

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS SPRING 2014 REPORT

CHANGING THE PICTURE IN WASHINGTON STATE





“Poverty, language barriers, homelessness and poor health all play a part in limiting the ability of a child to even see, much less pursue their potential. Our school-based site coordinators give them a hand up, hope for the future and the confidence to get them walking down a path towards success.”

—**SUSAN RICHARDS**, STATE DIRECTOR, COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF WASHINGTON



Communities In Schools is a nationwide network of passionate professionals working in public schools to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. For the last 23 years, Communities In Schools has served tens of thousands of students in Washington state. This year, Communities In Schools of Washington is serving more than 54,000 students at 160 schools, helping to break the cycle of poverty, school failure and underemployment.

This report outlines the accomplishments of Communities In Schools of Washington during the 2012 – 2013 school year. It includes data on the percentage of students who were promoted from one grade to another, graduated from high school, or otherwise improved their performance as a result of their involvement with Communities In Schools; and describes how this success was achieved.

“Children in poverty come to school every day with tremendous burdens that hinder their ability to learn. It’s hard to focus on math or reading when you’re hungry or sick or worried about where you’re going to sleep at night. In those conditions, it can seem like the ‘escape valve’ has been welded shut from the outside.”

—**DANIEL CARDINALI**, PRESIDENT, COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS

ABOUT COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF WASHINGTON

COMMUNITIES
IN SCHOOLS
SPRING 2014
REPORT

“I firmly believe that partnerships with nonprofits such as Communities In Schools are a vital part of any district’s greater commitment to supporting each of its students toward maximum success. I am a huge fan and have seen firsthand — as a district superintendent and as a board member — the impact and positive results of their work.”

—MICHAEL DUNN, Ed.D., SUPERINTENDENT, NORTHEAST WASHINGTON EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICT 101

Communities In Schools is the only dropout prevention organization proven to both lower dropout rates and increase graduation rates. What sets Communities In Schools apart is the organization’s holistic approach to addressing both the academic and nonacademic needs of students. Working with school staff, Communities In Schools site coordinators — who are positioned in schools — identify students in danger of dropping out, assess what resources they need, and then provide those resources through the appropriate community partnerships. These resources include food, clothing, transportation, housing, medical care, mentoring and much more.



THE STUDENT

For high school junior **DREW CHASE**, a mood and anxiety disorder made traditional learning environments difficult for him to navigate. Though he’d excelled in elementary school, Drew’s confidence, participation and grades had declined by high school. All that changed when he transferred to the Kent Phoenix Academy, a non-traditional high school working in partnership with Communities In Schools of Kent to connect kids like Drew with the individualized resources they need to overcome all kinds of barriers to learning. Drew especially appreciates his mentor, Tom. “Miss Kim [the site coordinator] got me to Tom,” said Drew. “He helps me set goals in school and talks to me about college and work.” Drew’s mother, Mary Ann Clayton, said it’s been beneficial to have someone helping Drew manage his mood and anxiety issues at school, whether



it's seeing a therapist right on site or taking breaks from the classroom when these issues get in the way of learning. "Communities In Schools has given Drew the support he needs," said Clayton. "Now he's much more positive, maintains a higher GPA and is having better peer interactions. I didn't even know programs like this existed before. I wish more students had these opportunities."



THE SITE COORDINATOR

KAITLIN THOMAS, Communities In Schools site coordinator at Federal Way High School, admits her job can be hard to describe: every day is different because every child is different. "I work one-to-one with students — many who have little support at home," Thomas said. "I have students I see three times a day. They want someone they can connect with who will be there and just listen." When Thomas listens, she also learns about the challenges these students face, inside and outside the classroom. She enjoys working in partnership with the students, families, teachers, school staff, volunteers and community organizations to help the kids overcome their obstacles. Any given day, Thomas may be providing snacks or a jacket, arranging for a mentor or tutor, or seeking shelter for a homeless family. Recently she learned of a girl whose mother was unable to drive her to school because of morning chemotherapy treatments for breast cancer. Thomas found a donor to provide the student with a bus pass, which helped the whole family. It's all in a day's work for a site coordinator. "That's what's so exciting about my position," said Thomas. "I get to help turn it around for these kids."

