



Foundation for
**Education Reform
& Accountability**

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CONTACT:

Jason Brooks, Sr. Research Associate, or
Andrea Rogers, Research Associate
518-383-2598

**ONLY 5% OF ELIGIBLE BUFFALO STUDENTS
RECEIVING TUTORING
MORE CHILDREN SHOULD BE ENROLLED; MORE PROVIDERS NEEDED**

Although nearly 12,000 low-income students attending poorly-performing public schools in Buffalo are eligible to receive tutoring, the city school district has enrolled only 5 percent of these students in programs that provide this needed help. To help improve the academic performance of these students, the district needs to get all eligible students enrolled in tutoring programs, and dozens of qualified private education service providers must be immediately approved to handle these thousands of students, according to the Foundation for Education Reform & Accountability, a nonprofit research organization based in the Capital District.

The federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act empowers low-income students attending certain schools that have failed to meet performance goals to qualify for free tutoring and other services to help improve academic achievement. Nearly 12,000 Buffalo students at 19 low-performing city schools are eligible for such services, but only 650 students reportedly are receiving this assistance. And results of state assessments administered this year could cause thousands more Buffalo public school students to qualify for tutoring next school year.

“Clearly, the Buffalo City School District is not doing its job to get eligible students enrolled in needed tutoring programs,” said Jason Brooks, Senior Research Associate at the Foundation for Education Reform & Accountability. “These children need – and have the right to – educational services *now*, not at some time down the road.”

The State Education Department has approved 17 non-district tutoring providers among which Buffalo students may choose, yet reportedly 85 percent of students being served receive supplemental educational services only from the district itself. The district controls the parental notification process and all contracting procedures with the private providers. And the district has not even finalized contracts with most of these providers, even though almost all were approved by the state in September 2002 to begin providing services.

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“The district immediately needs to get many more educational service providers operating in Buffalo,” said Andrea Rogers, Research Associate at the Foundation for Education Reform & Accountability. “Community groups, charter schools, and dozens of other private providers need to be authorized quickly and to be enrolling thousands of eligible students now, over the summer, and into the next school year.” Rogers also noted that any administrative deadlines previously imposed on applicants seeking to become education service providers should be lifted until enough capacity has been created to handle all eligible students in Buffalo.

While Buffalo’s non-district service providers have the capacity to enroll up to hundreds of additional students, more providers are needed immediately to generate the capacity to handle the 12,000 students currently eligible for tutoring, a total that could grow by thousands by next fall. The next round of approval for new providers is likely not to be scheduled until October or November of this year, later than the start of this coming school year.

Under *No Child Left Behind*, districts are not supposed to simply enroll children in a district-created tutoring program, but rather are to educate parents about the various options offered by all approved providers and to encourage them to shop among these tutoring services to find the best fit for their child. In January 2003, however, a survey by the Brighter Choice Public School Choice Project found that 75 percent of parents with children in Buffalo’s 32 designated failing schools were not aware of the schools’ status and did not know of their right to additional education services under the federal *No Child Left Behind Act*.

“The district needs to stop self-referring, and start doing what it is supposed to be doing: ensure that parents know about and have the opportunity to get quality tutoring services for all students who attend low-performing city schools,” said Rogers.

In September 2002, the State Education Department released a list of failing schools for the 2002-03 school year that included information on which schools’ students qualify for tutoring and other extra educational services. The district failed to notify parents of children in failing schools of their right to these services until January 2003, and despite its district-wide classification as failing, has been providing such services itself. Federal and state regulations prohibit failing districts from providing tutoring and other educational services.

Under NCLB, funding for tutoring and other supplemental educational services comes from federal aid designated for low-income students, known as Title I funds. In Buffalo, up to \$1,215 per student from this federal money is available to cover the cost of these supplemental educational services.

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Attachment: Approved Educational Service Providers in Buffalo

The Foundation for Education Reform & Accountability is an independent education reform organization based near Albany and led by a coalition of business leaders, education reformers, and civic and cultural leaders. The Foundation’s efforts are focused on three broad education areas: accountability, innovation, and choice.

Approved Educational Service Providers for Buffalo

Achieve Tutorial Services: Approved to provide services for K-8th grade in English language arts and Mathematics. (877) 223-6402.

Babbage Net School: Approved to provide services for all grade levels in English language arts and Mathematics. (631) 642-2029.

CompassLearning, Inc.: Approved to provide services for pre-K-8th grade in English language arts and Mathematics. (800) 422-4339.

Edison Schools Inc.: Approved to provide services for all grades for English language arts and Mathematics. (212) 419-1600.

Illuminate: Approved to provide services for all grades for English language arts and Mathematics. (954) 781-7958.

Erie 1 BOCES: Approved to provide services for K-12th grade in English language arts and Mathematics. (716) 821-7071.

Friends to the Elderly Youth & Family Center, Inc.: Approved to provide services for high school juniors and seniors in English language arts and Mathematics. (716) 882-0602.

Huntington Learning Center: Approved to provide services for K-12th grade in English language arts and Mathematics. (800) CAN-LEARN.

Kaplan K12 Learning Services: Approved to provide services for 3-12th grade in English language arts and Mathematics. (888)-KAPLAN8.

Kumon Math and Reading Centers: Approved to provide services for K-12th grade in Mathematics and Reading. (201) 928-0444 (x369).

Progressive Learning: Approved to provide services for all students above a 3rd grade reading level in English language arts and Mathematics. (310) 315-1444.

Success for All Foundation: Approved to provide services for 1-6th grade for English language arts. (410) 616-2521.

Test University, Inc.: Approved to provide services for 9-12th grade in English language arts and Mathematics, and 5-8th grade in Mathematics only. (212) 279-4368.

The After-School Corporation: Approved to provide services for K-8th grade in Literacy and Mathematics, at schools running The After-School Corporation's programs. (212) 547-1002.

The Princeton Review: Approved to provide services for 3-8th grade, as well as high school, in English language arts and Mathematics. (212) 874-8282 (x2620).

Tutor.com: Approved to provide services for 4-12th grade in English language arts and Mathematics. (212) 528-3101 (x202).

Ventures Education Systems Corporation: Approved to provide services for all grade levels in English language arts and Mathematics. (212) 696-5717.