

# Erie County

Judge Robert C. DeLamatre

## Program Snapshot

(As of June 30, 2016)

### **Gender:**

43% Male  
57% Female

### **Race/Ethnicity:**

25% African American  
55% Caucasian  
20% Other

### **Age Range:**

7 - 17

### **Offense Level:**

Status, At-Risk

### **Youth Re-offense Risk Level:**

Low & Moderate

### **Screens & Assessments:**

OYAS

### **Program Start Date:**

March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

### **Received Services:**

49 Youth & 38 Families

### **Program Completion Successes:**

13 Youth & 13 Families  
28 Youth & 18 Families Continuing into  
FY17

### **Average # of Service Units:**

20.65 Hrs. of Direct Services per  
Successful Youth & 10.5 Hrs. per  
Successful Family, 14 Hrs. Service  
Coordination

### **Program Partners:**

- Vermilion Local School District
- Sandusky City School District
- Perkins Local School District
- Huron City Local School District
- Margaretta Local School District

### **Program Name**

Truancy Erie County Mediation Program (TEMP)

### **Program Intervention**

Truancy Prevention/Mediation

### **Primary Service Location**

School

### **Program Description**

- TEMP was developed to reduce truancy among youth in Erie County. TEMP connects parents, youth and six local school districts through mediation to assist in reaching a solution that improves school attendance.
- TEMP utilizes diversion staff and attendance officers who are trained mediators to implement the program. Together with school staff, they meet regularly with youth to address barriers/issues relating to truancy. Parental involvement continues to be fostered.
- During mediation and subsequent meetings, issues and/or barriers are identified and solutions are developed by all involved parties. Mediations are held at the youth's school to avoid unnecessary time out of the classroom.

### **Outcomes**

- All 13 youth having successfully participated in TEMP have not incurred any new charges.
- All 13 youth having successfully completed TEMP have not had any additional formal or informal contact with the juvenile court.
- 9 youth (approximately 72%) having successfully completed the program showed a reduction in unexcused school absences.

### **A Lesson Learned**

- TEMP staff quickly learned that many of the youth participating in the program did not have appropriate clothing for school and/or enough food at home. Youth experienced frequent bullying because of their shoddy appearance and personal hygiene issues. TEMP staff incorporated gift card incentives to encourage families to work together to get their children to school on time. Not surprising, food gift cards were the most chosen incentive.

### **Program Information Contact**

Michelle Deichler  
Diversion/Mediation  
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# Erie County Early Successes – TEMP

“The TEMP program has allowed court staff to form a partnership with local school districts to combat truancy by addressing the underlying reasons for why youth are not attending school. Court staff utilizes their mediation skills to bring a group resolution to improve attendance.”

**Judge Robert C. DeLamatre**  
Erie County Common Pleas Juvenile Division



The Erie County Commissioners appreciate the support DYS has shown the Erie County Juvenile Court by investing in one of our most valuable assets, our youth. The TEMP program is reaching school age children across the county with an innovative truancy reduction program. Court staff have partnered with our local school districts to make an impact on the barriers that keep these youths away from valuable classroom instruction time.

**Thomas M. Ferrell, Jr., Erie County Commissioner**



**Janice Trent**  
School Counselor  
Sandusky City Schools

I am taking this opportunity to share my experiences in regards to the TEMP program (Truancy of Erie County Mediation Program). On multiple occasions, I have met with the staff of this initiative and have found the experience to be positive and beneficial. TEMP has been an excellent tool for our students and families to utilize to improve attendance. The TEMP program has encouraged a team approach. Within this framework, parents, students and school staff share the responsibility in reaching the goal of school attendance. The commitment from the staff, the consistent follow through and the positive approach surely makes this program shine. The students are so pleased to see the staff visit them during the school day. Even though rewards are offered for improved attendance, the encouragement and positive praise from the TEMP is beneficial to the success of the program as well”.

**Youth Success Story** – FJ a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student was referred to the TEMP program by the attendance officer and guidance counselor after accumulating 27 unexcused absences.

Mediation disclosed that her mother and father were divorced and she resided with her mother. Mother reported they struggled financially and did not have reliable transportation. Mother expressed difficulty providing basic needs for her daughter. FJ often missed school due lack of appropriate clothing, having no reliable transportation after missing bus, parental conflict and an overall feeling of disconnect with school due to not having friends.

FJ was a little larger than her peers and often wore clothes that didn't fit and/or were stained and old. Peers were not always nice to her for these reasons and she had a difficult time making friends. She often preferred not to be noticed by others and tried to “fade into the woodwork”. She was initially very shy and it was a challenge for staff to get her to open up. During each meeting, staff would concentrate on the positives with her and she began to open up and share feelings.

FJ had a goal of making at least one friend before school was out for the summer of 2015. Connectivity to the school was important and she was able to befriend a new student to the district.

FJ started the 2015/2016 school year with continued involvement with TEMP and the support of her school guidance staff. Barriers regarding clothing began to be lifted. This enabled her to begin to feel better about herself and it appeared her self-esteem was rising. Weekly meetings with TEMP and school guidance staff helped to address issues. Mother stayed connected with school and TEMP staff and improved communication by reporting absences and reasons on a regular basis.

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“It has been my pleasure to work with Michelle Deichler and John Zadell through the TEMP program. We began last April and have recently finished up a very successful year. I think the program made a difference in the lives of my students and their families. By addressing barriers to school attendance in a strengths-based fashion, families are able to resolve these issues. Students are asked what they can contribute and how they will change their behavior to accomplish the goal of getting to school. I look forward to continuing my involvement with the TEMP program next school year”.

**Elizabeth "Buffy" Greenawalt L.P.S.C.  
School Counselor, SWA  
440.204.1700 #641**



**Program Success Story** – TEMP was developed to work with youth exhibiting attendance issues in all of the 6 local school districts in Erie County. TEMP has been implemented in 5 of the 6 districts to date.

TEMP utilized Vermilion Local School District as the pilot program. Due to it being a smaller sized school district in Erie County it allowed for TEMP to develop and fine tune the program. The two agencies were able to develop a team of people to work together in the elementary, middle and high school with the youth/families who were struggling with attendance issues. School staff included guidance counselors, principals, teachers and attendance secretaries.

TEMP was recognized and honored by the Vermilion Teachers Association at their 2016 VTA Annual Banquet. On May 26, 2106, TEMP staff working with Vermilion Schools were honored with the “2016 Friends of Education Award.



*“We all know, as educators, that our students are the main focus of what we do, each and every day, year after year. This year’s recipients of the “Friends of Education” Award also work in a professional career field where today’s youth are the main focus of their daily work”.*

*“The Erie County Juvenile Court system provides a truancy taskforce mediation program for students who are struggling with attendance. The program is much bigger than that. TEMP is a strengths based program that bridges our schools, our families, and county officials. All three factors must work together in this challenging world to create positive relationships that impact our kids”.*

**Laura Wheeler**  
**Vermilion Teachers Association**  
**Guidance Counselor**  
**Vermilion Local School District**



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