



# BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF METRO ATLANTA

## LEVEL UP DATA REPORT

SEPTEMBER 30, 2024-MARCH 31, 2025



## LITHONIA MIDDLE SCHOOL

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### What is Level Up?

Level Up pairs students (Littles) with trained professionals (Lead Mentors). Littles meet with their mentors during the school day for group mentoring and 1:1 session, fostering conversations, connection, and the enhancement of social-emotional skills and mental health within a structured school schedule.

This report will review our impact on student attendance and discipline data, review program highlights, feedback from littles & parents, and entail an impact story of a match from your school.

### Students Served

Last school year, Level Up served 100 littles in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. For the 2024-2025 school year, we currently serve 300 littles. The mentors that served our 6<sup>th</sup> graders last school year looped up to 7<sup>th</sup> grade to provide a continuum of mentoring services. To increase our impact for the 2024-2025 school year, we increased the number of 6<sup>th</sup> grade littles from 100 served to 200 served. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta raised additional funds to serve an additional 100- 6<sup>th</sup> graders this school year due to the larger enrollment at Lithonia MS.

### Summary of Results

Data shows many tangible results for the Level Up program at Lithonia Middle School, particularly on the reduction of chronic absenteeism and school behavior incidents. For absenteeism, we see greater impact for 7<sup>th</sup> graders (most of whom have been in the program for two years) than 6<sup>th</sup> graders, showing the long-term benefit of consistent mentorship. In addition, the attendance rate at mentoring sessions is over 80% for seventh graders, showing their strong interest in and commitment to the program.

- **While the overall Chronic Absenteeism Rate for Lithonia Middle School is 24.4%, only 10.5% of sixth graders and 5% of seventh graders who participated in the Level Up program were chronically absent** (had more than 12.6 absences YTD).
- The Level Up program also has a strong impact on the number of behavior incidents for students, especially in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, where we served 200 students. **Littles in the sixth grade have a much lower behavior incident rate than their peers (22.5% vs. 48%)**. There were more behavior problems in seventh grade (where we serve 100 students) but Level Up students still outperformed their peers (55% vs. 75% had incidents).

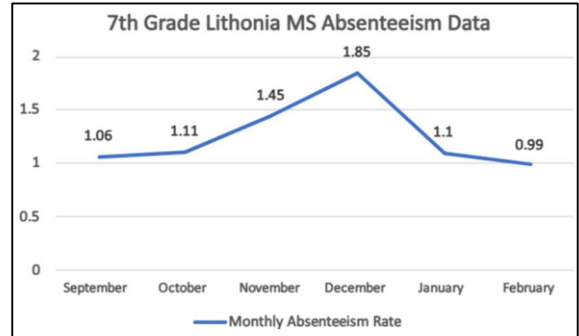
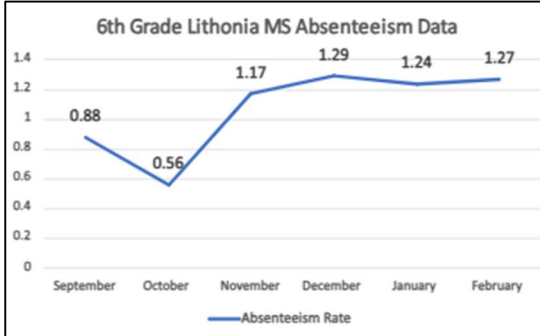
### Chronic Absenteeism Data YTD

Chronic absenteeism is typically defined as missing 10% or more of school days, encompassing both excused and unexcused absences, which is roughly equivalent to missing 18 days in a typical school year.

Total School Enrollment	1,058 Students
Total 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment	326 Students
Total 6 <sup>th</sup> Graders Served by Level Up	200 Littles
<b>Lithonia MS Overall Chronic Absenteeism Rate YTD</b>	<b>24.4%</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade Level Up Littles Chronic Absenteeism Rate</b>	<b>10.5%</b> <i>(21 Littles with 12.6+ absences YTD)</i>
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade Level Up Littles Chronic Absenteeism Rate</b>	<b>5%</b> <i>(5 Littles with 12.6+ absences YTD)</i>

**School Attendance Data**

Littles in the Level Up Program School Attendance Data  
Average days absent per month



**Observations:**

**1. 6th Grade Trends:**

- **December** shows the highest absenteeism rate (1.29), indicating a peak during the winter months.
- **September** has the lowest absenteeism rate (0.88), suggesting better attendance at the start of the school year.

**2. 7th Grade Trends:**

- **November** has the highest absenteeism rate (1.41), possibly due to seasonal factors.
- **January** shows the lowest absenteeism rate (0.99), indicating a recovery period post-holidays.

**Comparative Analysis:**

- **6th Grade:** Shows a gradual increase in absenteeism from September to December, followed by a slight decrease in January and February.
- **7th Grade:** Displays a peak in November and a significant drop in January, suggesting different seasonal impacts compared to 6th grade.

