



## Communities In Schools of Pittsburgh-Allegheny County CIS ACADEMIES ~ 2009-2010 FACT SHEET

---

### WHAT IS COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS?

Communities In Schools of Pittsburgh-Allegheny County is a **dropout prevention organization** affiliated with the nation's largest stay-in-school network. The organization's mission is to champion the connection of needed community resources with schools to help young people learn, stay in school, and prepare for life. Headquartered in Virginia, the network consists of nearly 200 local CIS affiliates serving 3,000 educational sites in 27 states. For two years in a row Communities In Schools was ranked by *Worth Magazine* as one of the **100 best charities in the nation**. CIS has been forming partnerships that address needs of students and their families since 1977. CIS has had a local presence in Allegheny County since 1985, working in - and partnering with - public schools.

### WHAT ARE THE COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS ACADEMIES & PERFORMANCE LEARNING CENTER?

The Communities In Schools Alternative Learning Academies and Performance Learning Center (a Gates Foundation-supported initiative) provides non-traditional education for academically at-risk students. Communities In Schools is an approved private provider of alternative education through the PA Department of Education, and programs meet all AEDY (Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth) state guidelines. CIS works closely with each school district to provide an education that meets their standards.

- Certified teachers work closely with students; no teaching assistants are used. Our professional support staff includes a therapeutic counselor and services coordinator at each site.
- Students learn through a teacher-led, project-based, computer and book-assisted curriculum individually tailored to meet their academic needs and the standards set by each student's school. Although it is a self-paced curriculum, earning one credit takes a minimum of 60 instructional hours (up to 120 hours depending on school district criterion) and proof through testing of mastery of all concepts in each subject's scope and sequence.
- Over the past eight years over 500 students have earned their high school diplomas through CIS. Approximately 60% of graduates have pursued post-secondary education, 38% have entered the workforce, and 2% have entered the military.
- CIS alternative learning academies are located in the South Hills, East End, and Alle-Kiski areas. For enrollment information regarding any of the Academies' programs, contact:

**CIS Academy South Hills** – located at the Southland Shopping Center  
541 Clairton Boulevard (Route 51), Pleasant Hills, PA 15236 ~ 412-655-7100

**CIS Academy East End** – located in the Kingsley Association  
6435 Frankstown Avenue, East Liberty, PA 15206 ~ 412-361-4945

**CIS Alle-Kiski Area Performance Learning Center** (A Gates Foundation-supported Initiative)  
494 Pittsburgh Street, Springdale, PA 15144 ~ 724-275-7078

## WHAT PROGRAMS ARE OFFERED?

**High School Success Program (HSSP)** is a stay-in-school program serving students at-risk of dropping out of their home high school. **Diploma Plus Training Program (DPTP)** is a program for students under the age of 21 who dropped out of school but have decided to return to earn their diploma.

### Students can:

- Set goals, get back on track, and continue their high school education meeting high educational standards in a professional and supportive setting
- Transition back to the school district or earn a high school diploma through CIS (from their home school)
- Develop employability skills
- Design and launch a post-graduation plan

Individual and group counseling, work experiences, service learning, and connections to community resources help students to reinvent themselves and reconfigure their future.

**Transitions Program** - Transitions teaches 6<sup>th</sup> thru 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and helps them to develop strategies to achieve academic *and* social success so they can smoothly transition back into their school (currently offered only at our CIS Academy - South Hills and the Alle-Kiski Area PLC).

---

### Unique in design, the CIS Academies are structured on six pillars:

- **High Tech/High Touch Curriculum**  
*The nexus of caring teachers and technology ~ teachers work individually with students on a project-based, computer and book-assisted curriculum.*
- **Professional Training Environment**  
*An attractive facility that conveys respect for the students, staffed with certified teachers and quality professional staff.*
- **Self-Managed Performance Track**  
*Student-staff partnerships are directed towards achieving academic & work readiness objectives.*
- **Community Engagement**  
*The community is viewed as a campus that provides valuable resources & connections.*
- **Positive School Climate**  
*An environment that generates self-confidence, active participation, and productive behavior.*
- **Post-graduation Preparation**  
*An individual student plan is developed and ready to activate upon graduation.*