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## NEWS RELEASE

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## COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF GEORGIA ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP

*Dropout prevention advocate, Carol F. Lewis, to succeed founding president*

**ATLANTA** – Communities In Schools (CIS) of Georgia, one of the nation's leading dropout prevention networks, announced that Carol F. Lewis has been selected to lead the organization following the retirement of founding president, Neil Shorthouse, on August 1, 2014.

Lewis is a 20 year veteran of CIS, having most recently served the past five years as Chief Operating Officer at CIS of Georgia. She has held positions of increasing responsibility within Communities In Schools of Georgia regionally and locally, including serving as an executive director of a local affiliate and a fundraiser within the state office.

During her 14-year tenure with CIS of Georgia, she excelled at connecting the mission with strategic planning, and has been a leading force in driving quality standards across the state organization's affiliates.

"Carol's deep knowledge of the CIS model, her proven leadership ability and her passion for the transformative work CIS does on behalf of Georgia's children made her the right choice to lead this organization at this time," said Wendell Dallas, CIS of Georgia board chair. "Carol is a credible and experienced advocate for children and is uniquely qualified to successfully guide CIS of Georgia into a thriving future." Marie Gooding, search committee chair, added, "Having prevailed over a slate of very impressive finalists, Carol has the full support of the board as the best person to lead Communities In Schools of Georgia."

"We are delighted to have the depth of leadership experience and skills that Carol will bring to the position of president," said Gary Chapman, Executive Vice President, Communities In Schools National. "Carol is well respected across CIS – both locally and nationally – and has an unwavering commitment to the children CIS serves, and we are confident that she brings the expertise needed to successfully lead CIS of Georgia into the future."

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Lewis was selected following a national search that included over 200 sources and prospects from at least 18 states. CIS of Georgia was advised throughout the search by BoardWalk Consulting, an executive search firm which specializes in nonprofit leadership.

“I’m deeply honored to have this opportunity to continue my life’s work in a new role within CIS,” Lewis, who holds a B.A. in Sociology from Mercer University, stated. “It will be no easy feat following in the footsteps of Neil Shorthouse, who has been a mentor, leader and fellow advocate on behalf of children. I am prepared to lead this organization into its next evolution. CIS has a model that is proven to work and I look forward to expanding its impact in Georgia.”

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### **About Communities In Schools of Georgia**

Communities In Schools (CIS) of Georgia is part of the nation’s leading dropout prevention network. The mission of CIS is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. Through a school-based site coordinator model, the Communities In Schools of Georgia network partners with school districts and community organizations to connect students and their families to critical resources, tailored to local needs. Last year, the network served 125,574 students in 227 school and community-based sites throughout the state, and the dropout rate was 14% lower than the state’s rate for all students. Communities sponsoring CIS programs have seen an increase in their school graduation rates, a decrease in violence and disruptions, and an increase in attendance and academic achievement. For more information, visit [www.cisga.org](http://www.cisga.org).