic and learning as they expect the school administration and staff to be. But I also commend those Parent Leaders who are actively involved on various levels. Many are intimidated and feel inadequate to serve and help, but they too can bring their other transferable skills and talents to the table to assist in their child's learning career." She also started a cohort for adults with families who desire to pursue a Child Development Accreditation (CDA) at no cost through a yearlong self-paced course with Vibrant Future. It will also give those who are interested in joining the field the tools necessary to begin their career pathway.

Fredericka's own journey in the education field began as a mother volunteering and advocating for her 10-month-old child. Now as a professional, she has experienced and seen both sides of the challenges involved with educating children. She also saw how the ravishing effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic played on all parties involved - children, families, educators, and the supporting staff. Education and the world at-large were changed forever - for many are still recovering. However, it also affected our young ones' mental health and learning components that caused personality and behavior shifts and a severe diminishing of learning skills. Help came from many sources to create the means and resources needed to strengthen key development skills that are needed prior to the children's promotion to kindergarten.

The Education Equity Summit is another event that Fredericka is hosting that will address all of these concerns and more. "We live in a different world than what was considered "traditional" years ago, "Family" now consist of several frameworks and dynamics that constituted as households that does not make them less valid. As educators and officials, we have to recognize the difference and make efforts to meet families where they are - no more cookie-cutters. Equity then becomes the linchpin that goes the extra mile to bridge any gaps," said Brown.

She then aims to bring families in Ward 1 with school staff and officials together for her follow-up event with "A Family Celebration" on July 8th at 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Because of the Neighborhood Matching Fund, she can showcase the progress and impact that has been made regarding equity in early childhood education to our community's families. Early Childhood Education is foundational, and we all can come together to give it all a good push needed to build positive momentum", explains Brown.

The event will also highlight various career opportunities in education, childcare, and preschool and various vendors will be on hand with resources and information to strengthen families; especially from BIPOC households. "All parties can come together on the same page and see one another with different eyes yet respecting one another's role and contribution for the sake of our children's future."