**Notes from Chew and Chat session September 26, 2017**

**Discussion topic: Back to School**

**Challenges in Buffalo Public Schools/Education**

* Size of system🡪bureaucracy
  + Difficult to navigate/get things done
* Uncertainty, i.e. contracts, getting into the schools to work with students
* System failures- esp. for families in schools/communities/jobs that are challenging
* People are busy-hard to get through
  + Lots of persistence required
  + Tough to get answers
* Majority of parent don’t have access, time, etc. are in survival mode🡪often met with annoyance or lack of responsiveness.
* Lack of equity-some schools doing a good job🡪others not
* Often, parents only hear when there is a problem
* Lack of leadership (often at building level) & not a welcoming environment
* Need for professional development for staff to facilitate conflict resolution
  + Suspension disproportionality
* White supremacy/racism
* Trauma/lack of staff & families feeling “safe” in schools (physical, mental, emotional)
* Lack of diversity in staffing (90% white, 70% don’t live in city)
  + Disconnect between staff & families
* Poor health/safety indicators
* System is reactive not proactive

**Opportunities/Actions**

**1. On your own 2. With help 3. Someone else’s job (accountability)**

* Use YRBS as a tool/data set (Youth Risk Behavior Study)
  + Lots of data on all areas of heath, wellness, safety, trauma, etc.
* Wellness policy implementation
  + School wellness teams
* Get more youth involved & engaged
  + Youth programs, student CHWs, students on SWTs
* Advocate for the **whole child** approach (not just academics)
  + Talk to teachers/administrators
  + Ask questions
* Staff wellness- teachers must know and practice what they teach
* Trauma-informed care, restorative practices, etc.
* Community schools, parent centers, ‘My Brother’s Keeper’, etc.
  + How can we ensure programs are implemented with fidelity/resources used appropriately?
    - Make it fun/what community wants
    - Ensure activities are what families want & need
* Improve communication infrastructure
* Parent Congress-parent forum 11/4 @ W. Hertel, 10 a.m.
* Network of those doing the work (especially parents/students)
* Individual learning opportunities

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| **+**  **What you got out of meeting/liked** | **-**  **Changes or next steps** |
| * Making connections (for out of school youth) | * Share info with people we serve |
| * Ideas generated | * Organizing resources   -getting info out |
| * Policy | * Work with teachers who need healing/support |
| * Simple ways to have action-based plans | * Work with students in trades |
|  | * Share info of members here today |
|  | * Self-care |
|  | * Promote life-long learning   -use community schools  -all learners |
|  | * Have an action plan |