

Turning Points



COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS of Georgia News

FALL 2012

New Online Parent Resource Center for Georgia Families

Research shows that students with parents who are more involved in their education have fewer behavioral problems, better academic performance and are more likely to be successful and graduate from high school. With this in mind and in an effort to help parents and caregivers get their children on a path to success during this school year, Communities In Schools of Georgia launched a new online Parent Resource Center at www.CISGA.org/ParentResourceCenter. Parents, students and educators can find information on educational activities for the classroom and home, links to aid in homework preparation, online learning games and much more. Tips available in the resource center are designed to increase motivation, self-esteem, boost grades and test scores and help educators better connect with students and parents.

The online Parent Resource Center includes a searchable directory that makes it easy for parents and caregivers to locate traditional resource centers, often found in partnership with local school systems, in counties across the state of Georgia.

There is also a downloadable Parent Engagement Toolkit for educators with templates available in both English and Spanish. Some of the items in the toolkit include:

- Research-based strategies for overcoming barriers to parental engagement in school and at home.
- Information for parents of elementary, middle and high school children, as well as parents of

special needs students and those who speak English as a second language.

- Practical, fun activities professionals can use to engage parents and children.
- Inspiration and ideas to help encourage parents to create a home environment that will foster good study habits.

Currently, more than 20,000 students entering high school will not graduate within four years. Thousands more youth fall further behind academically and face family and other challenges that put them on a path to drop out in the future. Utilizing the tools available in the resource center will help students succeed academically and provide parents with more information to get involved. Together, as a community, we can make a difference in a young person's life, increase graduation rates and position every student for long-term success in school and in life.



Calendar of EVENTS

| | | |
|--|-----|-------|
| College Success Corps Scholars Adventure Day at Georgia Tech | OCT | 19 |
| AmeriCorps Pre-Service Orientation | OCT | 18-19 |
| American Education Week | NOV | 11-17 |
| National Parent Involvement Day | NOV | 15 |
| National Family Week | NOV | 18-24 |
| National Mentoring Month | JAN | 1-31 |
| CIS Student Achievement Month | JAN | 1-31 |
| ML King Jr. Holiday and Day of Service | JAN | 21 |

Every day
Leads to
graduation day.



Communities In Schools
www.CISGA.org





In April state school superintendent Dr. John Barge reported that Georgia's high school graduation rate was not over 80% as previously reported but was actually 67.4% of those students entering the state's high schools four years earlier.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution's researchers went deeper into the state's numbers and calculated that the new percent meant some 15,000 students were not counted under the previous system for documenting graduates.

Letters to the editor and a public buzz began with a rush of explanations, many of them explaining that schools were not doing enough, too many "sorry parents" and students' misplaced values ... the blame game hit high gear.

Beyond blaming, what can be done to ensure all children succeed in school and graduate? Who needs to do what?

More than ninety percent of Americans utilize public education for their children. It's the #1 institution for building the nation, ensuring our safety, creating jobs, solving problems and overall strengthening our quality of life. Given this, all of us should have a huge stake in increasing graduation rates, doing our part and providing opportunities for all of our students to succeed.

So what does "doing our part" mean? Is paying our taxes enough?

When the founding fathers of our U.S. Constitution said in the Preamble to "form a more perfect union ... and promote the general welfare," what responsibility were they implying for me in regard to the child down the street who needs help with homework?

What must parents do? What about kids' values? What about schools and the community doing more?

Schools cannot succeed apart from their communities and conversely, communities cannot succeed apart from their schools. Working together we can all do our part more efficiently.

The founding fathers found little use in blaming, and we can't either.

Dine Out For Kids® A Success

Dine Out For Kids (DOFK) provided restaurateurs, diners, sponsors and partners an easy way to get involved with Communities In Schools (CIS). Restaurateurs gave a donation (between 5-20%) on DOFK day. Thank you to all who participated in this year's event and we hope you will continue to support us. To learn more about DOFK and view a state listing of our participating restaurants, please visit www.cisdineoutforkids.org.

Our sponsors help to make this event possible. This year included the **Georgia Restaurant Association, KISS 104.1 FM, The Atlanta Journal - Constitution, WSB-TV** and its **Family2Family** partners (Northside Hospital, American Signature Furniture, Scana Energy, Kroger and Southwest Airlines), **Smith & Howard** and **Arby's Foundation**.

If you are a restaurateur or business who would like to support next year's DOFK, please contact the Marketing & Communications Department at 404-835-8907 or dblair@cisgeorgia.org. Next year's event will take place on Thursday, August 15.



Photo courtesy of Johnny Jackson, Henry Daily Herald

The school year is in full swing, and fall is upon us. So far, it's been a busy year with many changes, from the implementation of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards to the continued roll out of the state's new teacher and leader evaluation tools. We want to challenge our students and elevate our teaching methods to meet the needs of the new global economy. We also want to not only test knowledge, but teach students how to apply it in real-world problems. It's rigor WITH relevance.

We are also working hard to get our new College and Career Ready Performance Index ready. The index will let teachers put their focus back on the child in the classroom without having to worry about just a test score. There's so much more to accountability than the test. We want to put the focus back on the children, which will ultimately lead to improved student achievement.

Guest Columnist
John Barge, Ed.D.
State School Superintendent

Did You Know?

