

HIGHROAD FELLOWSHIP REPORTS

BOLSTERING SCHOOL SUPPORT

Racial Equity and Trauma Informed Care Measures

July 2020

Helen Zhou

Hum Ec '22, from Appleton, WI

2020 High Road Fellow

With Say Yes to Education Buffalo.



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Bolstering School Support during a Pandemic: Racial Equity and Trauma Informed Care Measures



SAY YES TO EDUCATION BUFFALO

HELEN ZHOU

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Introduction

“Equity will be achieved when we can all just wake up and live freely; be valued and respected; live free from structural impediments based off of perceived racial characteristics; and, have fair representation and opportunity.”

~Collective Statement Developed by Say Yes Buffalo Staff at 2019 Retreat~

The Buffalo Strong Community Schools is one of Say Yes to Education Buffalo’s joint-efforts with the Buffalo Public School District. Strong Community Schools build bridges between families and communities leading to improved student learning, increased parent engagement and healthier students¹.



Vision

Our Community Schools will attract families using a “whole child” model to increase student outcomes and improve the surrounding communities.

Mission

Build bridges between families and communities leading to improved student learning, increased parent engagement and healthier students.

Goals

- Implement strong educational programs which reduce learning gaps, enrich and expand the curriculum, and strengthen parent and community engagement in the school.
- Coordinate with Say Yes Buffalo and other local resources to offer medical, dental, health and wellness services at the school.
- Build partnerships with local organizations to implement high quality programs of excellence to the entire community!

¹ www.buffaloschools.org/communityschools

The Community School model provides a large range of services for both students and their parents. This strategy is effective because it increases community engagement and provides comprehensive support to the whole family unit rather than just individual students. In Buffalo, there are now 21 Community Schools and 4 Parent Centers. Through Community Schools, students can engage in academic enrichment programs and much more¹. There are many resources provided for parents such as assistance with FAFSA completion, tax preparation, and more. There are also health and wellness courses such as swimming classes, Zumba, and yoga that are available for everyone¹.

Since the massive school closures across the country in response to COVID-19, the Community Schools and Parent Centers in Buffalo have transitioned to virtual programming. With the suspension of in-person schooling, parents and students are now faced with many unique obstacles. Say Yes has continued hosting Saturday Academies by live-streaming the Zoom sessions on Facebook² despite the challenging circumstances.

It is more crucial now than ever to examine the possible reopening scenarios through racial equity and trauma-informed lenses. The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent school closures have dramatically altered the lives of students, their families, school districts, and communities at large. This document will provide further information on what schools, with a focus on Community Schools and Parent Centers, could look like through these lenses and examine best practices for conducting a needs assessment during this time. We will also define and focus on four scenarios, as presented by New America³, for reopening schools: “brick to click,” “click to brick,” hybrid/blended, and fully virtual. For these scenarios, we will propose questions that Community Schools and Parent Centers will need to consider moving forward.

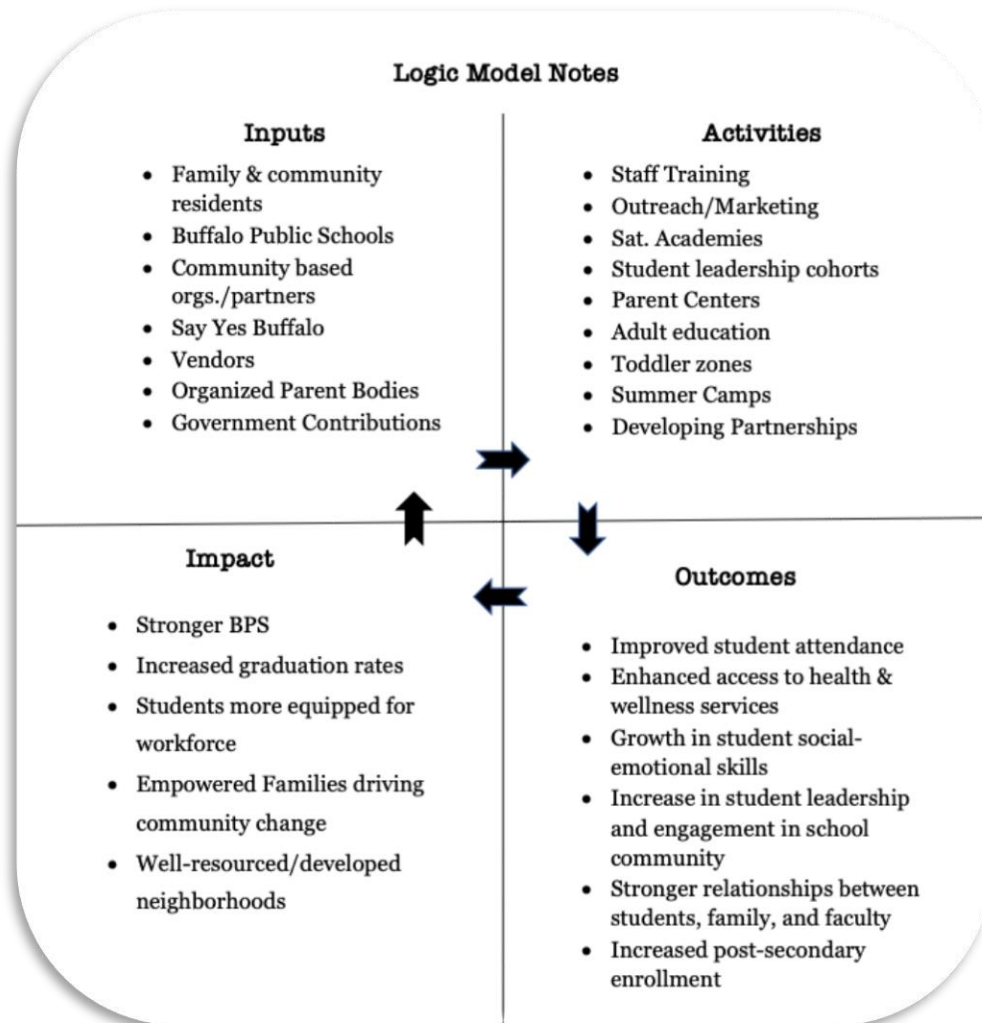
While this report focuses on the Community Schools model, the recommendations and themes of trauma-informed care and racial equity laid out herein are largely applicable to schools in general. “Reopening stronger” for the benefit of staff, students, parents, and caregivers while uplifting Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities is a ubiquitous goal in education.

² www.facebook.com/BPSCCommunitySchools

³ www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/pandemic-planning-for-distance-learning-scenarios-and-considerations-for-prek12-education-leaders/

New Logic Model Considerations

As defined by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a logic model is a road map that presents the shared relationships among the resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact for a program⁴. Logic models are important because they enhance an organization’s understanding and clarity about a particular program by identifying resources needed and provide a tool for evaluating the program’s success. In this section, we will assess how trauma-informed care and promotion of racial equity can be implemented within the Community Schools logic model (shown below).



