

SECTION 18D

D. TRANSFERRING STUDENTS TO AN ANOTHER HIGH SCHOOL

Students may need to transfer into another high school for a variety of reasons. Remember that this is an important and nuanced decision, and all stakeholders should be consulted before taking action – the young person, parent, school/guidance counselor, Case Planner, the Coach’s Supervisor, etc.

Should this become a goal, the Coach should select the “[Transfer student into a better-fit high school setting](#)” goal in the Online Platform and follow the Required Steps.

TYPES OF SCHOOL TRANSFERS

The local transfer process is limited and complicated. [Say YES representatives](#) can advocate for student transfers, or Coaches can visit the Student Placement & Registration Office. More information on transferring schools can be found [here](#).

Types of transfers include:

❖ **Transfer to another public high school:**

Students might request a school transfer for medical, safety, or travel hardship or if they are struggling with academics, behavior, social-emotional concerns or attendance, and a different school could address the problem. The local transfer process is limited and complicated but possible. Say YES representatives can help advocate for student transfers.

For general transfer-related questions, visit the Student Placement & Registration Office in Buffalo.

Call 716-816-3717 or email BPSSchoolChoiceApplication@buffaloschools.org).

❖ **Transfer to charter high school:**

Charter schools are independent public schools founded by not-for-profit Boards of Trustees. They operate under a contract (or "charter") of up to five years. Many charter schools have unique educational approaches that may include longer school days, a longer school year, or themed programs. While many charter schools offer rigorous instruction and have high graduation rates, many also have strict discipline codes or promotion policies and may not be the right choice for some students in care. Similarly, some charter schools are designed to support students with special education needs, while others struggle to provide special education services and are not a good fit for students who need substantial supports. Before enrolling, make sure to visit charter schools with families to learn more about their discipline and promotion policies and their approach to providing special education services, to ensure the school is a good fit for your student.

There are 21 charter schools in the Buffalo area, seven of which serve high school-aged students. Most charter schools conduct admissions through a lottery. With support from Coaches, students can apply to multiple charters on the following site: enrollbuffalocharters.org. Seats are limited, and it is helpful to call schools individually to learn about their programs and about seat availability. See [Appendix F30 Charter Schools](#) for more information.

❖ **Transfer to an alternative high school setting: Alternative schools or a GED Program**

While limited, the region has a few alternative schools for students who are overage for their grade and/or behind in credits. These students might benefit from schools with expanded options such as flexible class structures/hours, the opportunity to gain work experience, and/or individualized counseling (note that not every alternative school offers each of those services). See [Appendix F8 Alternative High School Selection and Application Guide](#) for more information on these alternative high schools, the supports they provide, the application process, etc. *Also included in that document is more information on GED programs, which offer highly flexible prep courses for as long as necessary prior to a young person’s passing of the exam. Some of those programs also offer workforce development training.*

- Coaches should motivate the student and help them apply.
See “[Transfer student into a better-fit high school setting](#)” Goal for Potential Steps a Coach can take with the student.
- The Coach should visit the program with the young person

❖ **Transfer to an international high school**

If a student has newly arrived in the country and is an English Language Learner (ELL), they may want to consider an international high school such as [Buffalo's Lafayette International School](#). International schools are designed to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of newly-arrived immigrant students. See [Appendix F9 List of Alternative High Schools](#).

❖ **Transfer to a specialized setting including: Day Treatment Programs and non-public special education schools**

Students who require intensive special education supports beyond what is available in a traditional high school will need to consider a specialized setting. This should typically be the last-resort option, after considering a local diploma and an alternative high school (alternative school, GED program, etc.). In order to enroll in a specialized setting, students will need updated psychological testing and a current psychiatric or other specialized evaluation. They also likely will need a new recommendation on their IEP.

If a Coach is not sure which type of program to help a student pursue, they can connect with Say YES representatives, who can help advocate for student transfers. For general transfer-related questions, visit the Student Placement & Registration Office in Buffalo. For GED programs, it is best to contact each program directly to learn more.

SELECTING THE BEST-FIT HIGH SCHOOL/PROGRAM: REQUIRED STEPS

Review [Appendix F8 Alternative High School Selection and Application Guide](#) for information on alternative high schools, the supports they provide, the application process, etc.

Required Steps for the "[Transfer student into a better-fit high school setting](#)" goal include:

- Create a vetted list of specific high schools/programs to visit with the young person (based on [Appendix F8](#))
- Discuss plans with caregiver and Case Planner
- Reach out to potential schools/programs to ask about open houses, process, eligibility criteria, services offered, etc.
- Visit potential schools/programs with young person (and/or have parent visit with young person)
- Follow-up with school/program and young person after visit(s) to debrief and hear their thoughts
- Apply to a best-fit school or GED program; support young person through any interviews
- Enroll in best-fit school or GED program; complete any paperwork
- Celebrate acceptance into the new school/program
- Follow up with young person before the first day of school to provide support/encouragement
- Follow up with young person after the first day to debrief/reflect on experience
- Follow up with young person after the first week to debrief/reflect on experience (if still enrolled at this point, check off goal as "completed")

If the young person is not accepted to a particular school or program, keep repeating the above steps until the student is accepted.

Transferring schools sometimes requires some advocacy from the Coach! The fact that the Coach is not giving up and sticking with the student throughout the entire process will help strengthen their relationship.

[Click here to return to Section 18 Table of Contents.](#)