



**STRATEGIC PLAN – 2009 - 2011**

**MISSION:** To champion the connection of needed community resources with schools to help young people successfully learn, stay in school, and prepare for life.

**2012 VISION:** Communities In Schools of Pittsburgh-Allegheny County is a sustainable, well-known, and evidence-based solution for ending the drop-out crisis.

**STRATEGIES**

1. **Fundraising and Development.** A development plan has been created and implemented that ensures the people, processes and systems are in place to support fundraising efforts that will result in diversified funding streams. Planning has begun to build cash reserves.
2. **Communication and Public Awareness.** A measurably effective communications strategy has been implemented with a focus on highlighting and addressing the dropout crisis and CISPAC’s role and value in that effort. All staff and board are effective ambassadors for CISPAC.
3. **Human Resources.** Foundational personnel policies and procedures and professional training have been documented and are in place and understood. We are on the way to having market competitive salaries and benefits.
4. **Strengthen our existing programs.** Continue to strengthen our existing programs using data and evaluation methods and practices. Align ourselves with quality partners. Strengthen administrative systems and capacity to allow for internal program replicability.
5. **Controlled growth of existing programs:** Realistic program expansions are informed by market need, best practices, and financial implications to the organization and its existing services. Emphasis is placed on growing our presence in elementary and middle schools.

1. Fundraising & Development	2. Public Awareness	3. Human Resources	4. Strengthen Existing Programs	5. Controlled Growth
<b>2011 Goals</b>	<b>2011 Goals</b>	<b>2011 Goals</b>	<b>2011 Goals</b>	<b>2011 Goals</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CISPAC has a clear strategy and plan for fundraising and development and the required people and systems in place to ensure success</li> <li>Planning for cash reserve has begun</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CISPAC is recognized by schools and funders as an effective evidence-based and measurable provider of dropout prevention services</li> <li>Within our region there is greater awareness among the schools, public, and funders on the dropout crisis and potential solutions</li> <li>Develop and share best practices with partner programs and schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solid human resources practices for recruiting, hiring, performance management are in place and practiced by all</li> <li>A Management Development and training program is implemented</li> <li>All new hires are provided comprehensive orientation and training</li> <li>Salary packages are on the way to being market competitive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective data evaluation system is in place for each program and is informing our decisions around resources, capacity, and growth of existing programs</li> <li>Effective administrative systems and processes are in place to allow for program replicability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One new Academy has been opened</li> <li>After-school programs have been created in 3 new schools</li> <li>Research-based Connections Model has expanded to 10 new schools at full cost to school with recruitment efforts to include middle and elementary schools</li> <li>Begin next strategic planning process to ensure viability of organization</li> </ul>
<b>2009 Goals</b>	<b>2009 Goals</b>	<b>2009 Goals</b>	<b>2009 Goals</b>	<b>2009 Goals</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With Board input and advice, develop and implement a Development Plan to include the following funding sources: Individuals, Community, Businesses, Foundations, and Government</li> <li>Establish advisory and steering committees to guide cash reserve efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board is engaged in helping to create a comprehensive tactical Marketing Plan</li> <li>Create and implement comprehensive Marketing Plan focused on CISPAC and its services</li> <li>Create and Implement comprehensive Marketing Plan focused on the dropout crisis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review, update and/or write all human resource policies</li> <li>Conduct monthly development trainings with both management &amp; staff</li> <li>Create curriculum for leadership development trainings</li> <li>Create orientation training curriculum. Host 3 general orientations (fall, winter, spring)</li> <li>Create report for board and management team on competitive salary packages for CIS employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a streamlined process for data collection and analysis for all programs</li> <li>Create standardized processes for after school programs, Connections coordinators and academies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create plan for new academy opening by 2010-2011 school year</li> <li>Create expansion plan for 3 additional after school programs, with one program beginning in each of next three school years</li> <li>Create expansion plan for connections model into 4 schools, with three programs beginning in each of next three school years</li> </ul>

**SUCCESS MEASURES**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development Plan measurements and the capacity in place to execute it</li> <li>Cash reserves</li> <li>Predicted versus actual funds raised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measured results of comprehensive marketing plan to include public action— website hits, inquiries, media coverage, individual contributions</li> <li>School recognition of CISPAC as evidenced through expansion to new schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR practices and policies implemented</li> <li>Management Development and Training programs in place</li> <li>Number of new hires who have been oriented and trained</li> <li>The gap in market competitive salaries is narrowing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data evaluation system</li> <li>Increased graduation rates</li> <li>Decreased dropout rates</li> <li>Increased attendance, behavior and grades</li> <li>Internal replicability of programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New academy</li> <li>Number of new connections model schools and after school programs</li> </ul>
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## WHAT WE DO