The COVID-19 pandemic can bring a new sense of grief, loss, and trauma for students. It may lead to an increased risk of violence/abuse in the home and also invites other adversities such as isolation, economic hardship, and unmet basic needs. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge and analyze how the pandemic has disproportionately affected communities of color, specifically Black, Latinx,

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/eval/logicmodels/index.htm>

and Indigenous communities, in the United States⁵. These disparities are important considerations when thinking about the new school year. Not every student or family has been impacted by the pandemic in the same way and may have differing needs.

A **trauma-informed system**⁶, as defined by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTS), ensures that all parties involved recognize and respond to the traumatic stress that children, caregivers, staff, and service providers may be experiencing. The trauma-informed lens will help schools facilitate the recovery or adjustment of the child and the family while continuing to support their ability to learn and thrive. Assessing the logic model through a **racial equity lens**⁷ is also crucial during this time. How can the school district, along with Community Schools and Parent Centers, promote racial equity through its activities and programming? How can we empower community stakeholders to address and eliminate instances of racism and xenophobia? These are not ideas that are currently expressed within the logic model.

Inputs 🏠❤️

In a logic model, the inputs describe the resources or “players” necessary for the overall success of the program. The Community Schools logic model includes many different inputs, taking into account the wide variety of stakeholders within the landscape of K-12 education. In Buffalo, these inputs include Say Yes Buffalo and the typical school district comprised of students, teachers, principals, parents, caregivers, school staff, and district staff. However, it is important to note the inclusion of organizations and community members beyond just Say Yes Buffalo and Buffalo Public Schools. Community Schools and Parent Centers aim to unite the broader Buffalo community in support of the students in the city.

A recommendation for Community Schools and Parent Centers, as programming stays primarily virtual, is to consider a shift in organizational structure to include **school staff as clients**. In the virtual world, collaboration and the sharing of expertise between agency staff and school district staff will increase self-efficacy overall. Using a racial equity lens, this could look like an effort to enhance **cultural competency** amongst all parties involved.

It is also important to examine what roles each input in the logic model plays and how this may change in the virtual world. For example, at a Saturday Academy, what role does a teacher play versus a Say Yes employee? With virtual Saturday Academies, how do these roles change?

Activities 🏠📚🧠🎵

Trauma-informed care for staff/educators/administrators is a new consideration for the activities portion of the logic model. In particular, trauma-informed workshops for staff will be extremely valuable going into the new school year. Facilitating workshops for both school district and Say Yes staff that are centered around discussions of **self-compassion** will be beneficial going into the new school year. The trauma-informed workshops should:

1. Remind staff that they need to take care of themselves before focusing on others (students, parents/caregivers, etc.).

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/race-ethnicity.html>

⁶ https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/trauma_informed_school_strategies_during_covid-19.pdf

⁷ <https://nfty.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2017/02/4-Strategies-for-Racial-Equity-in-Classroom-and-School.pdf>

2. Discuss positive ways to cope with stress.
3. Discuss how, as adults and educators, students may model how they practice self-compassion (taking care of oneself before focusing on providing care to others) and cope with stress.
 - a. Emphasize the importance of self-care during this difficult time.
 - b. Acknowledge that this form of self-care may go against the nature of a caregiver, which is why reminders to practice self-compassion are crucial.

Other recommendations for activities oriented around staff members include **virtual coffee breaks/lunch hours**, **wellness checks**, and **virtual professional development** sessions. These can all serve as a time for staff to share their stories and relevant experiences among their colleagues.

Regarding activities offered to parents and caregivers, staff will need to consider how to best implement trauma-informed care into the services provided for parents/caregivers. Activities such as **virtual office hours** and **virtual drop-ins** can provide caregivers with information about how kids respond to stress and trauma and how this varies by age group and other factors, emphasizing the same message of self-compassion previously mentioned.

Valuable examples of trauma-informed programming can be found on the New York State Community Schools Technical Assistance Center (NYS CS TAC) website⁸. There are many COVID-19 Response Webinars regarding trauma, mindfulness, conflict resolution, and more. The COVID-19 Response Webinars include: Educator Wellness During COVID-19, Trauma & the Coronavirus Crisis - Impact on Students & Families, Engaging Families Through Family Resource Centers, Family Engagement during COVID-19, and Mindfulness and Conflict Resolution During a Time of Crisis. At the moment, all of the recordings are available for the public to view. These webinars are examples of trauma-informed programming, and the descriptions below serve as examples of workshops that will be beneficial as school starts again.

The Guided Notes for all four Educator Wellness Webinars⁹ presented WellEducator, LLC. through a collaboration between the Northwest Mental Health Technology Center and the Northwest PBIC Network list the following agendas:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Cultivating a Community of Compassion During Times of Stress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss the benefits of mindful compassion & self-compassion on wellbeing of self & school community. ● Practice self-compassion exercises to enhance personal wellbeing. ● Practice compassion exercises to build strong, compassionate school communities. |
| Supporting Educator Wellbeing: Wellness Tips to Help Your S.O.A.R. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learn three mindfulness practices. ● Identify infinite possibilities for wellness and potential barriers. ● Identify supports to get “unstuck” and create lasting change. |
| Trying to Change that Negative Loop of Self-Criticism and Perfectionism? Mindfulness Practices Can Help! | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe how mindfulness practices work to break unhelpful habit loops. ● Identify ways to start a mindfulness practice. ● Learn 3 guided meditation practices. |

⁸ <https://www.nyscommunityschools.org/webinars/>

⁹ <https://mhntcnetwork.org/centers/northwest-mhntc/educator-wellness-webinars>

Cultivating a Practice of Gratitude and Appreciation in Your School Community

- Learn strategies to create a practice of gratitude and appreciation in your daily routine within a school community.
- Learn how to receive - really “take in” - and apply appreciation to boost resiliency especially at the end of a school year.
- Identify several benefits to a practice of gratitude and appreciation to both self and within a school community.

Below are three more examples of trauma-informed programming:

Trauma & The Coronavirus Crisis: Impact on Students and Families

- Hosted by Fordham University RBERN & CSTAC
- Dr. Amelio D’Onofrio, a clinical psychologist with an extensive knowledge base on trauma, took questions from participants in advance via a Google Form.
- Using a Google Form is an effective method for speaking directly to the concerns of community members and providing the most relevant information.

Virtual Conversation: Family Engagement During COVID-19

- Hosted by the NYS CS TAC
- Goals
 - LEARN strategies to engage and support families during COVID-19
 - LEARN best practices and strategies for promoting systemic alignment while leveraging engagement to advance equity
 - DEVELOP solutions to obstacles encountered while engaging

Mindfulness and Conflict Resolution During a Time of Crisis

- Hosted by the Fordham CSTAC and Fordham RBE-RN
- Sara Steinweiss of Conflict Resolution Systems provides a foundational understanding of conflict and strategies for managing conflict during crises.
- These **conflict resolution strategies** can become extremely valuable for caregivers and staff as school districts begin to develop reopening plans (distance learning).

