



TWO YEAR INITIATIVE IMPACTS

The CITRS/CHARACTER COUNTS! Character Initiative focuses on the development of character, social-emotional learning, school climate, and academic improvement in the Buffalo Public School District (BPSD).

Two external evaluators, Multi-Dimensional Education Inc. (MDed) and Community Connections of New York (CCNY), studied the two-year impacts of the initiative and reported the following.

IMPROVED READING PROFICIENCY

MDed conducted an evaluation of the publicly available academic data provided by the New York Department of Education for the BPSD schools participating in the initiative compared to non-participating BPSD schools (control group).

MDed reported the following significant findings:

- In the first two years of the initiative, participating schools experienced statistically significant improvements in reading proficiency (ELA) compared to the control group.
- Improved English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency is a major predictor of other academic outcomes.

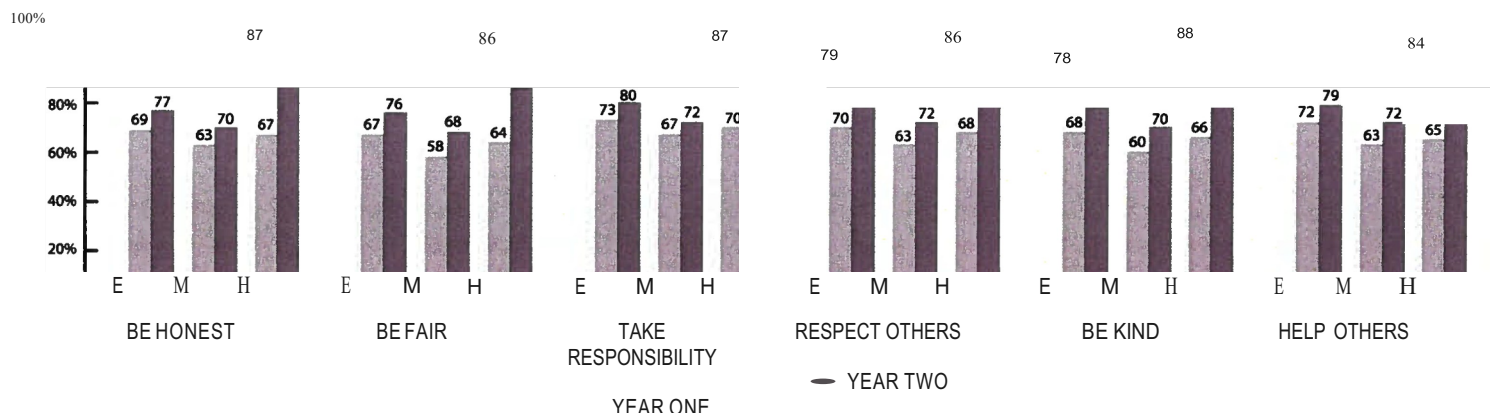
It should be noted that most interventions do not produce statistical evidence of academic change until years three and four of programming. This academic impact after only two years is notable and publishable.

SURVEY RESULTS

CCNY reported the following exceptional findings:

97% of administrators, teachers, and staff support the initiative 85% of parents support the initiative
76% of parents believe the initiative has had a positive impact on student behavior
78% of elementary school students believe the initiative helps them be a good person 76% of high school students believe the initiative helps them be a good person
81% of administrators, teachers, and staff believe the initiative is effective 78% of parents believe the initiative is effective 78% of high school students believe the initiative is effective

The graph below shows a significant growth in each character trait that elementary (E), middle (M), and high (H) school students feel likely to display. There is a notable increase year over year.



TESTIMONIALS

"Our disciplinary referrals have decreased. Our students are happy. We have a common vocabulary that allows us, the staff, to have more productive conversations with our students. We are building stronger relationships with our students every day." - *Sarah Vittoria - Assistant Principal, Lorraine Academy #72*

"Students are happier to be in school." - *Jeff Banks, principal, Buffalo Public School #72*

New York state previously deemed Hamlin Park a receivership school but now is a school in good standing. "The school climate at Hamlin Park has been transformed. We grew from a school on the verge of being shut down to a school in good standing; a school operating in fear to a school operating on positivity and hope; and a climate of compassion, caring, respect, and responsibility that is embraced school-wide by teachers, staff, students. Hamlin Parle is now a school to be proud of." - *Lauren Gopl, teacher, Buffalo Public School #74*

"Students develop perseverance so they can pursue their goals despite their frustrations, mistakes, setbacks, and other obstacles that make learning and other difficult tasks seem impossible. It nurtures social and emotional development needed for learning." - *Autumn Zasowski, teacher, Buffalo Public School #61*

See the impacts for yourself; watch the BPSD Initiative Impacts video here: citrs.org/our-initiatives

About the Evaluators:

Multi-Dimensional Education Inc. (MDed) was started in 2008 by internationally respected researchers and evaluators, Drs. Michael W. Corrigan and Doug Grove, as well as their since retired partner Dr. Phil Vincent. MDed are experts in child development, clinical and developmental psychology, organizational change, and statistical analysis. MDed's goal is to improve the lives of children by helping youth-focused organizations, schools and agencies collect, analyze and utilize more sound, evidence-driven approaches to continuous improvement MDed has assisted more than 150 school systems, state agencies, and national organizations in their work with children. Holding to the highest ethical practices and standards, they have directed the research for more than \$19.5 million in federal studies.

Community Connections of New York, Inc. (CCNY), located in Buffalo, NY, is a nonprofit member organization that provides a broad range of community-based organizations, behavioral health, and government agencies with the tools, services, and knowledge they need to improve the lives of the people in communities they serve. CCNY's services include program evaluation, training solutions, quality improvement planning and technical assistance, predictive analytics, performance and program metrics, and fiscal monitoring and management. CCNY's experienced staff members partner with client organizations to improve processes, increasing positive outcomes and further impact.

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