

2016 Annual Report



40
YEARS IN SCHOOLS



Communities
In Schools

Our Story

Since 1977, Communities In Schools has been keeping kids in school and on track to achieve in life. We continued that tradition last year, supporting 1.48 million students in more than 2,300 schools across 25 states and the District of Columbia. Because we're in schools every day, we see the unique needs of each student and partner with teachers and the community to help students overcome barriers that can stand in the way of their success. From clean clothes and food to academic and emotional support, we do whatever it takes to help our students succeed.



Leadership Messages



“Our success at Communities In Schools is founded on strong relationships in schools and in communities.”

A Foundation of Strong Relationships

Our success at Communities In Schools is founded on strong relationships in schools and in communities. I am deeply appreciative of the many people whose work, support and contributions underscore and bring alive the idea of “community” that is inscribed in our name.

Seeing the results of our communal hard work in these pages strikes a spark in me that is more than hope. It is excitement at the knowledge of how we have changed, and are changing, young lives.

I am also excited to introduce a new partner in our collective effort: Dale Erquiaga, who recently joined Communities In Schools as our president and CEO.

Dale understands just how powerful relationships can be. While he was Nevada’s state superintendent of public instruction, he brought together policymakers, educators and families to reform K-12 education. He stood up for children in poverty and English language learners and expanded programs to help students get ready for college and careers.

That ability to bring people together to stand up for children is exactly what Communities In Schools needs as we build a new future based on the successes of our past 40 years.

With his powerful record of leadership and vision in the public and private sectors, Dale is the right leader to take us into that future.

Our board is deeply committed to working together to chart new pathways that sustain, deepen and grow our impact so that more students have the support and opportunity they need to succeed in school and in life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elaine P. Wynn". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Elaine P. Wynn
Chairman



Our Highlights 2015 - 2016

Dale Erquiaga Named CEO

A seasoned public servant with experience using public policy, marketing and strategy to strengthen K-12 education, Dale Erquiaga joined Communities In Schools in November as president and CEO. He previously served as Nevada's state superintendent of public instruction.

Leveraging ESSA

Signed into law in 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) specifically identifies Integrated Student Supports as a program eligible for funding and gives districts and schools greater flexibility to use federal dollars to address local needs. In September, Communities In Schools convened a panel of education experts in Washington, D.C., to help school leaders better understand how to use ESSA. Affiliate staff and school superintendents also talked to policymakers on Capitol Hill about improving student outcomes with Integrated Student Supports.

CIS Recognized as One of Nation's Best Nonprofits

For the seventh straight year, Communities In Schools earned the highest rating from Charity Navigator, America's premier nonprofit evaluator. For the second year in a row, CIS also made The Nonprofit Times' national "Best Nonprofits to Work For" list, ranking number 10. We appreciate the hat tips to our sound fiscal management practices, commitment to accountability and transparency, and the hard work and dedication of the national staff.

Our Students

Nearly one in five of our nation's children lives in poverty, and even more belong to low-income families that face daily struggles. These students often lack the array of academic resources and physical facilities that students in wealthier neighborhoods take for granted.

Yet these children are far more than what they don't have. Within them, within every child, lies the potential for success.

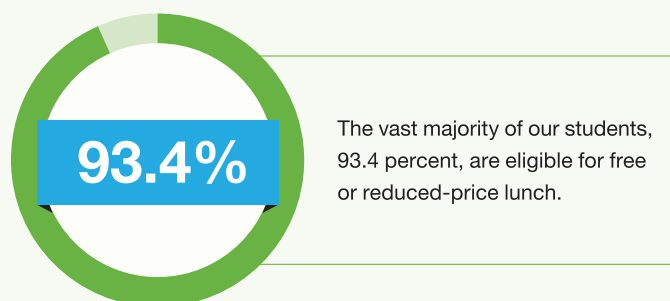
Communities In Schools taps that potential by providing the basic elements that allow students to thrive, including the presence of caring adults, a healthy foundation and a safe place to learn.

Our staff work in schools across the country as partners to teachers and administrators, empowering children with what they need to succeed. That could be a quick pick-me-up snack, a listening ear or a pair of shoes to replace ones with holes. More than that, our staff helps students find tutors, take advantage of college tours, get much-needed school supplies, access medical care and more.

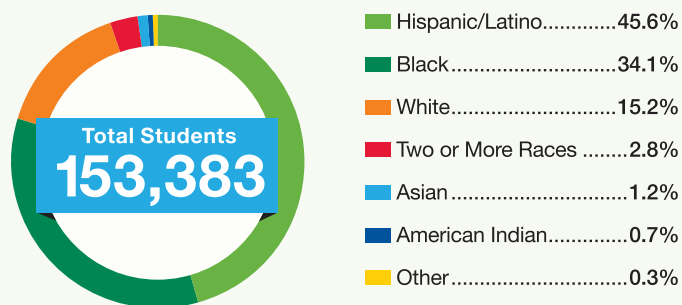
Through these collective efforts, we help children deal with their struggles, from experiencing homelessness or having an incarcerated parent to being in foster care or becoming parents themselves. One goal, one project, one assignment at a time, we empower them to stay in school and succeed in life.