**CIS is a dropout prevention organization.** In Pittsburgh-Allegheny County, CIS works with educationally at-risk kids from kindergarten through age 21. We lead the way in creating and managing school/community partnerships that meet students' academic, behavioral, and social needs. CIS has several models of service delivery:

Our core model nationally is

**Comprehensive Connections**, where a CIS Coordinator is positioned fulltime at any K - 12 school site to provide integrated student services. The CIS Coordinator identifies community resources and services, connects these services to the school, students, and their families, manages the delivery of the services, and monitors student participation and progress. The Coordinator, working with the whole school and/or a designated, educationally at-risk student population, assures that services are delivered in a personal, accountable, and well-coordinated manner.

CIS facilitates **after-school and summer programming** for any K-12 school. Programming focuses on providing relevant, engaging, and fun experiences for kids to encourage life-long learning.

CIS runs **alternative learning academies**, which are state-approved non-traditional centers for educationally at-risk students who are at risk of dropping out of school or who have dropped out but desire to return to earn their diploma and employability skills. Students follow a teacher-led, project-based, computer and book-assisted curriculum. They are referred by and earn their diplomas from their home school district, working closely with each school district to provide an education that meets their standards.

CIS facilitates **special initiatives and partnerships** that support student success such as the *Girls Going Places* entrepreneurial conference, *First Row* (a rowing and mentoring college-prep program), and *Hip Hop On L.O.C. K.* (a leadership training and character development program).

### The Communities In Schools National Evaluation: Mid-Level Findings

Released in September 2008, Communities In Schools announced the first set of findings from a five-year longitudinal evaluation, the CIS National Evaluation. The initial results of this study, which was conducted by ICF International, provide third-party, independent confirmation of what Communities In Schools has been proving for more than 30 years—the organization has a positive effect on keeping kids in school and helping them graduate prepared for life.

The CIS National Evaluation study meets the highest level of research rigor and, at its conclusion, will yield results that meet the “gold standard” of scientifically-based evidence established by the U.S. Department of Education. Now at the mid-point of the study, the research confirms the effect of the CIS Model on school-wide outcomes. Research continues with randomized control trials to determine student level impact.

#### Overview of Findings

Results confirm that in comparison to other dropout prevention programs listed in the Department of Education's best practice website, CIS is:

- One of a small number of dropout prevention organizations with *scientifically-based evidence of effectiveness*
- Of these, one of a handful proven to *decrease dropout rates*, and the only organization proven to *increase graduation rates*

**Specifically**, when outcomes of CIS schools that have high fidelity to the CIS Model were compared with closely matched comparison schools:

- 3.6 percent fewer students dropped out
- 4.8 percent more students graduated on time with a regular diploma
- 5.3 percent and 6 percent more students reached proficiency in fourth- and eighth-grade math, respectively
- 2 percent and 4.9 percent more students reached proficiency in fourth- and eighth-grade reading, respectively.



## STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2011

**Communities In Schools (CIS) is the nation's largest stay-in-school network.** Headquartered in Virginia, the network consists of nearly 200 local CIS affiliates serving 3,400 educational sites in 27 states. There are five affiliates open in Pennsylvania. For two years in a row CIS was ranked by *Worth Magazine* as one of the 100 best charities in the nation. Since 1977 CIS has been forming partnerships that address the needs of students and their families.

CIS has had a local presence in Allegheny County since 1985 (CISPAC). To date the local CIS organization has delivered services to over 50,000 students. The commitment of CISPAC's board and staff to maintaining its high-quality of dropout prevention services while reaching more schools and young people has informed the development of a strategic plan to guide the agency from 2009-2011.

### CISPAC BOARD MEMBERS 2008 - 2009

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Retired Executive Vice President  
Alcoa

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**Sam Reiman**, Program Officer  
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**Robert Heaton**, Retired President  
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**Thomas Murrin**, Retired Professor  
School of Business Administration  
Duquesne University

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**Keiha Peck**  
City High Charter School

**Ondrea Robinson**  
Women's Center & Shelter

#### Executive Director

Nicole Molinaro

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CIS believes every child needs and deserves these "Five Basics"

- A one-on-one caring relationship with an adult
- A safe place to learn and grow
- A healthy start and a healthy future
- A marketable skill to use upon graduation
- A chance to give back to the community