**Mentoring Session Attendance Data**

Littles in the Level Up Program Session Attendance Data

**Goal: Lead Mentors will have a 75% or higher attendance rate for sessions**

Lead Mentor	Number of Session Hours Offered Fall Semester	% of Session Hours Attended by Littles
Dorian Britt- 6 <sup>th</sup>	604	78%
Jeremiah Nealy- 6 <sup>th</sup>	625	77%
Tamiya Lawrence- 6 <sup>th</sup>	634	75%
J’Kari Willingham- 6 <sup>th</sup>	626	77%
Nicholas Turner- 7 <sup>th</sup>	641	84%
Jeffelyn Martinez- 7 <sup>th</sup>	566	82%

- All mentors met or exceeded the goal of a 75% or higher attendance rate for sessions
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Mentors have a session attendance of 80% or higher due to longevity of relationships and possibly the maturity of the Littles in the program.

**Behavior Data Comparison YTD**

Total School Enrollment	1,058 students
Total 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment	326 students
Total 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment	349 students
Total Number of Littles served in Level Up Program	300 <i>(200-6<sup>th</sup> Graders, 100- 7<sup>th</sup> Graders)</i>
Lithonia MS Total Number of Behavior Incidents YTD	346

Even though we serve some of the students with the most challenging behaviors, Level Up students in sixth and seventh grade showed fewer behavior incidents than their peers. Note that there was not sufficient data available to analyze the severity of the behavior incidents.

**6th Grade Analysis:**

- Total Behavior Incidents: 105
- Level Up Littles with Incidents: 45 students out of the 200 we served (22.5%)
- Non-Level Up Participants with Incidents: 60 students out of the 126 that were not in the program (48%)

**Insights:**

- Level Up Littles in 6<sup>th</sup> grade have a 53% lower behavior incident rates than their peers
- We saw the biggest impact in sixth grade, where we serve twice as many kids.

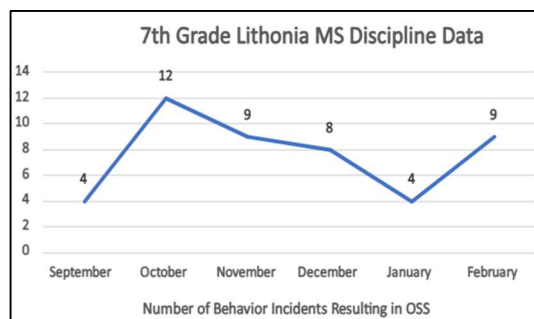
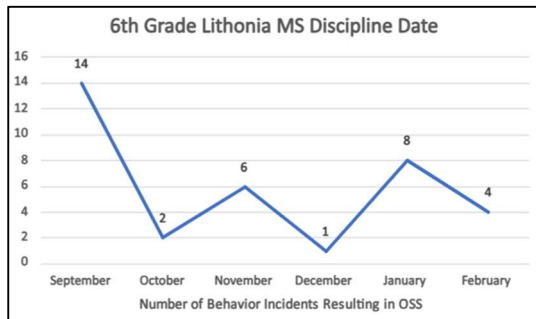
**7th Grade Analysis**

- Total Behavior Incidents: 224
- Level Up Littles with Incidents: 55 students out of the 100 we serve had incidents (55%)
- Non-Level Up Littles with Incidents: 169 students out of the 249 we do not serve had incidents (75%)

**Insights:**

- Behavior incidents for seventh grade were more than double the number in 6<sup>th</sup> grade for the entire school.
- In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, which has the most challenging behavior, Level Up students outperformed their peers by 20%.

**Discipline Data (Incidents Resulting in OSS)**



**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Trends:**

- **September** shows the highest number of incidents (14), which then drops significantly in October (2).
- **December** has the lowest number of incidents (1), indicating a possible improvement in behavior.
- **January** sees a rise again (8), followed by a decrease in February (4).

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Trends:**

- **October** has the highest number of incidents (12), suggesting a spike in behavioral issues.
- **November to February:** The number of incidents remains relatively stable, with slight fluctuations.

**Comparative Analysis:**

- **6<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Shows more variability in the number of incidents, with significant drops and rises.
- **7<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Displays a more consistent pattern, with a peak in October and stable numbers thereafter.

**Session Snapshots**

Session Snapshots serve as our daily progress monitoring measure for Littles to identify what was learned and give Littles an opportunity to provide feedback on sessions. This information provides our Lead Mentors with the information needed to adjust and adapt their lessons to the needs of the Littles. We review Session Snapshot Cumulative Averages weekly.

**Goal: Lead Mentors have a weekly and monthly cumulative average of a 3 or higher (scale 1-5).**

Nine closing questions are asked after each session. Please look at the questions below:

1. I feel happy after today's session.
2. I feel in control of my emotions after today's session.
3. I felt connected to my Mentor in group in today's session.
4. I feel connected to my peers after today's session.
5. I learned something today that will help me prepare for the future.
6. Today's session helped me think about how to make good decisions.
7. I learned something today that will help me do my best academically this week
8. After today's session, I feel confident that I will make good behavior choices this week.
9. Is there anything you'd like to tell, share with or ask your mentor?