Case-Managed Student Profile*

Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility



Ethnicity



*Case management – A collaborative process to 1) establish a system of supports provided to individual students and 2) identify and partner with students at risk of dropping out to: assess their needs and assets; create individual plans; provide, coordinate, monitor, and adjust service delivery; and evaluate student progress against established goals.

CHARTING A PATH

“
She put me on
the right track.”

For Steffan, a senior at Wakefield High School in Arlington, Virginia, site coordinator Amanda Gallardo was a guide through uncharted territory. He was on track to be first in his family to go to college in this country, but when it came time to apply, he says, he was a wreck.

“I had no idea what I wanted to do,” he says. “I didn’t know where to apply.”

Amanda, a first-generation college student herself, knew he needed both practical and moral support. Together, they stepped back from the overwhelming to-do list of essays, forms and financial aid applications and broke the process down into steps.

“I didn’t have anybody guide me through that process of getting through high school and going to college,” Amanda says. “I wanted to be that for somebody.”

“She put me on the right track,” Steffan says.

When Steffan was accepted to his top two choices and learned he is a finalist for a full-ride scholarship to one of them, Amanda was not surprised.

“I knew that he would be able to get in, and I knew that he would be successful,” she says. “Now, he’s seeing that he can do this and it is possible.”

Photo: Steffan, recent Communities In Schools graduate, and Amanda Gallardo, site coordinator



EMPOWERING STUDENTS

“**When my students are not in school, I notice.**”

“It probably started with a granola bar,” says Monique Baker of the relationship with her student, Kaitlyn. Monique is a site coordinator at Cardozo Education Campus in Washington, D.C., where Kaitlyn is a sophomore.

At Cordozo, Monique plays a critical role in implementing CIS’ model of Integrated Student Supports. Working in partnership with school staff, Monique assesses the needs of students like Kaitlyn and develops a plan to help them succeed. “In a school of 800 kids, if you have a personal one-on-one connection with an adult that can hold you accountable, you’re more likely to succeed. When my students are not in school, I notice.”

For some students, that plan can involve addressing basic needs like between-class snacks and khaki uniform pants. Often, what her students need most is a listening ear. Speaking about her relationship with Monique, Kaitlyn reveals that “most of the time, I’m talking about whatever is bothering me — classes, attendance, stuff outside of school. We talk about just about everything.”

Depending on the specific set of challenges that her students and their families face, Monique focuses on empowering youth with a range of academic and enrichment activities, behavioral interventions and life skills to help them achieve their full potential.

Photo: Monique Baker, site coordinator



The Last Word

Turning Toward Justice

Since the founding of Communities In Schools 40 years ago, we have had one foundational commandment: Keep our eyes focused on the kids. From that commandment a stream of accomplishments and milestones continues to flow.

Beginning with street academies, we learned that the best way to serve children is by dealing with their basic needs so that they are prepared to learn and succeed in school as well as in life. We were so overwhelmed with the needs that we saw around us, we wanted to grow as fast as possible. We started with 100 young people, and once the idea caught on, began to grow rapidly. Today, we work with tens of thousands of children and their families.

When Dan Cardinali became President of Communities In Schools, he saw how much more effective our pioneering work would be if it had an organized infrastructure to support it. He led us into the next phase of our collective life, creating quality benchmarks, figuring out how best to evaluate our work and beginning the research that would quantify the results of what we do.

With the signing of the Every Student Succeeds Act in December 2015, and another year of milestones achieved, we are now on our way to delivering charity in a quality way, effecting institutional change by not only embracing mercy, but also delivering justice.

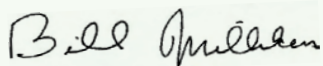
We are expanding our work beyond the familiar boundaries of mercy, which for us has meant loving children into success by providing them with critical wraparound services.

Turning toward justice opens up new territory: advocating on behalf of the 11 million children and young people we have not yet reached.

This new frontier brings us back to where we started, to where we always start: with the Five Basics. They are 1) one-on-one relationships with children; 2) a safe place to learn and grow; 3) a healthy start and a healthy future; 4) a marketable skill to use upon graduation; and 5) a chance to give back to peers and community.

I've never been more excited about the future of Communities In Schools. We have new leadership in place with Dale Erquiaga blending with our seasoned team. We also have a growing, passionate generation of alumni who are already involved in giving back to the next generation. There is good reason to believe we are ready to meet the future.

Blessings,



William E. Milliken
Founder

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more excited
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