

# COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF GEORGIA IMPACT REPORT



## Changing the Picture of Education in Georgia



Communities  
In Schools

Georgia

[www.cisga.org](http://www.cisga.org)

# OUR LEADERSHIP



“Georgia’s high school graduation rate is among the lowest in the nation. Communities In Schools of Georgia is committed to turning this situation around. Our work provides resources to support a network of local, dedicated associates who partner with educators and do everything possible to keep students on track to graduate.”

**MARIE GOODING, CHAIRMAN, COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF GEORGIA BOARD**



“We strive to ensure underserved youth and their families have the same opportunities as their peers to change their lives, achieve academic success and reach their full potential.”

**CAROL F. LEWIS, PRESIDENT AND CEO, COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF GEORGIA**

# THE ISSUE

We live in changing times where students must learn the academic basics such as reading, writing and arithmetic, and they are also being trained as critical thinkers, creative problem solvers, good communicators and masters of technology. According to the Georgia Budget & Policy Institute and other organizations, more than 60 percent of jobs in Georgia will require some type of post-secondary credential by 2020, yet only 42 percent of the state’s adults between the ages of 25 to 34 have education beyond high school.

In a recent poll, 88% of U.S. teachers said that student poverty is the #1 barrier to effective learning in the classroom, and acknowledged that they spend 20% of their time and personal resources addressing these barriers.\* Teachers carry a much bigger load than ever before, requiring a much broader and deeper set of skills and competencies.

Learning today can be an overwhelming, complex challenge for some students. But it’s not a challenge without solutions. High needs students require more resources, and teachers need strong community partners in order to provide extra support to build the talent pipeline for the future. Research tells us young people thrive when adults care about them on a one-on-one level, and when they receive community support. That’s exactly what Communities In Schools (CIS) provides. CIS is the nation’s largest and most effective organization dedicated to keeping kids in school and helping them succeed in life – doing whatever it takes. We partner with school districts to ensure underserved kids have the resources needed to get a good public education. These resources could be anything from transportation to school, connections to adequate school and food supplies, clothing, housing, mental health, mentoring and tutoring services, to name a few.

*“Communities In Schools combines the best of what we know works – a caring adult and the effective use of metrics and evidence-based strategies – to drive positive, measurable outcomes for the students they serve.”*

**BETH SHIROISHI, VP, GLOBAL CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, STRATEGY AND INSIGHTS, AT&T**



**1 OUT OF EVERY 5**

students in the U.S.  
lives in poverty



**88%**

of U.S. teachers believe  
that student poverty is  
the #1 barrier to effective  
learning in the classroom



**20%**

amount of time U.S. teachers  
spend helping students with prob-  
lems outside of classroom

\*CIS/Public Opinion Strategies 2015

# THE BARRIERS

## 10 SURPRISING REASONS STUDENTS DON'T GO TO SCHOOL



### 1 THEY'RE HUNGRY

When a child is hungry, he or she can't focus on school, extracurricular activities or the future.



### 2 THEY'RE HOMELESS

Not knowing where they are going to sleep at night may make going to school seem unimportant in comparison.



### 3 THEY FEEL LIKE THEY DON'T FIT IN

Kids struggling with personal identity or physical appearance suffer from low self-esteem and may become a target for bullying.



### 4 THEY CAN'T SEE THE BLACKBOARD

Students may give up on their school work rather than admit they can't see what the teacher is writing on the blackboard.



### 5 THEY CAN'T GET THERE

If students must walk through a dangerous neighborhood or lack reliable transportation, they may stay at home.



### 6 THEY'RE IN POOR HEALTH

Chronic illness made worse by lack of medical care or proper medication keeps many kids out of the classroom.



### 7 THEY NEED SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Some students can't afford a simple backpack to carry their books, let alone the basic school supplies they need at school.



### 8 THEY NEED A CARING ADULT IN THEIR LIFE

If a parent dies or is absent from the home, kids lose the emotional support they need to succeed in school.