It is also critical that we examine the logic model activities with a racial equity lens, emphasizing strategies for promoting racial equity in classrooms and schools such as facilitating **racial equity workshops** and **professional development**. In Buffalo, it is anticipated that Say Yes staff will serve as ambassadors and liaisons who:

1. Promote **cultural competency**.
2. Encourage staff to continue educating themselves about race and racism.
3. Distinguish equity from equality.
4. Allow staff to explore and confront how race or racial biases have played a role in their lives as educators and/or administrators.
5. Start important conversations about educators’ curricula.

- a. What are you including? What are you excluding? Whose identities are represented? Who is left out?
6. Analyze disciplinary practices.
 - a. Zero tolerance vs. restorative justice practices.
 - b. Examining the Code of Conduct within the district through a racial equity lens.

Additionally, if caregivers and school district staff struggle with how to approach students about the confusion and/or traumatic stress associated with racial injustices which may be occurring in their community, workshops on how to have these difficult conversations will be beneficial. The American Psychological Association (APA) emphasizes that diversity and discrimination are important subjects to discuss with children¹⁰. Research shows that children are oftentimes aware of racial differences, which means that it could be harmful for adults to avoid these topics. The Child Mind Institute¹¹ emphasizes that these discussions of race and racism should:

1.1. Validate the student's feelings

- Check in with them and suggest alternative ways of communication like drawing or acting out a story with toys if they are uncomfortable

1.2. Not avoid the topic

- Many families/children of color may have already had conversations about race out of necessity, but is this the same for white families?

1.3. Be clear, direct, and factual

- Use clear language because children may miss the message if it is vague/confusing
- Discuss the history of racism in America
- Emphasize that racism and racial violence is wrong

1.4. Encourage questions and keep the discussion open

- These questions may not be easy or even possible to answer, but staff should encourage this form of critical thought

1.5. Remain calm but do not completely hide emotions

- Find a balance between staying factual and showing the child the emotions you feel while discussing the difficult topics

1.6. Emphasize self-compassion

- Trauma-informed care is extremely important, especially for caregivers and staff of color who may have experienced their own trauma related to racism and racialized violence
- Remind them to rely on their support systems

1.7. Explore resources

- A comprehensive list of resources to refer to can be found on the Center for Racial Justice in Education website's page with resources for talking about race, racism, and racialized violence with children.
- <https://centerracialjustice.org/resources/resources-for-talking-about-race-racism-and-racialized-violence-with-kids/>

¹⁰ <https://www.apa.org/topics/kids-discrimination>

¹¹ <https://childmind.org/article/racism-and-violence-how-to-help-kids-handle-the-news/>

Outcomes and Impact [↗](#)

Community Schools and Parent Centers in Buffalo have routinely evaluated themselves on a set of outcomes and points of impact since the program's inception. These outcomes and desired impacts are important for assessing the effectiveness of a given program and identifying gaps.

In the Strong Community Schools Report (2016-2019), the top 10 highlights (refer to Appendix E) include:

1. Strong Community Schools Named 2019 District of Distinction
2. Parent Centers and Adult Education had 25,785 Parents through 9,548 Engagement Opportunities
3. 93,602 Saturday Academy Visits
4. 4,527 Pre-K through 6th Grade Students Participated in Free Summer Camps 2017-2019
5. 785 Dental Screenings
6. Access to Healthy Food
7. Partnerships
8. Community Schools "Going Green"
9. Family Appreciation Dinners
10. Innovative Programs

Moving forward, it is important to acknowledge how outcomes might change considering factors such as **safety precautions** in a brick-in-mortar setting, how **participation** and **engagement** look in the **virtual world vs. in-person**, and more. Though objectives for outcomes and impacts are set by the school district, how these objectives are reached comes through the collaboration of services coordinated and demanded by all logic model inputs, including the internal work and leadership of Say Yes.

Including additional outcome measures to analyze the effect of supports in this new terrain ensures that Community Schools and Parent Centers continue to meet the expectations that students and families should hold for them. Assessing the outcomes and impact on the logic model through trauma-informed and racial equity lenses could involve the addition of the following goals:

1. Helping students adjust to the changing times and new school/learning protocols using trauma-informed practices
2. Promoting racial equity and cultural competency

Developing a Needs Assessment

The needs of communities across the country have changed drastically as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Needs might differ when considering what a family may be experiencing during the pandemic versus afterward. For example, when schools began to close, many Community Schools teams responded to families' more immediate needs such as food and childcare. As previously mentioned, it is now important to formulate a **post-crisis response** using a trauma-informed lens. It may also become increasingly important to assess the needs of staff and administrators (at Community-Based Organizations, the lead Community Schools agency, school district, etc.).

Conducting multiple or ongoing needs assessments can also provide schools with an idea of **how needs change over time**, which can be a tool for assessing the effectiveness of certain programs. For example, if an area of need that was identified from a previous assessment is no longer a top priority issue arising from a recently administered assessment, it could signal that a certain program has been effective within the community and vice versa.

“Needs assessments,” as defined by Dr. Karin Trice, “identify the needs for, and gaps in, services for a group of individuals that an organization serves, or is considering serving¹².” Needs assessments can be conducted in many different forms. Methods can range from online surveys, paper forms, telephone calls, focus groups, individual interviews (community leaders, caregivers, students, staff, etc.), and more. Oftentimes, multiple methods of conducted needs assessments will be used to get a more complete picture of the community. It is important to remember that a needs assessment should be inclusive of all genders, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, socioeconomic statuses, and more.

Steps for Conducting a Needs Assessment

In the Needs Assessment Kit developed by the Children’s Aid Society National Center for Community Schools in partnership with the Chicago Public Schools Community Schools Initiative¹³, they outline steps for conducting the assessment. Below are key/relevant points drawn from the document:

1. Getting Started

- Tasks [a. Convene a leadership team
- Tips [b. Assign a team member with the role of project manager so that there is someone keeping track of the overall process and keeping other team members accountable

2. Archival Data Review

- Tasks [a. Gather and record key information from existing data sources like after-school attendance, community health statistics, school suspension rates, and more
- Tips [b. Use Need Indicators when reviewing the data
- [c. Record any questions or concerns about the data

¹² http://www.feraonline.com/pdfs/Needs_and_Asset_Assessments_Article.pdf

¹³ <https://www.nccs.org/sites/default/files/resource/NeedsAssessmentToolkit.pdf>

3. Initial Analysis

- Tasks
- a. Convene the team again to review archival data
 - b. Identify the high priority needs
 - c. Brainstorm questions for surveys, interviews, focus groups, and other methods of conducting a needs assessment

4. Surveys

- Tasks
- a. Develop surveys for key constituent groups (students, parents/caregivers, teachers, administrators, etc.)
 - b. Administer surveys
 - c. Compile results
- Tips
- d. Questions should be mostly closed-ended (multiple choice, true/false, Likert Scales, etc.) and limited in number
 - e. Because of school closures and how COVID-19 will affect how schools reopen for the new school year, it may be best to focus on administering the surveys virtually
 - i. It is also easier/more convenient to compile results from web-based surveys
 - f. Use vocabulary and language that is appropriate for each audience
 - i. Avoid using overly technical language/difficult jargon
 - g. Could consider offering incentives for completion of the survey
 - h. To increase response rate, it might be beneficial to time the administration of surveys to coincide with certain events
 - i. Examples: Before, during, or after virtual Saturday Academies (could embed a QR code in a slide), faculty meetings, parent-teacher conferences, etc.