- Communities In Schools (CIS) of Georgia received a \$6.6 million grant from the Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation to support our Network Empowerment Initiative. The grant will help strengthen local affiliates as they work in public schools statewide through the CIS site coordinator model. The goal is to decrease dropout rates and prepare students for college and careers. Key partnerships to execute the initiative include the Georgia Department of Education, local school districts and the Technical College System of Georgia.
- Walmart conducted a Back to School Supply Drive for 14 affiliates throughout Georgia and collected more than 2,800 supply items for disadvantaged kids.
- Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia, Inc. partnered with Communities In Schools in Harris and Troup counties and collected school supplies that were distributed to families in the two counties.
- CIS of Baldwin, Burke, Dodge, Turner and Walton counties earned national Total Quality Standards (TQS) accreditation. They join Catoosa, Fitzgerald/Ben Hill, Glynn, Laurens and Marietta/Cobb counties as Georgia TQS affiliates who have met the high standards. TQS ensures uniform quality and positive outcomes for the students we serve.

But the only way we will be successful with these initiatives is to get parents actively involved in them. Please be sure to get active in your child's school and encourage your friends who have children to do the same. Engaged parents can make the difference between a school that's barely getting by and a school that's thriving.

The strength of your support is immeasurable. When we hit a bump, help us plow through it. You helped us carve this path, so please help us walk through it.





Six Feet Under

Dine Out For Kids®



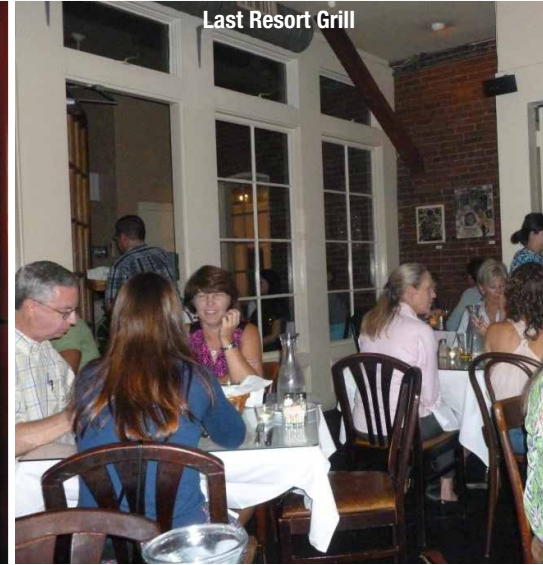
Chick-fil-A



CIS of Marietta/Cobb County board members David Stewart and Meilyn Weiss enjoy lunch at McEntyre's Bakery.



Kiss 104.1 DJ Mix Master Witch interviewing Neil Shorthouse.



Last Resort Grill



Wendy's



College Success Corps Visits Washington DC





After a successful inaugural campaign in 2011, Communities In Schools (CIS) teamed with Procter & Gamble (P&G) once again to increase awareness surrounding the dropout crisis. *School the Nation* raises awareness of America's dropout crisis and provides at-risk kids CIS serves with the support and encouragement needed to succeed in school and achieve in life.

Funds from the campaign help CIS deliver human, financial and community resources to more than one million students and their families. Last year close to \$600,000 was raised, which also aided in the development of a national public awareness campaign and provided other marketing support for the network. This year acclaimed actor Matthew McConaughey helped with the nationwide campaign.

By working with consumers to fund life-changing work of mentors across the country, P&G can give back to communities and enable kids to succeed in life. This P&G cause marketing campaign provided easy ways for consumers to participate through coupon redemptions from a monthly brandSAVER® coupon booklet, purchases of selected products, rebates and via their MyGive Facebook page. P&G in return provided monetary donations based on the purchases.



P&G's wide array of products also provided an opportunity for Georgia-made products to support Georgia students. By purchasing Tide laundry detergent during the campaign, which is manufactured in Georgia, some of the consumer's dollars will be used for Georgia students.

Successful Partnership

Partnerships with P&G support the work of Communities In Schools and allow us to continue to provide a variety of programs and services for at-risk youth and their families based on individual needs.

Communities In Schools of Georgia Key Program Areas:

- Mentoring
- Parent Engagement
- Performance Learning Centers®
- Literacy
- Youth Leadership Development

Georgia CIS Local Programs

| | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Albany/Dougherty | Dodge | McDuffie |
| Athens/Clarke | Douglas | Rome/Floyd |
| Atlanta | Effingham | Savannah/Chatham |
| Augusta/Richmond | Fitzgerald/Ben Hill | Screven |
| Baldwin | Glascok | Stephens |
| Barrow | Glynn | Sumter |
| Berrien | Hancock | Troup |
| Bulloch | Harris | Turner |
| Burke | Hart | Walton |
| Candler | Henry | Warren |
| Carrollton/Carroll | Jefferson | Washington |
| Catoosa | Jenkins | Wilkes |
| Central Georgia | Laurens | |
| Cochran/Bleckley | Marietta/Cobb | |

CIS of Georgia provides training, technical assistance, and funding to locally managed programs to help young people succeed.

Communities In Schools of Georgia

600 West Peachtree Street, Suite 1200
Atlanta, GA 30308
404-888-5784/Fax 404-888-5789
800-838-5784

www.cisga.org

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage

PAID
Permit No. 3650
Atlanta, GA

Address Service Requested

Communities In Schools surrounds students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.