### 9 THEY NEED TO SUPPORT THEIR FAMILY

The burden of caring for a sick parent or the need to hold down a part-time job to pay for groceries can lead to frequent absences.



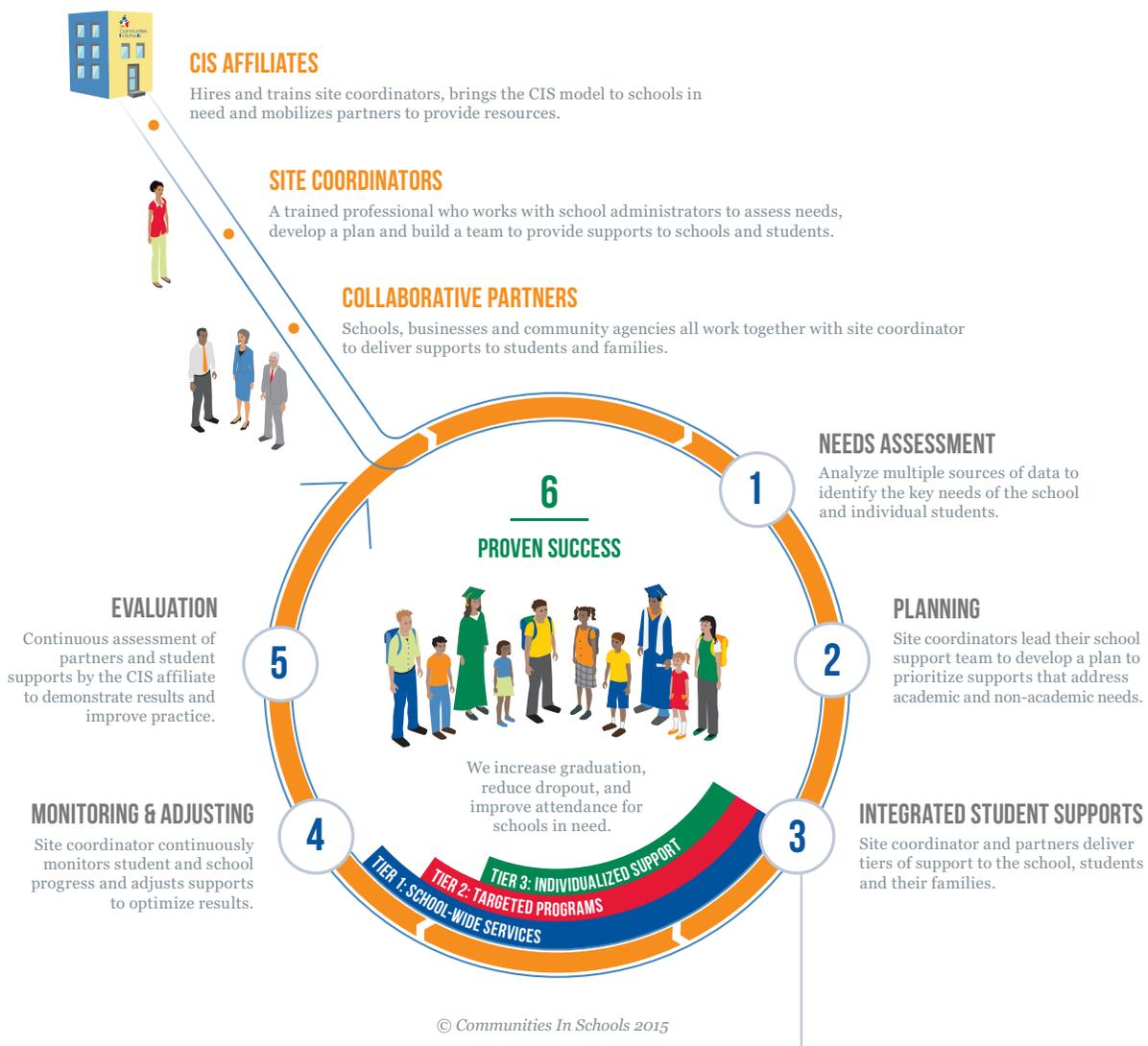
### 10 THEY DON'T HAVE PROPER SHOES OR CLOTHES

Clothes that fit, shoes without holes or a warm winter jacket are luxuries for some students.