5. Key Informant Interviews

- Tasks
- a. Conduct Key Informant Interviews (can be conducted over Zoom, by phone, etc.)
 - b. Summarize findings
- Tips
- c. Keep interviews to 30-45 minutes long
 - d. Frame questions carefully
 - i. Avoid making the informant feel defensive
 - ii. Elicit the informants' interpretation of the data and suggestions for address the needs

6. Focus Groups

- Tasks
- a. Conduct Focus Groups (can be conducted virtually over Zoom)
 - b. Summarize findings
- Tips
- c. Groups of 6-12 are generally the most lively and effective
 - d. Should last between 45-60 minutes
 - e. Assign one team member to be a facilitator and another to be a note taker
 - f. Prepare a scripted introduction and 8-12 questions in advance and stay away from yes/no questions

7. Final Analysis

- Tasks
- a. Review summaries of surveys, interviews, and focus groups
 - b. Determine a few priority need areas for the next school year
 - c. Review and brainstorm additional recommendations for how to address the needs

8. Reporting

- Tasks
- a. Write Needs Assessment Report
 - b. Disseminate Report

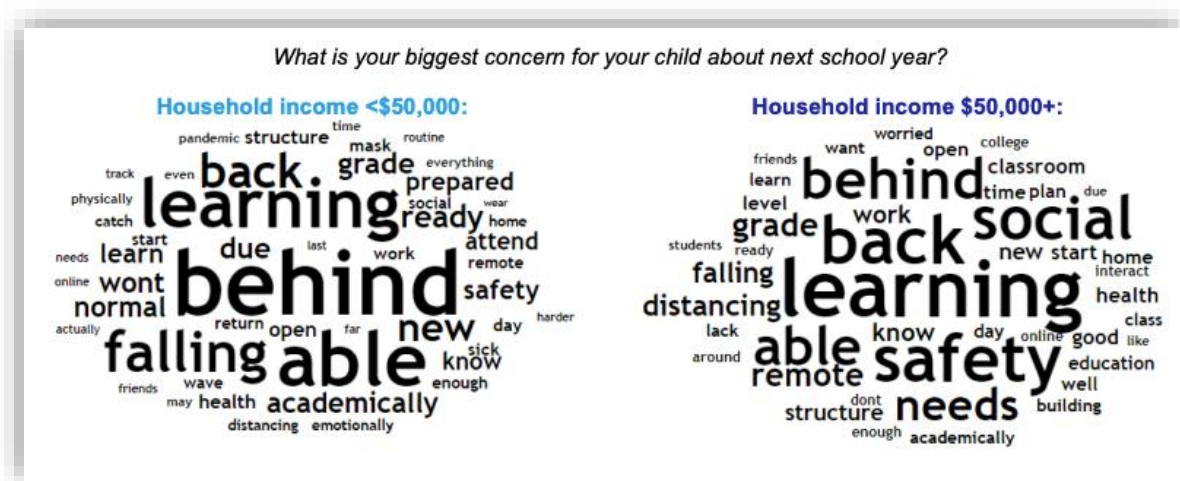
Templates/Examples

Say Yes Buffalo Community Schools tailored four needs assessment surveys for dispersal. The 4th-8th Grade Student Needs Assessment (Appendix A), High Schools Student Needs Assessment (Appendix B), Student Wish List (Appendix C), and Parent Interest Survey (Appendix D) are located in the appendix. Pre-existing templates from the Federation for Community Schools¹⁴ and Panorama Education School Reopening Surveys¹⁵ were used to guide Say Yes's survey creation for the local context.

The University of Buffalo also has a Distanced Engagement Resource Guide¹⁶ with approaches for distanced engagement for community and stakeholder meetings, surveys, focused engagement activities, and digital communication tools. These approaches will be crucial moving forward as programming and learning stays in the virtual world either entirely or through a hybrid model.

COVID-19 and Post-Crisis Considerations

For Say Yes Buffalo Community Schools, it is important to utilize pre-existing state information in developing relevant needs assessments. Below are relevant key findings from an online survey conducted by Global Strategy Group and The Education Trust-New York¹⁷ among 800 parents of children in New York State public schools (June 16th-22nd, 2020). Along with these key findings, we provide subsequent examples of questions that could be developed from each finding to use for a community needs assessment:



¹⁴<https://education.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/linc/lincurriculummodule/Community%20Needs%20Assessment%20-%20ALL.pdf>

¹⁵<https://www.panoramaed.com/school-reopening-surveys>

¹⁶http://regional-institute.buffalo.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/05/DistancedEngagementResourceGuide_MAY-2020.pdf.pdf

¹⁷<https://s3-us-east-2.amazonaws.com/edtrustmain/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/06/26111501/NY-Public-School-Parents-Memo-6.29.20.pdf>

“Months after school closures, satisfaction with distance learning has decreased – driven by a large gap between the experiences of low-income families and higher-income families.”

- How satisfied are you with distance learning?
- (STUDENT) If you answered that you have been dissatisfied with distance learning, mark the reasons below:
 - Access to teachers
 - Feedback on assignments
 - Summer learning materials
 - Access to technology
 - Access to reliable internet
 - Food insecurity
- (PARENT) If you answered that you have been dissatisfied with distance learning, mark the reasons below:
 - Access to technology
 - Access to reliable internet
 - Food insecurity
 - Lack of childcare services
 - Job instability
 - Etc...
- Do you believe you received adequate support from _____ with the transition from in-person to virtual schooling?

“At the root of parents’ dissatisfaction with remote learning is a fear that their child will fall behind academically.”

- (PARENT) T/F: The Spring 2020 school closures greatly disrupted my child’s learning and academic performance

“Access to their child’s teachers is viewed as an important area of improvement.”

- How would you rank teacher responsiveness?
 - Extremely responsive
 - Responsive
 - Occasionally responsive
 - Rarely responsive

“Parents prioritize providing additional support for students who have fallen behind and finding safe ways for children to attend school.”

- (PARENT) Do you feel safe sending your child to the brick-in-mortar school for the 2020-2021 school year?
- (STUDENT) Do you feel safe attending the brick-in-mortar school for the 2020-2021 school year?

“Losing more learning time is an extremely high concern for parents.”

- How can Community Schools fill these gaps in the student’s learning?

These questions and those in the Say Yes Buffalo Community Schools surveys address many of the concerns and needs that families might have for the new school year. Since most schools will be utilizing some form of distance learning, many families will experience similar hardships from when schools initially closed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overall, the needs assessment amplifies the voices of students and their families. This focus on long-term student and parent input mechanisms is especially important for the Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities that have been empirically overlooked in policy considerations.

