

# Transportation Workout

Convened by Say Yes Buffalo  
Buffalo Public Schools and Erie 1 BOCES

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# About the Buffalo Public Schools

- 57 Schools – 38 Pre K thru 8 buildings.
- 74% free or reduced lunch.
- Ethnic background: 50% African American, 22% Caucasian, 17% Hispanic, 19% Limited English Proficient, culturally diverse with a large refugee population.
- State Education Department Accountability Status: 47% Priority, 29% Focus, 24% Good Standing.
- Interim Superintendent – 3<sup>rd</sup> Superintendent in 4 yrs. School Board has new leadership and membership.
- 86.5% ride the bus to school.
- Choice district – lottery placements.



# Attendance Improvement Initiatives

- 1.) Data conversion – 2011
- 2.) Integration of attendance with PBIS (RtI- B)
- 3.) Updated the attendance teacher job description
- 4.) High School Student Ambassadors – Get Schooled  
(# 1 Nationally and 10 schools in the top 35 spots)
- 5.) Ready Freddy – Pre K and K
- 6.) GE Attendance Workout



# General Info on Transportation

## BPS Student Eligibility:

- a.) Students attending schools more than 1 and ½ miles and less than fifteen miles walking distance from their home.
- b.) Students eligible for McKinney-Vento.
- c.) Students with disabilities.
- d.) Transportation pass on public buses or trains operated by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA), good for passage to and from schools for students enrolled in grades nine through twelve.



# Transportation Attendance Barriers

- Transportation was reported as the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest barrier to school attendance (Youth Risk Behavior Survey).
- Focus group data taught us that:
  - Full (or not so full) NFTA busses drove past students
  - Lost/stolen bus passes can only be replaced by going to the transportation office, 1-2 weeks
- Behavior: Data suggested a high number of NFTA passes were being confiscated.



# (GE) Attendance Workout Process

Consultants worked with a cross section of professionals with the goal of turning around transportation barriers to attendance in 100 days. Teams got together for 2 “design sessions” and concluded the planning with immediate Superintendent approval to move forward. Committees included:

- Transportation
- Attendance
  - Registration Process
  - Communication Strategy
  - Attendance Data
  - School Climate



# Work-out Finding #1

Finding 1: NFTA Student Passes were being confiscated (concentrating on specific bus routes/officers).

Goal 1: To reduce the monthly average number of confiscated passes by 25% in 100 days.

## Actions:

- Confiscated passes were returned to building where school staff discussed the incidents with students.
- Increase monitoring of routes/officer confiscations

# Work-out Finding #2

Finding #2: Pass replacements were issued at one location in the City and the process took up to 2 weeks.

Goal #2: Shorten pass replacement time and be more responsive to the student/family consumer.

Action #2: Pilot a replacement process at school building and eliminate the need for travel to terminal.



# Key Learnings

- Data clarified the actual number of pass confiscations and found that most are due to being off-route or using the pass after time is expired.
- Additional training for NFTA staff is necessary to further reduce unnecessary confiscations.
- Pass restrictions need to be examined in order to determine best practices for our student body and the District
  - Routing
  - Valid pass hours

# Other Transportation Barrier Not Yet Addressed

After the new year, for NFTA busses not picking up students, we will work with our Student Ambassadors to:

- Develop a data reporting logging system for students to report times they are not picked up.
- Have students lead a town meeting with City Council and other elected officials and representatives to address issue with the NFTA.