**Student Attendance & Out of School Time in Baltimore**

Attending school is a prerequisite for a young person’s success. Out of School Time (OST) programs offer a proactive response to many of the barriers blocking student attendance by providing additional academic support, reengaging students in learning, and building positive relationships with peers and caring adults. OST programs are effective partners with schools and families to identify chronically absent students and offer the supports and opportunities individual students need to increase their attendance, thrive and succeed.

The Family League of Baltimore City has been tracking student school day attendance and Out of School Time participation. The data has consistently shown that participants in Family League Funded Programs are more likely to be high attenders to school and less likely to be chronically absent. Of the 404 chronically absent students in 2009-10 who participated in an OST program in 2010-11, only 237 continued to be chronically absent in 2010-11, a decrease of 167 students representing a 41.3% decline.  This decline occurred as the district CA rate increased from 24.1% in 2009-10 to 25.0% in 2010-11.

In the Baltimore Student Attendance Campaign, housed by Baltimore’s Safe & Sound Campaign, Out of School Time programs and systems builders are playing a key role in addressing chronic absence:

* As part of a technical assistance project with Attendance Works, The Maryland Out of School Time Network ([www.mdoutofschooltime.org](http://www.mdoutofschooltime.org)) has designed and piloted a training to increase OST Program providers awareness of the prevalence and impact of chronic absence and to provide strategies for strengthening program and school day attendance. MOST and Safe and Sound are also partnering with the Maryland Disability Law Center ([www.mdlclaw.org](http://www.mdlclaw.org)) to ensure that young people with disabilities have access and are supported in OST programs.
* The Family League of Baltimore City ([www.flbcinc.org](http://www.flbcinc.org)) has placed school day attendance at the center of its metrics of success. Afterschool and community school initiatives are working to directly identify, recruit and reengage chronically absent students.
* Young people are taking a leadership role in creating peer-led strategies to address barriers to school day attendance. Wide Angle Youth Mediaparticipants created youth designed posters and postcards. With transportation as one of the key barriers, Wide Angle has partnered with the MTA to increase participation by young people in the Rate Your Ride campaign and their “Design Team” is working on creating campaigns aimed at improving rider experiences on buses serving Baltimore: [www.wideangleyouthmedia.org](http://www.wideangleyouthmedia.org)
* The Baltimore Urban Debate League’s A-Game (Attendance & Grades Amplify My Excellence!!) Ambassadors serve as city-wide peer educators to engage students across the city in conversations about student engagement and increasing attendance. In the 2012-2013 school year – 33 students representing 11 schools will serve as youth advocates and school representatives to create awareness of the importance of good and high attendance: <http://budl.org/our-programs/a-game/>

A short video about OST and School Day attendance produced by MOST & the Baltimore Student Attendance campaign can be viewed at: <http://vimeo.com/36775817>