Reopening Schools

Safety is a top concern when it comes to “reopening” schools. However, safety is not a binary consideration. The CDC Readiness and Planning Tool to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 in K-12 Schools¹⁸ lists the following guiding principles to keep in mind:

- **Lowest Risk:** Students and teachers engage in virtual-only classes, activities, and events.
- **More Risk:** Small, in-person classes, activities, and events. Groups of students stay together and with the same teacher throughout/across school days and groups do not mix. Students remain at least 6 feet apart and do not share objects.
- **Highest Risk:** Full sized, in-person classes, activities, and events. Students are not spaced apart, share classroom materials or supplies, and mix between classes and activities.

The CDC’s Considerations for Schools¹⁹ and guiding principles are necessary resources as school districts decide on how they will reopen for the 2020-2021 school year.

The following underlying questions across scenarios must be considered foremost:

1. What is the value of schools and agencies during a crisis?
2. What is the value of virtual Community Schools and Parent Centers programming?
 - a. How does this value change depending on what kind of stakeholder you are?
 - i. Is the student your child or grandchild? How does that change how you engage with virtual programming?
3. Will programming remain completely virtual or take on a hybrid model?
 - a. How is engagement best tracked when conducting virtual programming?
 - i. How can we track changes in engagement going from brick-in-mortar to virtual?
 - b. What does a hybrid model look like?
4. What safety precautions need to be taken if there is in-person programming?
5. How does outreach change?
 - a. How does communication and marketing that happens within the classroom change?
 - b. Will there be a heavier reliance on social media for school, agency, or parent/caregiver outreach?

Scenario #1: “Brick to Click” Learning

In a guide published by New America, a Washington D.C.-based think tank, authors Kristina Ishmael, Rebecca Heiser, and Jennifer Payne present four possible scenarios for reopening schools in the 2020-2021 school year. They preface the guide with the assumption that most school districts will not be able to conduct the new school year as they have in the past. The first scenario they describe is called “Brick to Click” learning. In this scenario, the school district will resume traditional in-person schooling with the flexibility to transition to distance education if there is a COVID-19 outbreak. The school district will decide which platforms/technologies to use for these modes of learning.

¹⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/School-Admin-K12-readiness-and-planning-tool.pdf>

¹⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>

Questions to Consider

1. How can schools and agencies like Say Yes assist families and staff with the transition from in-person to virtual schooling?
2. How do needs (students, parents, teachers, administrators, etc.) of the community change from one form of learning to another?
 - a. How does the content of Community Schools and Parent Centers' programming change considering whether students are physically attending school versus virtually?
3. How can schools and agencies prepare for the possibility of a COVID-19 outbreak disrupting in-person schooling using a trauma-informed lens?

Scenario #2: "Click to Brick" Learning

The next scenario that the New America guide details is called "Click to Brick" learning. In this scenario, the school district starts the school year with distance education with the plan of resuming traditional in-person when it is safe to do so.

Questions to Consider

1. The move from virtual to in-person schooling invites many safety concerns and can be scary for all parties involved, so how can schools agencies assist families and staff with this transition?
2. How do needs (students, parents, teachers, administrators, etc.) of the community change from one form of learning to another?
 - a. Considering the difficulties of distance learning for many people and especially for lower-income families

Scenario #3: Hybrid/Blended Learning

The third scenario for reopening schools is a hybrid learning model. The hybrid model would combine virtual and in-person learning.

Questions to Consider

1. What challenges will families face when sending their child(ren) to the brick-in-mortar school some days and doing distance learning during the other days?
2. How can schools supported by agency resources help fill the gaps in learning that may occur as a result of this hybrid model of learning?

Scenario #4: Fully Virtual

The last scenario is a fully virtual school year. In this scenario, the school district will move all learning experiences and services online.

Questions to Consider

1. How can schools and agencies continue to assist families and staff adjust to distance learning?
2. Will students continue to fall behind academically if the school year is fully virtual again? How can agencies help fill those gaps in learning?

Families and school district staff across the nation are now faced with a myriad of obstacles when it comes to reopening schools. Though there are still many uncertainties surrounding how schools will reopen, the guiding questions associated with each scenario will better prepare both Say Yes and school district staff to anticipate what may happen as students return to school, whether that be virtually or in-person.

Conclusion

Each community and school district in this country will have unique difficulties and challenges when schools reopen. Regardless, all the recommendations made in this guide regarding trauma-informed care, racial equity, cultural competency, and more are useful beyond the Say Yes Buffalo Community Schools context and beyond the immediacy of the crisis. Amidst the uncertainty and worry that many are inevitably experiencing during this time, positioning these recommendations as pivotal for the best possible school reopening is an important step. Schools across various circumstances will be able to use this idea of reopening stronger and the potential means of achieving this goal of increasing the priority of mental health, racial equity, and increased input, participation, and resources.

In short, reopening stronger, which also means reopening *safer*, will not be possible without the prioritization of both all parties' mental and physical health by providing trauma-informed care and positioning racial equity as a measure of success.

Acknowledgments

This document was developed through my work as a 2020 Cornell High Road Fellow. I was matched with the Community Schools team at Say Yes to Education Buffalo, and it was an absolute pleasure to work for this organization and my supervisors Tanya Staples, Senior Director of Community Schools, and Gellenia Smallwood, Parent Center Director. I am incredibly appreciative of all the support they provided me through the fellowship and the process of creating this guide.

Many thanks to Nicole Golias and Micaela Lipman, the High Road Fellowship co-coordinators, and Lou Jean Fleron, the director of Cornell University ILR Buffalo Co-Lab. Micaela, as my cluster captain, always gave me invaluable advice and support each week. Nicole gave me much-needed feedback and suggestions for this document, and I am so grateful for all of her help.

For any further inquiries or request for a Word Document version of this guide or the surveys, you can reach me at hv297@cornell.edu.

Appendix

Appendix A. 4th - 8th Grade Student Needs Assessment

Say Yes to Education Buffalo's Strong Community Schools and Parents Centers are asking you to complete this questionnaire in order to identify ways we can support your success in school and life. Please answer each question to the best of your ability, and honestly. Thank you!

Information about you:

1. Are you ___ Male (boy) or ___ Female (girl)?
2. How old are you? ___9 ___10 ___11 ___12 ___13 ___14 ___ Older than 14
3. What grade are you in? ___4th ___5th ___6th ___7th ___8th
4. How do you describe yourself or your family?
___ Latino (Mexican, Latin American, Puerto Rican)
___ African American (Black)
___ White (Caucasian)
___ Asian
___ Native American
___ Other _____
5. What language do you speak at home? (may choose more than one)
___ English ___ Spanish ___ Polish ___ Chinese ___ Indian dialects
___ Other _____

Information about your school:

Mark which statements are true for each form of learning (can mark one, both, or neither):

- | | Virtual | In-person |
|---|---------|-----------|
| 6. Students in my school get along well with one another. | ___ | ___ |
| 7. Teachers in my school like students in this school. | ___ | ___ |
| 8. My teacher listens to me. | ___ | ___ |
| 9. I can ask my teacher with help when I don't understand my work. | ___ | ___ |
| 10. Adults in this school treat students with respect. | ___ | ___ |
| 11. Students in this school treat adults with respect | ___ | ___ |
| 12. I feel safe attending school. | ___ | ___ |
| 13. I like to attend school. | ___ | ___ |
| 14. There are plenty of adults at my school to ask for help with school work. | ___ | ___ |
| 15. I could use more help with reading. | ___ | ___ |
| 16. I could use more help with math. | ___ | ___ |
| 17. I could use more help with science. | ___ | ___ |