# THE SOLUTION

School districts need more evidence-based solutions. The Communities In Schools Model is research-based, cost-effective, has worked well across grade levels within rural, urban and suburban environments and across various ethnicities. The role of CIS of Georgia is to provide local affiliates with marketing, advocacy and funding support, training, technical assistance and other business expertise to ensure fidelity to the model for improved student educational outcomes. CIS of Georgia also provides comprehensive data collection and evaluation services, invaluable to affiliates in creating their own robust funding and partnership programs.

## OUR UNIQUE MODEL



ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE



BASIC NEEDS



BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS



COLLEGE & CAREER PREP



COMMUNITY & SERVICE LEARNING



ENRICHMENT



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



LIFE SKILLS



MENTAL HEALTH



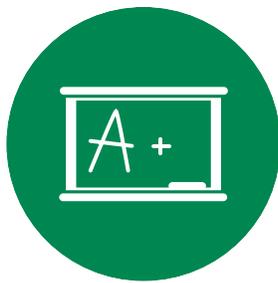
PHYSICAL HEALTH

# THE PROOF

CIS' dropout prevention and intervention programs have meaningful economic and societal impacts. Students benefit by developing skills so they can earn more money with a high school diploma and post-secondary education.

Among students receiving intensive services, 95% of potential dropouts stayed in school, 90% of seniors graduated, and 97% of elementary and middle school students were promoted to the next grade. When you look at the metrics behind the stories of our kids' success, the whole picture of education in Georgia changes, looking brighter than ever.

## IN 2014-15 AMONG CASE-MANAGED STUDENTS:



**95%**

stayed in school



**90%**

of seniors graduated



**97%**

were promoted



*"Communities In Schools has helped to improve the graduation rate dramatically in Glynn County and now they will be serving students in elementary school, setting the tone for future success in school."*