Lead Mentor/Cumulative Session Snapshot Average for the Month	October 2024	November 2024	December 2024
Dorian Britt- 6 <sup>th</sup>	4.5	4.53	4.61
Jeremiah Nealy- 6 <sup>th</sup>	4.6	4.6	4.7
Tamiya Lawrence- 6 <sup>th</sup>	4.3	4.6	4.6
J’Kari Willingham- 6 <sup>th</sup>	4.5	4.5	4.7
Nicholas Turner- 7 <sup>th</sup>	4.8	4.8	4.9
Jeffelyn Martinez- 7 <sup>th</sup>	4.5	4.6	4.6

### 15 Quotes from Littles from Session Snapshots

1. I love being with big brother big sister.
2. I like being here to have communication.
3. Thank you for being a good mentor/friend, I've needed someone like u in my life to help me with certain decisions I make in my life and to be a better person.
4. Thank you for being the best mentor ever from
5. I LOVE MR. NICK HE IS THE BEST EVERRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
6. I would like to tell my mentor you help me feel better about myself than I felt before I came here and that I love you as a sister.
7. We had a lot of fun and I feel more connected with my peers
8. How can I control my anger issues.
9. I want to be able to be the best I can be
10. Thank you, guys, for supporting us
11. I got anger issues.
12. I learned to choose friends that have more of the same qualities.
13. I feel like after today I can trust and support my friends I feel comfortable around my friends like I can be myself around them I feel like I can talk to them about my life and what's going on about it I can even trust my best friend her name is harmony she a trustful and honest and loyal I can be my fully self around her I can trust her with my life and heart she the best friend I love to have in my life I hope me and her stay friends forever
14. I would like to tell my mentor how much I appreciate her and all she does for me, she looks out for me when I am doing right/or/wrong. I love her so much and actually a lot. There wouldn't be any other teacher that would look out for me like she does and Mr. Britt, Mr. Jeremiah, and Ms. Lawrence thank y'all for all that u do for me :}
15. I like to share that from now on I can start choosing friends that are respectful, loyal, considerate, and honest



### Highlights from the Level Up Program

- Nicholas Turner earned 7th Grade Male Mentor of the Month for November 2024
- J'Kari Willingham 6th Grade Female Mentor of the Month for December 2024
- Team Lithonia earned Team of the Month for December 2024
- 30 Littles from 7th grade successfully attended the first ever Field Experience for Level Up to SiriusXM Radio. This field experience was an amazing opportunity for Littles to learn more about career-readiness, STEM-based careers, and preparing for the future!
- Hugh Walthall, III earned Supervisor of the Month for January 2025
- Jeremiah Nealy earned 6<sup>th</sup> grade Mentor of the Month for March 2025



## Meet Little JC and Lead Mentor Nicholas Turner



Little Brother JC, a seventh-grade student at Lithonia Middle School, was matched with his mentor, Nicholas Turner, in sixth grade. Mr. Turner tells the story of how JC has grown during his time in Level Up program:

*When JC first entered the program, his mother and I had an extensive conversation about his struggles with anger and attitude. She was deeply concerned about his emotional responses and felt that he needed a major adjustment to stay on the right path. From our very first meeting, I made it clear to JC that this was a journey he had to take for himself—I could guide him, but the change had to come from within. We sat down and talked about what he wanted to change and how he envisioned himself growing, and together, we committed to the process.*

*To help him navigate his emotions, I designed a series of activities aimed at improving his self-control and emotional regulation. These activities ranged from role-playing conflict resolution scenarios to journaling his feelings before reacting. What stood out to me the most was his willingness to put in the work. He was consistent, eager to learn, and open to feedback—qualities that made all the difference in his growth.*

*The true test came within his first month of sixth grade. He found himself in a serious altercation, getting into a physical fight with another student. Shortly after, he nearly got into a second confrontation with a female student. However, something remarkable happened. Instead of engaging in the fight, he sought me out and told me that he had thought about everything we had discussed. He realized that reacting with anger wouldn't solve anything—it would only make things worse. That moment was a breakthrough. He made the conscious decision to walk away, a choice that took immense self-control and maturity.*

*What made the experience even more rewarding was the way JC handled the aftermath. He took it upon himself to make amends with the male student he initially fought with. Over time, their relationship transformed from one of hostility to an unexpected friendship. Watching him repair that connection and take responsibility for his actions was one of the most powerful moments of our journey together.*

*Now, as he moves through middle school, we continue to do regular check-ins to assess how he's handling his emotions. Since the start of seventh grade, JC has not had any issues with anger or attitude. He has developed the ability to pause, reflect, and remove himself from situations that could jeopardize his future. Instead of allowing his emotions to control him, he now controls his emotions.*

*Beyond just managing his anger, Little JC and I have built a strong, trusting relationship. He knows that he can always come to me for guidance, and I take great pride in watching him continue to grow. His progress is a testament to the power of mentorship, patience, and the willingness to change. I look forward to continuing this journey with him and supporting him as he becomes the best version of himself.*