Information about your family:

18. Who provides assistance and support with your online classes? (choose all that apply)
___ Parents
___ Grandparents or other guardians

- Other relatives (older brothers/sisters, aunts uncles)
- Friends
- Teachers
- Afterschool programs
- Tutor
- Other _____

19. What do you think would help you do better in school?

COVID-19 and Distance Learning Questions:

20. During distance learning, how responsive were your teachers?
 Not responsive at all Slightly responsive Somewhat responsive
 Quite responsive Extremely responsive
21. During distance learning, how engaged did you feel with your schoolwork?
 Not engaged at all Slightly engaged Somewhat engaged Quite engaged
 Extremely engaged
22. How confident are you that you made sufficient academic progress during distance learning?
 Not confident at all Slightly confident Somewhat confident
 Quite confident Extremely confident
23. Has distance learning put a strain on your family? Yes No
24. If you marked “Yes”, would you say that Community Schools and Parent Centers programming regarding conflict resolution (resolving arguments) and mindfulness would be beneficial to you and/or your family? Yes No
25. Do you have continuous access to a tablet or laptop? Yes No
26. Did you pick up equipment (computer, hotspot wifi device, etc.) from the school?
 Yes No
27. Do you have continuous access to the internet? Yes No
28. How can Community Schools and Parent Centers best support you with distance/virtual learning?

Appendix B. High School Student Needs Assessment

Say Yes to Education Buffalo’s Strong Community Schools and Parents Centers are asking you to complete this questionnaire in order to identify ways we can support your success in school and life. Please answer each question to the best of your ability, and honestly. Thank you!

Information about you:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I know what it takes to be a good student at my school both in-person and online					
2. Virtual learning is preparing me well for life after graduation.					
3. I am well prepared to graduate on time.					
4. My teachers care about me and expect the best from me.					
5. I am doing well in school.					
6. When I need help with school work, I feel comfortable and am able to reach out to my teachers.					
7. I know what work is expected of me with virtual learning.					
8. My parents expect the best from me and believe I will succeed.					
9. My parents help me to do well in school.					
10. My teachers know and understand my culture.					
11. My teachers treat me fairly and with respect.					
12. In my school, I have a say in important matters.					
13. If I have a serious problem, I can get help in my school.					
14. If my family has a serious problem, I know where to get help in my community.					
15. My parents know how I am doing in school.					
16. High school is preparing me well for my future goals.					

17. How do you think you can best participate in community service activities virtually?

18. Who provides assistance and support with your online classes? (choose all that apply)

- Parents
- Grandparents or other guardians
- Other relatives (older brothers/sisters, aunts uncles)
- Friends
- Teachers
- Afterschool programs
- Tutor
- Other _____

19. What do you think would help you do better in school?

20. The biggest obstacles to my doing well in high school are (check all that apply):

- My parents don't help me
- Too many problems at home
- My teachers don't care about me
- My teachers can't teach me
- I need to work to make money
- I don't know English well enough
- I didn't understand the work or expectations
- My classes are too hard
- I had issues understanding the technology (Schoology, Google Classroom, etc.)
- School is too boring
- I take care of my siblings
- I am pregnant
- I have a child(ren)
- I don't have good & consistent childcare
- I don't need high school for my future goal(s)
- Other _____

21. If you are a senior, what are your plans for after high school?

- Go directly into the workforce
- College
- Military
- Unsure
- Other _____

22. If you are a senior planning on attending college, have you completed financial aid forms?
 Yes No
23. If you are a senior, have you completed your Say Yes scholarship? Yes No
24. Have you applied to be in any other Say Yes programs?
 Boys and Men of Color/Breaking Barriers
 Mentorship Program
 Internship Program
 Say Yes Ambassadors

COVID-19 and Distance Learning Questions:

25. How satisfied were you with distance learning?
 Not satisfied at all Slightly satisfied Somewhat satisfied Quite satisfied
 Extremely satisfied

26. If you marked “not satisfied at all” or “slightly satisfied”, what were some issues you ran into with distance learning? What do you think could improve?

27. Do you have continuous access to a tablet or laptop? Yes No
28. Did you pick up equipment (computer, hotspot wifi device, etc.) from the school?
 Yes No
29. Do you have continuous access to the internet? Yes No
29. During distance learning, how responsive were your teachers?
 Not responsive at all Slightly responsive Somewhat responsive
 Quite responsive Extremely responsive
30. During distance learning, how engaged did you feel with your schoolwork?
 Not engaged at all Slightly engaged Somewhat engaged Quite engaged
 Extremely engaged
31. How confident are you that you made sufficient academic progress during distance learning?
 Not confident at all Slightly confident Somewhat confident
 Quite confident Extremely confident
32. During distance learning, how difficult did you feel the schoolwork was compared to in-person learning?
 Not difficult at all Slightly difficult Somewhat difficult Quite difficult
 Extremely difficult

33. If you marked “quite difficult” or “extremely difficult”, what are some ways you think Community Schools and Parent Centers could assist with the transition from in-person to virtual learning?

34. Has distance learning put a strain on your family? ___ Yes ___ No

35. If you marked “Yes”, would you say that Community Schools and Parent Centers programming regarding conflict resolution and mindfulness would be beneficial to you and/or your family?
___ Yes ___ No

36. How can Community Schools Navigators and Parent Center Liaisons best support you with distance/virtual learning?

Appendix C. Student Wish List Survey

Community Schools and Parent Centers are working to develop new programs for students, parents, and other members of the community. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many in-person activities may not be possible, so we have marked activities on the wish list off that could be conducted **virtually** (in blue). We need your input to identify programs that interest you for now (mostly virtual) and in the future (in-person and/or virtual). Please check all activities you would participate in if they were available after school or on weekends. Thank you for your help!

Sports	Weekends	After School	Personal Growth - can be done virtually	Weekends	After School
Basketball			Individual counseling		
Boxing			Group counseling		
Soccer			Teen issues		
Volleyball			Parenting		
Tumbling			Dealing with divorce		
Softball			Self Esteem		
Track			Grief Support		
Karate			LGBTQ+ issues		
Weightlifting			Anger management		
Swimming			Child abuse		
Cheerleading			Conflict resolution		
Floor Hockey			Women's issues		
Flag Football			Alcoholics Anonymous		
Tennis			Relationship Skills		
Golf			Parenting Classes		
Baseball			Gang prevention		
Racquetball			Mentoring Program		

Other _____

Support groups on: _____

Workshops on: _____

Other: _____

Social Activities	Weekends	After School	Recreation	Weekends	After School
Dances			Open Gym		
Movie night			Camping		
Field trips to			Gardening		
Museums			Sewing		
Bowling			Knitting/Crocheting		
Skating			Cooking		
Downtown tour			Website Design		
Movies			Computer Club/Gaming		
Plays			Arts & Crafts		
Concerts			Exercise/Fitness		
Ski trip			Board Games		

Other _____

Other _____

College Readiness - can be done virtually	Weekends	After School
College tours		
Financial aid workshops		
Help choosing college		
Workshops on college applications and essays		
Scholarship assistance		

Other _____

Academic - can be done virtually	Weekends	After School	Job Preparation - can be done virtually	Weekends	After School
Study skills			Resume writing		
Homework help			Interviewing skills		
Tutoring			Part-time work		
Math club			Learn about careers		
Science club			Apprenticeships		
Book club			Internships		
Speech and debate			Job Shadowing		
Journalism			Public speaking		
Creative writing			Word processing		
History projects			Bookkeeping		
College Prep					
Computer classes					
ACT/SAT Prep					
Computer lab access					
Peer tutoring					
Writing lab					
AP Courses					

Other _____

What types of professions are you most interested in learning about?