**HOWARD MANN, GLYNN COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT**

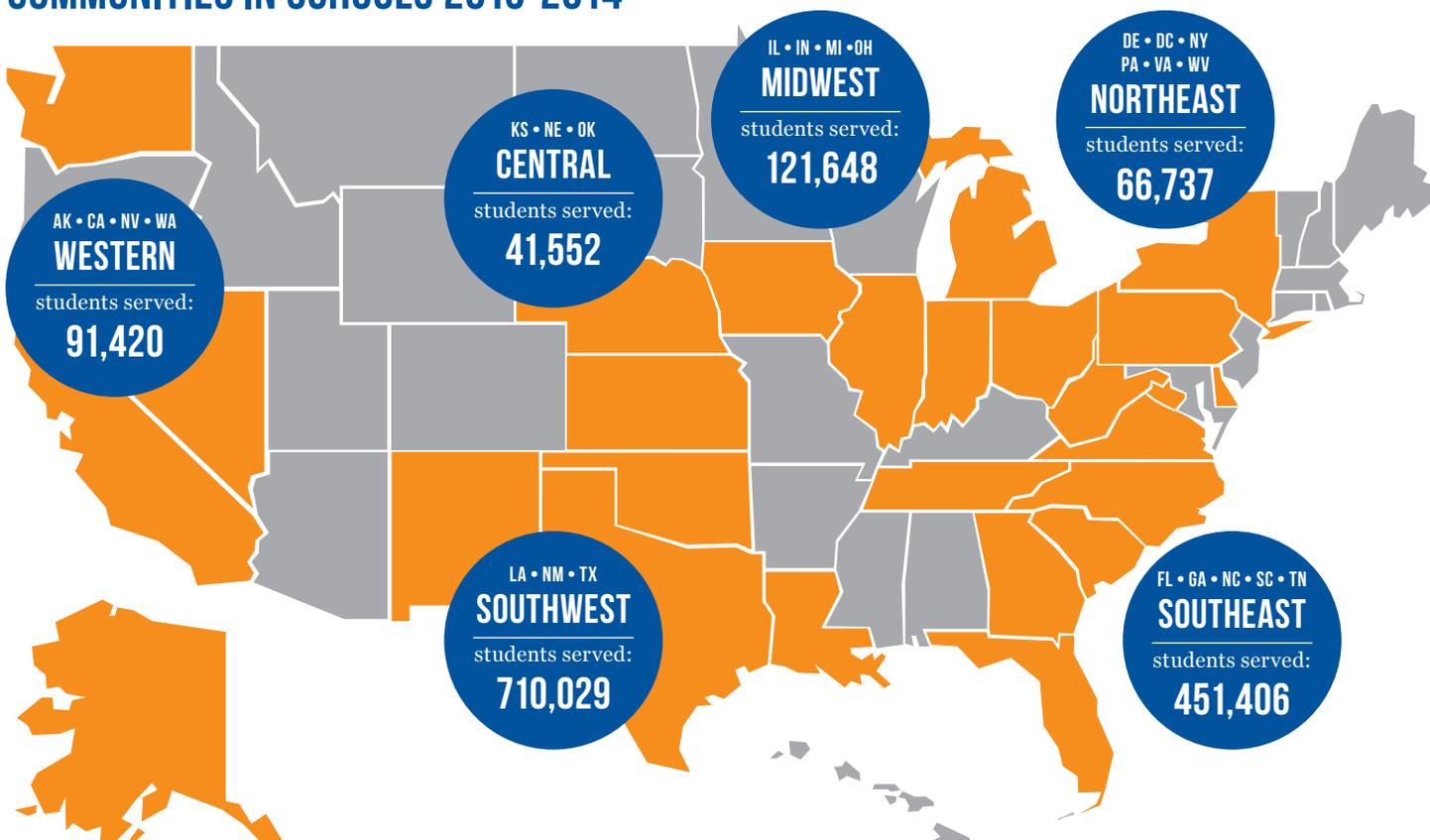
# THE COMMUNITY

- Businesses benefit by having a more skilled and productive workforce.
- Taxpayers benefit through a broadening of the tax base with more employed citizens.
- The public benefits from having more engaged, educated and civic-minded citizens.

If we want to build future leaders and contributors, we must create robust systems and structures to help teachers as they support students.

The 31 local affiliates established relationships with organizations and volunteers to provide resources and services to 121,255 students at 206 schools and community-based sites. The network's 4,826 volunteers provided more than 105,680 hours of service to communities across Georgia. Additionally, the Communities In Schools of Georgia network provided parent engagement supports to 25,819 parents.

## COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS 2013-2014



## COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS GEORGIA 2014-2015



# OUR SITE COORDINATORS

Too frequently, teachers are seen as content transmitters, but we know they are much more than that. They have one of the most complex jobs in today's world. With overcrowded classrooms, it's extremely difficult for teachers to provide one-on-one assistance. CIS site coordinators are part of a school team that develops individual success plans for at-risk youth, and evaluates progress and adjusts service delivery when needed. In the 2014-15 school year, site coordinators case-managed 10,500 students utilizing evidence-based approaches. A recent national survey of 700 teachers showed that teachers spend 20% of their time helping students address non-academic barriers that interfere with learning. Over 80% of the educators who have CIS services believe site coordinators are helpful and allow them more time to focus on teaching.



