



COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS ACADEMY Diploma Plus Training Program *For out-of-school youth*

WHAT IS COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS?

Communities In Schools of Pittsburgh-Allegheny County (CIS) 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 28 states.

WHAT IS THE DIPLOMA PLUS TRAINING PROGRAM?

The Diploma Plus Training Program (DPTP) serves students who are officially withdrawn from school and under the age of 21. Upon successful completion of coursework, PSSA, and specific home school district requirements, a diploma from the home school district is issued.

Tailored to the educational direction of each DPTP student, the CIS Academies' teachers facilitate student learning as they use an individualized, project-based curriculum. Students work in a professional and positive training environment and actively engage in service learning, project-based learning, enrichment activities, and mentoring while preparing for their post-graduation years. Each DPTP student designs a post-graduation plan, which may include attending higher education, apprenticeships, technical training, or entering the workforce. The CIS Academy Diploma Plus Training Program offers:

- Certified teachers and a highly qualified professional staff
- A rigorous individualized project-based academic curriculum tied in to state standards
- Goal direction including academic, career, and personal coaching
- Differentiated instruction aligned with students' assessed learning needs
- Employability skills development
- Connections to community resources (counseling, tutoring, mentoring, nutrition services, etc.)
- Community service learning opportunities
- Post-secondary planning and career direction
- A minimum of one year post-graduation follow-up

Applicants must meet WIA income guidelines in order to participate at no cost to the student. Applicants must also meet CIS Academy participation and performance guidelines for entrance to and retention in the Program.

Students who meet income eligibility requirements (which is virtually 100% of our students) attend this program free-of-charge. We are currently serving close to 200 DPTP students, with our costs totaling over \$650,000/program year. We are constantly in need of additional funding to operate this program, as County, City, and State funds are limited.

A SAMPLE OF RESULTS

On average after receiving their diplomas from their home school, 60% of our Academy students continued on to post-secondary education, 36% entered full-time employment, and 4% entered the military. The huge success of CIS Academies is attributed to the fact that we are able to accelerate students who have experienced a low level of success to a higher level of success through personal attention, setting high standards, technology and allowing participants to re-invent themselves.