Other _____

Art	Weekends	After School	Other Activities/ Interests - most can be done virtually	Weekends	After School
Crafts			Daycare		
Band			Self-defense		
Choir			Big Brothers/Big Sisters		
Fashion Design			Mentoring Younger Kids		
Painting/Drawing			Be Mentored		
Murals			Service Learning		
Photography			Volunteering		
Drama/Acting			Nutrition Class		
Poetry Slams			Social Justice		
Stage Tech			Young Democrats/Republicans		
Video Club			Leadership Training		
Student Journalism			Future Leaders Program		
Graphic Arts			Current Events		
Dance			Agriculture		

What instrument? _____
 What kind of dance? _____
 Other _____

What is your grade? 9 10 11 12
 What is your gender? _____
 What other new activities would you like to see offered?

Appendix D. Parent Interest Survey

Say Yes to Education Buffalo's Strong Community Schools and Parents Centers are asking you to complete this questionnaire in order to identify ways we can support you and your child's success in school and life. Please answer each question to the best of your ability, and honestly. Thank you!

Information about you and your child(ren):

Please answer the following questions about programs for your child/ren.

1. Does your child (children) attend an after school program at (School Name)?
 Yes No

2. How many days per week does your child attend an after school program at (School Name)?
 1 2 3 4

3. Why did you enroll in your child (children) in the after school program at (School Name)?
(Check all that apply)
 To have fun
 To build friendships
 To have something to do after school
 To get help with homework
 To be safe after school
 To gain skills for school success
 Other _____

4. What have been the benefits of participating in the after school program for your child (children)?
 Having fun
 Building friendships
 Having something to do after school
 Getting help with homework
 Being safe after school
 Gaining skills for school success
 Other _____

5. Community Schools Navigators and Parent Center Liaisons help children be more successful in school. Sometimes children have challenges in their lives that make school success difficult. Please provide us with your thoughts about how we could help your child be more successful and reduce barriers:

6. What kinds of challenges do children who you know (in this community) face that make success in school difficult?
 Difficulty with reading Need positive adult role models

- Difficulty with Math and Science
- Better relationships with teachers
- Physical health issues
- Ways to improve behavior
- Mental Health issues
- Family stress
- Other_____

7. What kinds of programs and services do you think would help your children have greater success in school? (Check all that apply)

- Reading Improvement Programs
- Math and Science Programs
- Health & Nutrition Services
- Behavior Management programs for students
- Opportunities for parents & teachers to work together for student success
- Programs to help parents help their children
- Mental Health Services
- Other_____
- Family support services
- Mentoring programs
- Life Skills programs for students

8. Would you be willing to talk in a discussion group about student needs? Yes No

9. Would you be willing to work with us to develop programs & services to ensure student success? Yes No Can't now, but in the future

10. How can we contact you?

Your Name _____
 Telephone _____
 Email _____

COVID-19 and Distance Learning Questions:

Distance Learning

- 11. Does your child have continuous access to a tablet or laptop? Yes No
- 12. Did you pick up equipment (computer, hotspot wifi device, etc.) from the school?
 Yes No
- 13. Do your child have continuous access to the internet? Yes No
- 14. Were you able to access childcare during COVID-19 pandemic and online learning?
 Yes No
- 15. Was childcare a challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic and online learning?
 Yes No

16. How satisfied were you with distance learning?
 Not satisfied at all Slightly satisfied Somewhat satisfied Quite satisfied
 Extremely satisfied

17. If you marked “not satisfied at all” or “slightly satisfied”, what were some issues you ran into with distance learning? What do you think could improve?

18. During distance learning in the spring, how clear was the communication from your child’s school regarding distance learning?
 Not clear at all Slightly clear Somewhat clear Quite clear
 Extremely clear

19. During distance learning in the spring, how easy was it to get in contact with your child’s teacher if you needed to?
 Not at all easy Slightly easy Somewhat easy Quite easy
 Extremely easy

20. During distance learning in the spring, how engaged was your child with their schoolwork?
 Not engaged at all Slightly engaged Somewhat engaged Quite engaged
 Extremely engaged

21. How confident are you that your child made sufficient academic progress during distance learning?
 Not confident at all Slightly confident Somewhat confident
 Quite confident Extremely confident

22. How much extra academic support will your child need upon returning to school in the fall?

23. What subject will your child need the most extra academic support in?
 English Math Reading Social Studies Science

24. Has distance learning put a strain on your family? Yes No

25. If you marked “Yes”, would you say that Community Schools and Parent Centers programming regarding conflict resolution and mindfulness would be beneficial to you and/or your family?
 Yes No

26. How can Community Schools Navigators and Parent Center Liaisons best support you with distance/virtual learning?

Social-Emotional Well-Being

27. How concerned are you about your child's social-emotional well-being?
 Not at all concerned Slightly concerned Somewhat concerned
 Quite concerned Extremely concerned

28. How concerned are you about your child's peer relationships because of social distancing?
 Not at all concerned Slightly concerned Somewhat concerned
 Quite concerned Extremely concerned

29. Is there anything else you would like to share about your child's social-emotional well-being and how Community Schools Navigators and Parent Center Liaisons can assist you?

Essential Services/COVID-19 Trauma

30. What best describes your family's food situation?
 We're okay for food right now without support from the school district
 We're okay, and are relying on the school district/Community Schools and Parent Centers for support
 We need more support from the school district/Community Schools and Parent Centers right now

31. Were you able to access grab and go meals? Yes No

32. If you need more support concerning stable access to food, what support can we offer?

33. How concerned are you about your family's housing situation?
 Not at all concerned Slightly concerned Somewhat concerned
 Quite concerned Extremely concerned

34. How concerned are you about child care if a form of distance learning continues in the fall?
 Not at all concerned Slightly concerned Somewhat concerned
 Quite concerned Extremely concerned

35. Were any of the following services disrupted as a result of COVID-19?
 WIC TANF SNAP Health Insurance

___ Other _____

36. If so, how can Community Schools Navigators and Parent Center Liaisons help you resume that service?

37. Was transportation a barrier in accessing school resources? ___ Yes ___ No

38. Did your family experience any traumatic events during COVID-19? ___ Yes ___ No

39. In what ways can Community Schools and Parent Centers support you with this?

40. Mark all the trauma-informed services that would be beneficial for you and your family:

- ___ Conflict Resolution Workshop
- ___ Mindfulness Workshop
- ___ Grief Counseling
- ___ Virtual Office Hours/Drop-Ins
- ___ Other _____

Racial Equity

41. How have the recent racial injustices in this country impacted your family?

42. In what ways can Community Schools and Parent Centers support you with this?

TOP 10 HIGHLIGHTS 2016-2019



1 Strong Community Schools Named 2019 District of Distinction

District Administration, a leading K12 education publication for district-level leaders across the country, names “Districts of Distinction” to honor school districts that are leading the way with new ideas that solve challenges. Buffalo Public Schools Strong Community Schools were named a 2019 District of Distinction.



