

Communities In Schools of Georgia (CIS of Georgia)

PURPOSE OF A LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS ORGANIZATION

- Involve the entire community in a cooperative effort with the school district and other agencies to find ways to help kids succeed in school and increase the high school graduation rate.

STRATEGY

- A community development approach to supporting education by unifying the full resources of the community (civic organizations, local government, law enforcement, businesses, faith groups and volunteers) around children, families, teachers and schools as a support system.

AT A GLANCE

- Communities In Schools (CIS) is the nation's leading community-based organization helping kids succeed in school and prepare for life.
- CIS began in Atlanta over 30 years ago and now reaches nearly two million kids annually with programs and activities in 28 states.
- Funding, training and technical assistance is provided to 50 locally managed Georgia CIS affiliates serving 60 counties and 64 school systems.
- Communities with CIS programs have seen their school completion rates **increase**, violence and disruptions **decrease**, and attendance and academic achievement **increase**.
- High school "at-risk" students who received sustained services from CIS of Georgia during the 2007 school year achieved a 92.8% stay-in-school rate.
- During the school year, nearly 163,000 students were served and nearly 9,000 volunteers helped CIS of Georgia provide services to students and parents at more than 700 school and community locations.

Counties with CIS programs in Georgia

Albany/Dougherty
 Athens/Clarke
 Atlanta
 Augusta/Richmond
 Barrow
 Berrien
 Bulloch
 Burke
 Candler
 Catoosa
 Colquitt
 Cook
 Coweta
 Decatur
 Dodge
 Douglas
 Effingham
 Elbert
 Fitzgerald/Ben Hill
 Glascock
 Glynn
 Hart
 Harris
 Houston
 Jefferson
 Jenkins
 Laurens
 Macon/Bibb
 Marietta/Cobb
 McDuffie
 Miller
 North GA (7 counties)
 Rome/Floyd
 Savannah/Chatham
 Screven
 Stephens
 Sumter
 Troup
 Turner
 Twiggs
 Valdosta/Lowndes
 Walton
 Warren
 Wilkes

KEY PROGRAMS	RESULTS
<i>CIS promotes a variety of programs that help kids successfully learn, stay in school and graduate.</i>	
Performance Learning Centers® (PLCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLCs provide another learning option to high school students who are not succeeding in a traditional setting. Students complete assignments using online computer-based curriculum and project-based learning assignments. There are 29 PLCs in Georgia. Since 2003, more than 3000 students have earned their high school diplomas.
Parent Engagement Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRCs are in five hub areas throughout Georgia to help parents become actively involved in their children's education through numerous early childhood programs.
Mentoring Georgia Mentoring Partnership AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIS serves as a facilitator for the Georgia Mentoring Partnership. The program provides support and guidance to mentoring programs.
Literacy AmeriCorps Reading Tutorial Program Reading Is Fundamental (RIF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers provide one-on-one tutorial assistance and help improve reading comprehension and vocabulary skills.
Graduation Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIS, in partnership with the Georgia Department of Education, provides training.

Communities In Schools of Georgia: Program Descriptions

Each of Georgia's local Communities In Schools (CIS) affiliates tailors its activities to meet the specific needs of its community. CIS of Georgia seeks out projects and best practices to enhance local programming, including after-school activities. The following are program areas and descriptions of key CIS state initiatives:

■ [Performance Learning Centers® \(PLCs\)](#)

PLCs are geared toward high school students who are not succeeding in the traditional school setting. They provide another learning option for those students and their parents. They create a professional environment and emphasize personal support and an intense academic program anchored by an online instructional system and project-based learning. Students receive one-on-one attention, complete assignments at their own pace using online computer-based curriculum, and develop a personal life plan.

LITERACY

■ [AmeriCorps Reading Tutorial Program](#)

The program is funded by a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service. Its mission is to tutor low-achieving elementary school students and improve their reading comprehension, vocabulary recognition, and basic writing skills. AmeriCorps members assist local affiliates and provide one-on-one reading instruction to youth in grades K-5.

■ [Reading is Fundamental \(RIF\)](#)

The program distributes free books to children up to 12 years old and engages the students and parents in motivational reading activities.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

■ [Parental Information and Resource Centers](#)

For parents seeking assistance in becoming effective in their children's education, CIS operates Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs) in five hub counties. Through a grant from the US Department of Education, the PIRCs provide extensive, research-based parent education on early childhood learning and support for involvement of parents of school-aged children.

MENTORING

■ [Georgia Mentoring Partnership](#)

CIS serves as facilitator for the Georgia Mentoring Partnership. The partnership develops and implements a statewide mentoring process that provides support and guidance to mentoring programs. CIS provides training and support, along with other recognized community organizations.

■ [AmeriCorps Volunteers In Service To America \(VISTA\)](#)

Full-time VISTA members work in local CIS affiliates throughout the state and assist in the development, expansion and sustainability of anti-poverty programming which supports high-risk youth. Programs include academic mentoring and family strengthening.

COACHES PROGRAMS

■ [High School Graduation Coaches & Middle School Graduation Coaches](#)

In collaboration with the Georgia Department of Education's School Improvement Division, Communities In Schools provides training, support, and technical assistance to high school and middle school graduation coaches. The training prepares coaches to be a resource for students and helps them succeed and graduate on time.

■ [Student Achievement Month \(SAM\)](#)

SAM recognizes students (K-12) who are sometimes overlooked and often expected to underachieve. The annual contest allows students to compete in a number of categories for prizes and scholarships. The contest helps students showcase talent in an environment of competition and cooperation, set and achieves new goals, understand the importance of staying in school and preparing for life, and assume responsibility for self-improvement and self-discipline.