Communities In Schools recognizes that if basic needs are not met, children are unable to learn.

COMMUNITIES
IN SCHOOLS
SPRING 2014
REPORT

Working with each school's administration, Communities In Schools identifies students who lack basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter, and utilizes community resources to assist with meeting these needs. Other whole-school offerings include parenting programs, grief and loss counseling, and bullying prevention programs.



THE STATE DIRECTOR

Since becoming the state director in 2008, **SUSAN RICHARDS** has seen a clear trend in Washington. The number of students who need Communities In Schools support has increased statewide due to the complexity of issues they face, which impact their academic success. "Poverty, language barriers, homelessness and poor health all play a part in limiting the ability of a child to even see, much less pursue their potential," said Richards. "Our school-based site coordinators give them a hand up, hope for the



future and the confidence to get them walking down a path towards success.” Despite a struggling economy, the Washington state network has continued to expand, reaching more students by growing within the communities served by the network’s 11 affiliates. As services grow, so does the network’s reputation for strong student outcomes and for positively impacting the drop-out rate working in collaboration with school district partners. Said Richards, “While I am proud of our accomplishments, I can clearly see the growing number of those students who need us and the opportunities that communities now have to embrace and surround these young people with the resources and support needed to secure a better future.”

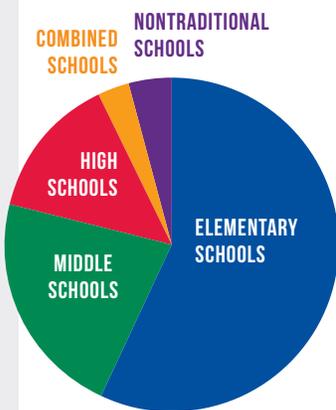
All of Communities In Schools’ work is guided by the “Five Basics” — a set of essentials that every child needs and deserves:



- A one-on-one relationship with a caring 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 peers and community

Communities In Schools of Washington

2012 – 2013 School Year Highlights

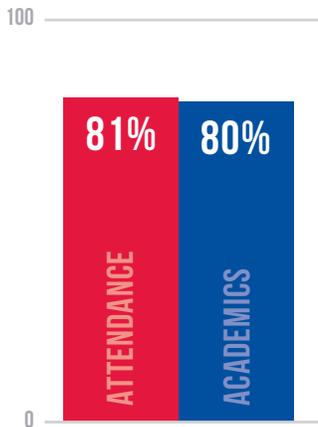


WASHINGTON SCHOOLS SERVED BY COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS

- › 91 elementary schools, 35 middle schools and 22 high schools, as well as 5 combined schools and 7 nontraditional schools were served.
- › Approximately 54,000 students received Level One* or school-wide prevention services from Communities In Schools of Washington affiliates; 4,088 students received Level Two** targeted and sustained interventions.

› **99% of the secondary students we serve remain in school.**

› **96% of the secondary students we serve were promoted or graduated.**



› **81%** of the students in grades K – 12 who received targeted and sustained services with an attendance goal met their goal. For some students, the goal was to increase the number of days they attended and for others it was to maintain their attendance levels.

› **80%** of the students in grades K – 12 who received targeted and sustained services with an academic performance goal met their goal. These goals, which are tailored to each student, may have included improving class grades, overall GPA, standardized test scores, or homework completion.

“Many years ago I was kicked out of middle school, but that turned out to be the biggest godsend — my last chance. I knew I needed to get back in school and change. I never would have made it without the opportunities provided by Communities In Schools.”

—**MARK MONROE**, CIS OF SEATTLE ALUM; CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, MYUNFOLD



*Level One services, also known as whole-school preventative services, are provided to all students, regardless of their risk for developing serious problems. Examples of these services include health fairs, attendance initiatives, anti-bullying campaigns, parent engagement activities/events, and motivational speakers.

**Level Two services are targeted and sustained interventions provided for specific students over an extended period of time. These services are provided based on individual student needs and include services such as one-on-one academic tutoring, mentoring, coordination of medical or dental resources, and counseling.