2 Parent Centers and Adult Education had 25,785 Parents through 9,548 Engagement Opportunities

Since 2016, with strong collaboration efforts from Buffalo Public Schools, Say Yes Buffalo and dozens of community partners, Parent Centers at Lafayette Community High School, East Community High School, Bennett Community School Campus and South Park High School have served over 25,785 parents through 9,548 engagement activities. Through Parent Academy and Adult Education workshops and frequent engagement activities throughout the year, parents are informed, supported and equipped to support themselves and their students. Free meals are offered at all Parent Academy workshops, Adult Education classes and parent and family engagement activities. Since 2016, 21,192 meals have been served to thousands of parents and families.



3 93,602 Saturday Academy Visits

The introduction of Saturday Academy programs in 2016 opened Community School locations to students, families and community members on the weekend, providing free breakfast and lunch, and an assortment of recreational, youth development, academic and social-emotional activities. Since then, there have been 93,602 visits, 13,000 activity sessions and over 190,000 meals served at hundreds of Saturday Academies across four zones.



4 4,527 Pre-K through 6th Grade Students Participated in Free Summer camps 2017-2019

School might have been out, but Strong Community Schools were busy over the summer! In 2019 alone, 1,345 Pre-K through 6th grade students participated in Summer Camp at 31 locations across the City of Buffalo. These students participated in a combined 1,575 hours of academic programming to keep their reading, writing and math skills sharp. They also participated in a variety of enrichment activities and attended field trips, exploring new talents and developing their social-emotional skills. Physical health and wellness was also a focus; students participated in a variety of physical activities and were provided healthy breakfast and lunch daily. In addition to these Summer Camps, Community Schools staff conducted 20 “Pop-Up” activities at a number of community locations across the city this summer.



5 785 Dental Screenings

The Erie County (NY) Chapter of the Links, Incorporated, Complete Health Dentistry, and University Pediatric Dentistry partnered with Strong Community Schools to provide dental screening opportunities for Buffalo Public School students and adults. During Saturday Academies, participants had access to oral health education, screenings, and referral services. Students also received a “dental goodie bag” containing toothpaste, a toothbrush, dental floss, and dental education materials.

These partners continue to leave a positive impact on the students’ oral health through their partnership with BPS Strong Community Schools. These impactful partners have been extremely supportive in providing a “whole child” approach to education.



6 Access to Healthy Food

Community School Navigators coordinate with local food banks, faith-based partners and other community organizations to organize School-based food pantries, Mobile Food Pantries and Community School Gardens and a Farmer’s Market to provide families with fresh fruits, vegetables and other healthy foods and nutrition education. More than 14,000 students and families have benefited from these resources.

5



7 Partnerships

BPS Community Schools seeks to improve the communities of Buffalo from the inside out. That means bringing the best out of our staff, students, families and community members. Essential to supporting that effort are our Community School partners. Each Zone has established key partnerships with colleges and universities, financial institutions, City of Buffalo public and private businesses, Faith based organizations, Health Care organizations and many more. Strong Community Schools boast more than 200 partners across the East, West, Northeast and South zones. There are as many as hundreds of local partnerships in the areas surrounding the schools. Block clubs, local businesses, Parent organizations, to name a few, make up the list of diverse groups that lend a hand to the important work being done on the ground and in the community. In the past three years, since the implementation of the Community school strategy in Buffalo, organizations big and small have contributed to our success. From funding field trips to providing volunteers, there has been support from all sides. Our Strong Community School’s partnerships put the emphasis on Unity in the Community!



8 Community Schools “Going Green”

Since 2015, the number of Buffalo Public Schools in good standing has more than doubled, while the number of schools in priority status has dropped from 25 to just three. 8 of the 10 Strong Community Schools that were priority status are now in good standing:

- D’Youville Porter #3
- Frank A. Sedita #30
- Charles R. Drew Science Magnet #59
- Hamlin Park Claude and Ouida Clapp Academy #74
- Herman Badillo Bilingual Academy #76
- Lydia T. Wright School of Excellence #89
- West Hertel Academy #94
- International Preparatory #198

9 Family Appreciation Dinners

In 2019, the Buffalo Public Schools Parent Centers & Community Schools held their first ever family appreciation dinners.

More than 400 families were awarded certificates for their participation in our Evening and Saturday Academy programs. Some of the awards included: Grandparents Engagement, Volunteer Award, Saturday Academy Engagement and Participation in three or more Parent Center Academy Learning Sessions. Staff made personal phone calls to all awardees to share the great news.

The uniqueness of each event was special and speaks to the amazing work and the relationships that have been established. “I’m 71 years old and this is the first time anyone has ever given me an award” was the response given by Ms. Margaret Brinkworth who was honored for her commitment, advocacy, and collaboration at one of our East Zone Community Schools. Mr. Sal and his sister Sarah, two of our South Zone community members were honored for attending 112 programs during our 2017-2018 school year.

10 Innovative Programs

If there is one thing that is a distinguishing feature of the Strong Community Schools initiative, it’s the special programs offered across every zone. There are financial literacy programs to help students to better learn how to manage finances to SAT prep classes for students to better prepare themselves for post-secondary education. When UB hosted its first Mini-Med Drone Competition, Community School students were able to practice their skills on drones, laparoscopic surgery tools and surgical stitching. For the past two years, Community School students have taken their shot at landing a shark, in Community School’s own Shark Tank competition where students pitch their business ideas and are able to win cash prizes.



With Community School supports, Frank Sedita was able to resurrect its baseball team for middle school boys and girls. In the East Zone, for the past three years, students not only get to test their jump-shot, they are also able to learn about leadership, perseverance, and teamwork through participating in the Zone’s Annual 3 versus 3 Tournament. The South Zone and West Zone open their doors for students and families to get fit by using the exercise equipment available at the school.

Participants travel from across WNY to compete in BUILD Community school’s ScrabbleFest, where proceeds are used to support literacy efforts in the city. Through a partnership with Mission Ignite, the School to Home computer program teaches basic computer program skills and provides participants with a free desktop computer when they complete the course.

Police and Fire-fighter fitness challenges, STEM Showcases, Health & Mindfulness symposiums, Spelling Bees, and nationally recognized leaders in their field, like guest speaker Dr. Reginald Brothers, former Under-Secretary for Science & Technology for the Department of Homeland Security under President Barak Obama. Each of these programs come at no cost to our students and families. Community Schools offers it all! Open to EVERYONE here for YOU!

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