## THE TURNAROUND

Metter, Georgia

Roberta Graham, who received the CIS of Georgia Site Coordinator award, sees herself as an agent of change when working with students who have challenges. "I like the turnaround I see when I lend a listening ear and provide some suggestions, along with lots of hugs and smiles," Graham said. One of her recent successes happened when she used the coaching training provided by CIS of Georgia to help a student see his role in his disciplinary issues. "The training gave me ideas regarding how to get students to open up to me."

# OUR STUDENTS

People of color are more than twice as likely as Caucasians to wind up in poverty in the U.S., meaning children of color struggle more with non-academic barriers to success. This is reflected in the demographic make-up of the case-managed students that the network served. Some case-managed students were also identified as homeless, English language learners, pregnant, having special needs or living in foster care or a group home.

## DEMOGRAPHICS OF CASE-MANAGED STUDENTS, 2014-2015



*"The one-on-one relationship that the CIS staff has with many of our students makes a big difference in their lives. As funds are reduced and the pressure to make the grade on Federal and/or State mandated testing increase, teachers have less time to communicate with students on matters outside the classroom. CIS fills that void for the student and that relationship improves the entire educational experience for the child."*

*"We have benefited greatly from the service that our site coordinator has provided. The tutoring/mentoring was a major asset to our students. Helping students with clothing, school supplies, etc. was very beneficial to our students who needed this. Our coordinator went above and beyond to help with whatever teacher, students, etc. needed."*

## PRINCIPAL SURVEY RESPONSES

# OUR SUCCESS STORIES

By helping students stay in school and prepare for successful futures, the Communities In Schools of Georgia network strives to build a stronger economy so every child has the potential to become a contributing citizen.



## AFTER THE FIRE

Atlanta, Georgia

Many students, particularly in low-income communities, come to school with chronic stressors like unstable living conditions, inadequate clothing, hunger, health issues and violent or traumatic experiences. These issues compromise their learning experience and require targeted intervention. Ka'liyah Moore is one of those students. Her family's apartment burned to the ground. Left with nothing, CIS provided Ka'liyah's family with clothes and household items. Ka'liyah was surprised and relieved that strangers helped her and her family. Later in the year when Ka'liyah faced more difficulties at home and self-esteem issues, she turned to her CIS site coordinator. Through conversations, Ka'liyah was able to make progress and get back on track.



## BUILDING CONFIDENCE

Metter, Georgia

It's not uncommon for kids to fade into the background when they are in over crowded classrooms. Teachers can get overwhelmed and need strong community partnerships that provide support services to yield positive education outcomes for high needs students. When Mackenzie Goodwin's family moved to Candler County, they were glad CIS had site coordinators in the schools. Mackenzie's school teacher recommended that she meet with a coordinator to improve her math skills. The site coordinator connected Mackenzie with a math tutor, and also provided a relaxed environment for one-on-one conversations. This approach helped Mackenzie open up, gain confidence and allowed her to feel special because she had opportunities to do things that other classmates did not.



## BEATING THE ODDS

Marietta, Georgia

First generation college students generally need extra attention to get through the process and prepare for a successful college experience. CIS site coordinators provide this type of "high touch" service. Mahogany Roundtree, a recent Cobb County high school graduate, was one of three Georgia students who attended an educational summit at the White House this past summer. Mahogany was chosen based on academic achievement, leadership skills, college aspirations and her ability to overcome challenges faced as a middle child raised by a single mom with six siblings. She was able to beat the odds while working a job and taking the lead with home responsibilities. Mahogany became the first in her family to go to college. She is currently enrolled at Chattahoochee Tech, and is working full-time and part-time jobs to help her mom pay bills and save more for college. Mahogany plans to transfer to a four-year university and has aspirations to become a registered nurse or podiatrist.

*"Tackling our nation's dropout crisis requires us to invest in effective solutions like Communities In Schools, so it can expand and serve greater numbers of schools and students across the country."*

**KELLY FITZSIMMONS, CHIEF STRATEGY AND PROGRAM OFFICER, EDNA MCCONNELL CLARK FOUNDATION**

## OUR PRIORITIES

Saying you care is one thing. Actually changing the equation is another. CIS is a model proven to help break the cycle of poverty and help our students achieve in life. It's cost-effective and works across all grade levels. We're calling on policymakers to create a system that supports this practical, affordable and successful solution. Two simple steps could change the face of education:

- Explicitly authorizing integrated student supports as an allowable use of state and federal funds. Far too often there is inconsistent and contradictory guidance given by federal agencies and state and local grant staff to the district leaders and educators who request CIS services. An explicit clarification in statute will prevent confusion and conflicting interpretations.
- Protecting taxpayer dollars by ensuring that federal and state funded support services are evidence-based. While unproven programs can lead to innovation, the majority of taxpayer resources should target programs that have a proven track record — such as integrated student supports.

No child should fall through the cracks and remain unseen with their needs unmet. Seeing each student as an individual and doing whatever it takes to help her or him succeed in both school and in life is the driving force of our organization — and should be the foundation of our country's educational system.

## OUR IMPACT

The network provides student support services to educators and together we partner to build Georgia's talent pipeline for the 21st century.

Following is the support the network received from CIS of Georgia during the 2014-15 school year:

- Raised and advocated for \$2.3 Million in grant funds and AmeriCorps member allowances passed directly to affiliates
- Invested over \$650,000 in staff support to affiliates
- Provided affiliates with 7,460 hours of formal training, evaluation, data support, and technical assistance
- Invested \$159,515 to buy over 18 million media impressions statewide for the Change the Picture campaign

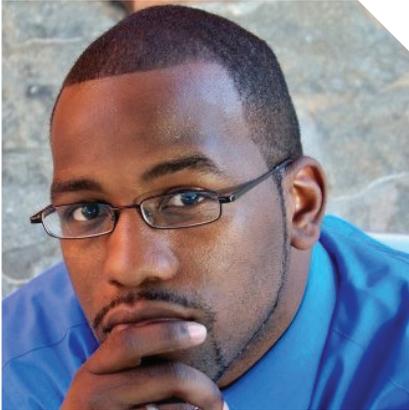
## THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Every dollar invested in CIS creates \$11.60 of economic benefit for the community.\*

COST PER STUDENT FY2015 BY LEVEL OF SERVICE			
Funding Source	Funds for Dropout Prevention	Cost Per Case-Managed Student (N = 10,586)	Cost Per Student: All Students Receiving CIS Services (N = 121,255)
Georgia Department of Education	\$1,033,100	\$97.59	\$8.52
Additional Funding Raised by CIS	\$12,030,405	\$1,136.44	\$99.22
Total Funds for Dropout Prevention Services	\$13,063,505	\$1,234.04	\$107.74

\* Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc.

# OUR ALUMNI



## A PATH TO SUCCESS

Atlanta, Georgia

As a student growing up in poverty in a small town, Fredrick Bailey faced what seemed like insurmountable obstacles that could have derailed his education and made him just another dropout statistic. But Fredrick was determined not to let that happen, even though his school work and behavior were in decline as a result of his home life experiences. It was his faith, relationships with caring adults, and journey with Communities In Schools from middle school through high school that provided an opportunity to get back on track and graduate.

Despite the everyday challenges Fredrick faced, he was the first in his family to attend college and earned a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education and a Master's in Adult Education and Training. Fredrick is now an Academic Advisor at Clayton State University. In this capacity, he conducts orientation sessions, monitors, advises, and tracks the retention, progression, and graduation status of students in the College of Health programs.

Fredrick penned his autobiography, *Waiting on the Rain*, and has been a speaker at a variety of churches, schools, nonprofit organizations, and local business meetings. He's an active faith-based leader and mentors young students, and credits Communities In Schools of Georgia with providing the support and resources needed to find success in school and life.

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Communities  
In Schools

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Georgia

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